

Välkomna till årets familjeterapikongress

FTF-Sydost vill hälsa er välkomna till Växjö den 3-4 september. Staden mitt i Småland, dit ni enkelt kan ta er med tåg, bil eller flyg. Kongressen kommer att äga rum på Växjö konserthus, mitt i stan, och vi har fått in ett stort antal abstracts/intresseanmälningar för seminarier, vilket är jätteroligt!

Exempel på seminariehållare är:

BJÖRN HOLMBERG, KETTY HAGMAN & LOTTA BESKOW, MARGARETA TEKE, ÖRJAN TIRÉN ET AL, SUSAN HAUSHOFF, ULF WALLIN, PETER HAUSENKAMPF, LOTTA HÖJMAN ET AL, LISA KOSER ET AL, GULLBRITT RAHM, ANNE-KARI BALKÅSEN ET AL, OTTO MEIJER, ULRIKA ERNVIK, KARIN PERNEBO, TRYGGVE BALLDIN, MALIN SELBERG ET AL OCH UNGDOMSGRUPPEN VÄXJÖ.

Och så har vi ju våra plenumföreläsare som vi har annonserat om tidigare: WAI-YUNG LEE, LENA SVEDIN, JOHAN SUNDELIN, BILL PETITT, MAGNUS RINGBORG OCH FAMILJEMOTTAGNINGEN MAJORNA/LINNÉ I GÖTEBORG.

Flera av dem kommer också att hålla seminarium.

Torsdagskvällens middag kommer att intas på en av Sveriges mest prisade restauranger, Restaurang PM, ett stenkast från konserthuset. PM har mat i världsklass och är kända för att skapa rätter av det bästa Småland har att erbjuda, och vi är mycket glada över att kunna erbjuda er ett besök där. Under middagen kommer det också att ges lite underhållning. Och så blir det så klart dans framåt senare kvällen...

De hotell vi har att erbjuda ligger alla centralt och nära Konserthuset. Så var ni än bor kommer ni att bo nära kongressen och nära varandra.

Anmälan görs på: www.sfft.se

Välkomna hälsar FTF-Sydost

Svensk Familjeterapi

Nr 2, 2015 årgång 26
Issn 100-3421
Utges av Svenska Föreningen
för Familjeterapi (SFFT)

Redaktör:

Anita Blom af Ekenstam,

Redaktör/layout:

Mårten af Ekenstam

Adress: Ringvägen 47b,
181 51 Lidköping

Mail: sftred@telia.com

Nästa nummer

kommer ut i

september

Manusstopp: 15/8

SFFT:s styrelse

2014—15

ordförande - vakant

Ronny Axelsson

kassör

Jörgen Gunnarson

sekreterare

Marie Forneman

ledamot

Helena Engelbrekt

ledamot

Ulrica Holmbom,

ledamot

Lena Sahlström

ledamot

Madeleine Cocozza

ledamot

Charlotte Westerberg

ledamot

Gunnel Nirving

ledamot

Ingegerd Wirtberg

vetenskaplig sekreterare

Föreningens

webbadress:

www.sfft.se

Vi finns på Facebook:

sfft — Svenska föreningen för
familjeterapi

Familjeterapiföreningen i Halland har gått i graven

Tja, vi håller på några år. Organiserar och möts. Ett intresse bortom lönearbetet för att se vad som händer mellan människor. Denna materia i gasform. Mellanrummet alltså. Som egentligen ingen kan äga men som är så fullt med regler. Vi är en skock med människor som tittar på andra skockar med människor.

Vi ser möjligheten att växa när vi längtar efter att få träffas.

Ja, vi tyckte om att träffas. Vi fick idéer som vi genomdrev. Vi hade inte så mycket censur som stoppade. Vi ville både leka och säga viktiga saker. Hitta former med elasticitet.

Därför blev det några workshops och grupper, t ex:

Låsning till lösning (kollegial samtalsgrupp),

Berättelser som förbinder (samling à la Per Jensen),

ett Kvadruppelprofessionellt rollspel (dramaturgi, filosofi, sjökapteneri och familjeterapi i en pigg blandning),

Arbetsledning (ja),

Grannskapsarbete (vem arbetar med socialt arbete nu för tiden?),

en Filmfraktion (både på 00- och 10-talet),

Barntema (med ut- och inlänningar),

Årsmöte i open-space-form.

Och en kongress i Tylösand som några gillade.

Och slutligen den ofullbordade. Vi pratade om den in i döden. Workshopen med arbetsnamnet: *Familjeterapi och demokrati*. Vi pratade länge, grävde där vi stod, satte ihop familjeorganisation med samhällskontrakt, statsskick och politik. Vi hittade inte den lysande idén tillsammans. Vi släckte lampan med årsmöte och fest alldeles intill ån Nissan i Halmstad.

Vi kommer mötas igen i en annan form. Vi växer så länge vi lever.

Tack för oss!

Familjeterapiföreningen i Halland 2003-2015

SFFT:s styrelse önskar er alla en skön sommar och hoppas
att vi ses på kongressen i Växjö i början av september!
Då hoppas vi få en ordförande på plats som kan fylla detta
utrymme framöver!

Medlem i Sveriges Familjeterapi Förening - SFFT blir du automatiskt genom att gå med i en regional förening. Alla föreningarna finns presenterade på SFFT:s hemsida, www.sfft.se, under rubriken regioner. Här följer också en lista på kontaktpersoner för de olika regionala föreningarna.

Västerbotten: Åsa Kvarnbrink asa@andebrink.se

Jämtland-Härjedalen: www.ffmitt.com Marie Forneman marie.forneman@jll.se
Telefon arb: 063-153921

Dalarna: Jörgen Gunnarson jorgen.gunnarson@ludvika.se
Telefon: 0240-86097

Värmland: Lennart Björk, Ö Torggatan 19, 652 24 Karlstad
Telefon: 0541-88025 networker@live.se

Västra Sverige: Ilze Norman ilze.norman@alingsas.se
Telefon: 0322-15401, 0733-963300

Södra Sverige: Ulf Korman ulfkorman@comhem.se

FTF-Sydost: Eva Sjökvist eva.sjokvist@vaxjo.se

Famös, mellersta och östra Sverige: www.famos.se Håkan Pettersson
khpettersson@gmail.com

Stockholm: Lena Sahlström lena.sahlstrom@sfft.se

Åland: Crister Eriksson cristere@aland.net

Det är till din regionala förening du vänder dig med namn- och adressändringar.



*Så här gör vi
familjeterapi*

FAMILJETERAPIKONGRESS
I VÄXJÖ
3-4 SEPTEMBER 2015

Välkomna till familjeterapikongress 2015

SÅ HÄR GÖR VI FAMILJETERAPI

Svenska föreningen för familjeterapi i samverkan med Familjeterapiföreningen Sydost inbjuder till Familjeterapikongress i Växjö 3-4 september 2015.

Med temat "Så här gör vi familjeterapi" öppnar vi terapirummen för varandra och delar med oss av vad vi gör när vi möter familjer.



MEDVERKANDE I PLENUM:

- >> **Wai-Yung Lee, internationellt välkänd familjeterapeut**
Verksam i Hongkong, där hon driver ett familjeterapiinstitut. Hon är mångårig medarbetare och författarkollega till Minuchin. *Äntligen – för första gången i Sverige!*
- >> **Välkända familjeterapeuterna**
Lena Svedin, Johan Sundelin, Bill Petitt, Magnus Ringborg
- >> **Familjemottagningen**
Majorna Linné Göteborg

INTRESSEANMÄLAN FÖR MEDVERKAN MED SEMINARIUM:

Skicka in sammanfattning senast 1 maj till drott.englen@gmail.com

KONGRESSAVGIFT:

Anmälan före 1 juni 2900 kr, från 2 juni 3500 kr, ej medlem 3800 kr.

I kongressavgiften ingår programmet, lunch och kaffe båda dagarna samt festmiddag inkl bordsvatten.

Lena von Krogh till minne

En intensivt arbetande, engagerad familjeterapeut, handledare och lärare har lämnat oss. Lena von Krogh avled den 3 februari efter en tids sjukdom, 66 år gammal.

Att jobba i team tillsammans med Lena innebar både skärpa och lust. Skärpa att aldrig släppa fokus på människors sårbarhet och respekt för allas lika värde. Lust, att alltid se det möjliga och ha tillgång till humor och se utanför boxen.

Lena kom till dåvarande Nackaprojektet vuxenpsykiatri, först som socionomstuderande, senare som socionom och familjeterapeut.

Under ett antal år i slutet av 80-talet och under 90-talet utgjorde vi tillsammans en familjeterapigrupp där vi fick ledningens förtroende, först att göra ett projekt där vi alla fem bedrev familjeterapi tillsammans. Senare utgjorde vi en familjeterapigrupp inom vuxenpsykiatriska vården i Nacka och Värmdö. Patienter remitterades från hela kliniken, både slutet och öppenvård. Vi fem familjeterapeuter fick tillgång till egna lokaler med envägsspegel, där vi prövade olika metoder och tekniker såsom Milanomodellen och Tom Andersens reflekterande team. Lena var innovativ, entusiastisk och inget var omöjligt. Snabbt skulle det gå också! Mycket humor mycket skratt fanns i rummet, förlösande då vi ibland hade olika meningar.

Lena och Peter hade i slutet av 80-talet haft några kortare utbildningar tillsammans. Beroendecentrum i Stockholm ville ha hjälp att utbilda personal i att arbeta med familjer och anhöriga. Lena och Peters uppdrag bestod i att utbilda erfaren behandlingspersonal i familjeterapi, så att verksamheten kunde



bilda ett familjeterapiteam med möjlighet att ta emot familjer från hela kliniken. Familjeterapiteamet är verksamt än idag, 25 år efter att initiativet togs. Kombinationen stabilitet och kreativitet som Lena bidrog med under dessa utbildningsprocesser var helt ovärderlig. Lenas förmåga att röra sig så smidigt mellan komplexa teorier i föreläsningar och klinisk vardag i hand-

ledning, möjliggjorde integration av kunskap som ibland föreföll magisk. Alltid med stor respekt för varje människas värde och alltid med tillgång till känsla och lust. 2001 beslutades att utbildningen skulle kopplas till Karolinska Institutet och ges formell status som grundläggande psykoterapiutbildning. Lena var med och ledde totalt 9 psykoterapiutbildningar.

Vi har efter tiden i Nacka Värmdö psykiatriska sektor arbetat på olika arbetsplatser, men tiden vi arbetade tillsammans svetsade oss samman och vi har hållit kontakten under alla år, måna om att se till att ha regelbunden kontakt. En lång vänskapskontakt har omkullkastats.

Vi sörjer också att Lena inte fick tiden som pensionär att tillsammans med familjen, make, barn och barnbarn samt njuta av lantstället på Gotland. Under den intensiva behandlingen åkte Lena och make till lantstället på Gotland och Lena planterade mängder av blomlökar så:

Låt hundra blommor blomma.

Vännerna

Peter Comstedt, Margot Zettergren-Berge,
Staffan Wibell, Torborg Klingsell



Jan Forsberg



Ulrika Bertilsson

Utbildningar i familjeterapi hösten 2015

Folkuniversitetet erbjuder i samarbete med Göteborgs Socialpsykologiska Institut (GSI) en grundkurs – FT1 samt en fortsättningskurs – FT2 i familjeterapi under hösten 2015.

Kursledare för båda utbildningarna är Jan Forsberg och Ulrika Bertilsson, leg psykoterapeuter, familjeterapeuter och psykoterapihandledare. De har båda varit med och grundat FamiljeTerapeuterna Korsvägen AB och har de senaste 15 åren kontinuerligt verkat som handledare i formerna process-, metod- och ärendehantering. De har också hållit både introduktions- och fortsättningskurser i familjeterapi samt kurser i systemiskt synsätt, samtalsmetodik och kommunikationsteori.

Samspelsfokuserad vård och behandling - FT1

Grunden för dig som vill skaffa dig en teoretisk och praktisk grund för att arbeta med relationsproblem i olika sammanhang.

Några formella förkunskaper krävs inte, men kännedom om grundläggande socialpsykologiska begrepp och erfarenhet av klientarbete underlättar för dig.

Innehåll

- Övergripande teorier om människa och samhälle
- Analys och behandling av kommunikationsprocesser och strukturer
- Samarbete i behandlingsteam
- Reflektion över egna personliga och professionella dimensioner

Kursfakta

Kursen är uppdelad på tre omgångar à 2 heldagar (28-29/9, 26-27/10, 23-24/11). Kortare teoretiska genomgångar varvas med praktiska gruppövningar och rollspel med simulerade situationer.

Pris

9.200:- moms tillkommer

Familjeterapi, fortsättning – FT 2

Fortsättningskursen vänder sig främst till dig som gått GSI's introduktionskurs (FT1) eller annan orienteringskurs i familjeterapi med motsvarande innehåll, omfattning och upplägg. Den ingår också som moment 2 i GSI's grundutbildning i familjeterapi som du kan bygga på i din egen takt om du vill utöka din kompetens.

Innehåll

- Samgående - att bygga en terapeutisk allians, baserad på förtroende
- Co-terapi och reflekterande team - extra dimensioner i terapin
- Problem- mål- och resursformulering samt samtalsstrategi i övrigt
- Inre och yttre omstruktureringar - nya tankar och samspelsmönster

Kursfakta

Kursen är uppdelad på tre omgångar à 2 heldagar (14-15/9, 12-13/10, 9-10/11). I början varvas kortare teoretiska genomgångar med videoinspelade rollspel, och mot slutet integreras teorin direkt i videoinspelade rollspel som bygger på deltagarnas egna erfarenheter av familjearbete.

Pris

9.200:- moms tillkommer

www.gsi.se



GÖTEBORGS SOCIALPSYKOLOGISKA INSTITUT AB

www.folkuniversitetet.se/goteborg



Folkuniversitetet

Temat för årets rikskongress:

Så här gör vi familjeterapi

Vårens nummer av Cirkulär, den västsvenska familjeterapiföreningens tidning har samma tema som kongressen. Anledningen till det är att familjeterapi görs varje dag. Året runt. Av en mängd människor. I en mängd verksamheter som möter familjer.

I den västsvenska föreningen, FTFVS, har vi under flera år verkat för att alla som är intresserade av familjeterapi och familjebehandling ska känna sig välkomna. Det gäller såväl socionomstudenter som legitimerade psykoterapeuter. Vi tror på kraften i dynamiken för en levande förening. Det här temat är en del av den tanken för oss - vi vill visa på bredden bland medlemmarna. Men det är inte bara i Västsverige det görs familjeterapi. Det finns lika många berättelser som det finns professionella. Därför får det

här temat utrymme även i rikstidningen.

Stina, Mattias och Ulrika är alla socionomer men med varierande vidareutbildningar. Gemensamt är att de brinner för sina arbeten med familjer. På de kommande sidorna möter ni dem. Deras tankar. Vad är just deras grej? Och vad driver dem?

Som redaktör för Cirkulär har jag under de här åren mött många människor som på olika sätt gör familjeterapi. Det har varit en förmån att få följa med som passagerare på deras resor. Ta del av berättelser, tankar och klokskap. Stort tack till er. Och tack till Stina, Mattias och Ulrika som låter oss möta deras världar.

Berättelserna väntar.

Välkomna in.

Heléne Gröndahl Lewinsky

Mattias:

Att utgå från familjekontexten känns självklart

Berättat för Heléne Gröndahl Lewinsky
”Jag tycker att begreppet familj är komplicerat. Det finns en förtryckande diskurs i begreppet familj. Om man inte har en familj eller har en familj som avviker kan man känna sig annorlunda. Annorlundaskapet i sig kan vara det som tynger en. Jag tror att det är många andra saker som skapar vår identitet än de biologiska banden. Vi lever i en rörig tid där gamla värderingar omprövas och förkastas. Jag skulle hellre kallas systemisk terapeut. Istället för psykoterapeut med inriktning familj skulle det vara bättre med psykoterapeut med systemisk inriktning. Min ingång är att jag möter människor i en kulturell, relationell kontext. Jag tycker att familjeterapi gör jag tillsammans med de människor som söker min hjälp. Det är en ständig förhandling om vad vi gör och varför.

Jag har svårt att skilja på familjebehandling och familjeterapi. Kanske krävs

det att man som hjälpsökare är i rummet helt frivilligt om det skall kallas terapi. Familjebehandling är lite vidare i sin definition.

Jag arbetar i mitt kommunala värv med ungdomar som missbrukar och det är ett tacksamt område att arbeta med eftersom missbruk rör sig på många nivåer samtidigt. Att utgå från familjekontexten känns självklart för mig. Jag skulle ha svårt att arbeta med enbart ett individuellt perspektiv. I mitt privata arbete jobbar jag med handledning och psykoterapi och då känns det också självklart med att möta folk som del i ett sammanhang. Jag är en systemisk familjeterapeut som hämtar inspiration främst från de postmoderna skolbildningarna.

Om något är verksamt överlåter jag åt de personer som söker min hjälp att svara på. Jag har ingen aning! När jag frågar brukar de flesta tycka att de känner sig nöjda efteråt. Ibland, eller rättare sagt ofta, tror jag att jag håller på med något intressant, när jag sedan frågar de jag

träffar vad de tar med sig från vårt samtal så brukar det vara något annat. Min grej i familjeterapi är att jag är glad. Samtalen med mig brukar innehålla en del skratt även fast det är besvärliga samtal. Jag tror att jag är hoppingivande!

Jag är trött på att prata om familjeterapins framtid. Det är vi som är framtiden. Kommer vi att prata med dem som söker vår hjälp utifrån deras kontextuella verklighet så har familjeterapi en framtid. Ingen från socialstyrelsen kommer att ringa och säga till oss att vi behövs. Vi får ta plats och visa att vi tror på våra idéer.

Jag vet inte vad som driver mig att fortsätta med familjeterapi. Jag kan bara inte sluta.”

Mattias Gullberg är auktoriserad socionom, legitimerad psykoterapeut och handledare i psykosocialt arbete. Han arbetar som socialsekreterare på Mini-Maria Göteborg och som handledare, föreläsare och privatpraktiserande psykoterapeut.

Stina: Vår uppgift är att se familjen som den är

Berättat för Heléne Gröndahl Lewinsky
Foto: privat

”Min roll i att göra familjebehandling eller familjeterapi är en medvetenhet om att jag är en liten del av stora processer där det alltid är familjen som gör det stora arbetet. Det ger mig ett lugn i att göra är något pågående och inte statiskt, att det finns utrymme för misstag



och utveckling hos alla inblandade och betonar vikten av handledning och kollegialt samarbete. Vi gör detta tillsammans. Jag trivs med formuleringen Så gör vi familjeterapi. För mig är begreppet ”vi” i formuleringen öppet och inkluderar inte bara oss som professionella utan även de familjer vi möter, våra kollegor och handledare.

Familj definierar jag som vuxna och barn som lever tillsammans i olika konstellationer. Det kan vara biologiska band eller andra anknytningsband som gör en familj. Det är inte titlar som avgör utan relationerna.

Under de år jag jobbat med ungdomar har jag verkligen lärt mig vikten av relation. Så för mig är det en mycket viktig del. Jag måste möta människor där de befinner sig, jag måste försöka se världen genom deras ögon. Jag tycker mycket om att vara flexibel i hur jag gör, att använda olika hjälpmedel, skalor och metoder för att försöka hitta vad som gör personer intresserade och engagerade. Jag har inte bara ett sätt att göra familjebehandling

utan många. Det tror jag är nödvändigt. Många föräldrar och familjer vi möter är socioekonomiskt utsatta. Ensamma. Vårdsutsatta. De har erfarenheter av trauman av krig och flykt. Jag måste vara beredd att vara flexibel i mitt bemötande och mina metoder om vi ska kunna skapa en arbetsallians som kan leda till motivation och förändring. Samtidigt som jag måste kunna hålla en struktur och en process. Det är en utmaning.

Eftersom vi ofta jobbar med familjer med små barn är det vanligt att vi mest träffar föräldrarna. Speciellt i inled-

ningsfasen. Vi tycker att det är viktigt att så småningom se föräldrarna tillsammans med sina barn så att vi kan bilda oss en gemensam uppfattning och erfarenhet kring vilka svårigheter och utmaningar som finns. Och vilka positiva relationsmönster och möjligheter vi kan bygga vidare på.

När jag jobbade i skolan med ungdomar kunde jag uppleva att det skedde ett familjearbete även i de perioder jag hade mest kontakt med barnet eller ungdomen. Individuella processer och förändringar påverkar naturligtvis dynamiken och relationerna inom hela familjesystemet. Att peppa en ensamstående mamma eller stötta en tonåring kan vara att jobba med en familj. Man kanske inte måste träffas alla samtidigt, men det är bra om alla kan komma överens om några gemensamma önsknings och mål.

Tidigare har jag arbetat mycket med människor som är nya i Sverige. Det har jag på olika sätt nytta av i familjearbetet också i dag. Många av våra klienter har

en social utsatthet och kan behöva hjälp vidare och vägledning med andra behov än de vi träffas för.

Jag tror att vi alla har föreställningar om vad som är ”Det goda livet” och den ”Goda familjen”. Där behöver vi ständigt ifrågasätta våra egna uppfattningar och våga bredda våra definitioner. Jag tycker vi kommit långt men jag upplever fortfarande att till exempel ensamstående mammor ses som per definition svaga eller otillräckliga. Det är inte okej. Vi som jobbar inom socialtjänsten i syfte att skydda barn och främja barns utveckling och goda relationer har inte till uppgift att bevaka normer och kritisera det som avviker från vår egen kultur, kärnfamiljen osv. Vår uppgift är att se familjen som den är och utifrån barnets behov jobba mot ett gott liv, även om det inte är just vår definition av ”ett gott liv”.

Jag upplever också att mäns våld mot kvinnor i nära relationer fortfarande ses som en bifråga inom mycket familjearbete. Kunskap om att våld förekommit berörs inte alltid. Trots att vi vet hur extremt mycket våldet präglar samvaron, att våldet föregås av en normaliseringsprocess där kränkningar och olika former av hot om våld ingår och naturligtvis påverkar hela familjebildningen. Det är extremt svårt att skapa hållbara förändringar om våldet är pågående. Det finns en ständig maktaspekt som gör att insatser och ansatser inte blir likvärdiga för den som utsätter och den som utsätts. Det här är ett stort problem, eftersom vi riskerar att understödja och upprätthålla makt- och våldsmönster i familjerna. Utbildning och åter utbildning i de här frågorna är mycket viktigt, för det är ett område som skrämmer och avskräcker och vi måste bli mer bekväma med att jobba direkt med våldet.

Både klassmässigt och etnicitetsmässigt kan vårt fackspråk vara ett hinder. Jag kan själv uppleva att jag, i de stunder jag blir osäker, faller tillbaka på termer och begrepp från socialt arbete som kanske inte säger familjen något. Vi jobbar ju med väldigt universella saker som relationer och känslor och måste hitta språk och sätt att förklara oss som kan nå alla vi möter, inte bara de med svensk eller svensk-akademisk bakgrund. För mig är rättvisa och likvärdighet otroligt viktigt i socialtjänstens arbete och vi måste hela tiden göra oss påminda om vilka hinder vi själva kan tänkas sätt upp

Fortsättning på nästa sida

för detta. Jag jobbar till exempel ofta med tolk och upplever det som positivt.

När jag inte jobbar broderar jag politiska bilder och budskap och tycker mycket om att odla saker. Jag har tidigare målat mycket och nu när jag har fått gå en utbildning med fokus på sagor och skapande skulle jag gärna vilja jobba mer med det. Jag skulle vilja få in de bitarna både i möten med barn och vuxna.

Jag vill bli bättre på det jag gör, fortsätta lära och utvecklas. Jag känner mig

fortfarande ganska grön som socionom och familjebehandlare, men jag känner ett driv, en lust och jag tycker det är förbannat roligt! Det är en ynnest att få komma in i människors liv en liten stund, att kanske få förtroendet att vara en liten del, en liten katalysator i ett långt och mödosamt arbete. Sen har jag naturligtvis en önskan om att barn ska få leva utan våld och hot, få goda anknytningsrelationer och ett tryggt och givande liv. Att föräldrar ska må bra och

ha en god samvaro och god relation till sig själva och sina barn. Om jag kan vara ett verktyg på något sätt för att nå dit vore det fantastiskt.”

Stina Birgegård är socionom och arbetar som familjebehandlare på Familjekraft på Västra Hisingen. Hon är utbildad i kreativt skapande behandlingsarbete med barn inom verksamheten Ringen. Hon har tidigare arbetat på kvinnojour och som skolteamssocionom.



Ulrika: Det är klienten som avgör vad som varit terapeutiskt verksam

Berättat för Heléne Gröndahl Lewinsky
Foto: privat

”Eftersom jag finns inom Svenska kyrkan är det naturligt att erbjuda samtalsmöjligheter med holistiskt perspektiv. Det är klienten själv som avgör om och när denne vill ta upp livsåskådningsfrågor. Jag ser mig som ett bollplank, mer än någon som har svar.

Jag ser familjeterapi som en chans när det uppstått läsningar, att terapeutiskt reflektera utöver ett individuellt perspektiv och därigenom koppla samman struktur, familjekonstellation och relationellt perspektiv. Det kan vara till hjälp att beskriva processer mellan individerna i en familj när man sätter ord på samspel, handlingar, tankar och känslor i system. Om man dessutom gör ytterligare koppling till familjerekonstruktion, för att titta på sin familjehistoria utifrån flergenerationsperspektiv kan man komma åt det som inte alltid verbaliseras i den egna familjen. Att koppla samman individ med familjestruktur ger en bredd i perspektivet som tilltalar mig, därför man bättre kan förstå sitt sammanhang.

För mig betyder familjeterapi att terapeuten tillsammans med familjen reflekterar över familjesituationen för att försöka hitta bakomliggande orsaker och fungerande möjligheter framöver. Terapeuten har då till uppgift att lyssna in och göra tydligt, så att familjen kan enas kring gemensamma utgångspunkter att arbeta utifrån. Terapeutens åtagande under processen är att hålla fokus

på det som stärker, vilket kan ändras under processen. Det är ett tillvägagångssätt som är mer sökande. En terapeut eller familjebehandlare kan föreslå metod eller samtalsterapi som denne anser kan vara terapeutiskt verksamt, men det är alltid klienten själv som avgör vad som i själva verket varit terapeutiskt verksamt.

I den verksamhet jag jobbar inom ska hela familjen finnas med 2-3 samtal i en inledande familjeterapi, men parallellt därefter kan enskilda samtal ske med olika familjemedlemmar eller föräldrar, för att ge möjlighet för dem att få sätta ord på sin egen erfarenhet och sin process. Oavsett om det är parsamtal eller familjesamtal upplever jag att detta skapar större ro i de gemensamma samtalen, då man uppfattar att man blivit lyssnad på och har fått ge sitt perspektiv, utan att bli avbruten av någon i familjen. Därefter är man mer mottaglig för det som sker gemensamt.

En familj kan se ut hur som helst. Vad och vilka som ingår i familjen, bestäms av dem som söker familjeterapi, men ibland får man hjälpa till att föreslå personer som kan vara relevanta att ingå i processen. Det kan till exempel vara personer på två- eller tre generationsnivån.

Jag tror på hjälp till självhjälp. Därför händer det att jag ber dem skriva dagliga anteckningar till exempel över hur de mått, vad som varit problematiskt eller känsloläget i allmänhet. Exempel utifrån det ger vad de kan behöva jobba med. Det behöver inte vara långt, en till två meningar räcker. De får själva välja om och vad de vill läsa upp för mig vid nästa samtal och så pratar vi om det. Det kan även vara en "läxa" att fundera över mellan samtalen, gärna göra någon anteckning under veckan. Om inte så pratar vi om detta vid nästa tillfälle. Alla läxor ska vara frivilliga, om de inte görs mellan samtalen, görs de i samtalen. De ska fungera som ett sätt att få igång eller behålla processen genom samtalstiden.

När jag inte jobbar läser jag, ser på tv och film eller lyssnar på poddradio eller vanlig radio. Därför rekommenderar jag sådant som kan var givande och passande i sitt sammanhang. Jag har också lite arbetsbibliotek där man kan låna böcker. Det händer också att jag ger bort böcker, till exempel "Barn av livet" av Tommy Hellsten, som bra beskriver egenskaper

att ha med in i vuxenlivet och som man kan arbeta med i terapi.

Familjeterapi eller individualterapi, liksom parterapi, är många gånger en klassfråga, vilket gör mig upprörd! Givetvis spelar tillgänglighet och socioekonomi en avgörande roll. När det gäller genus bör man även inkludera hbtq- perspektivet. Det är viktigt att alla har god tillgänglighet till terapi. Jag tror att man skulle spara mycket ekonomiskt genom att erbjuda terapi i större utsträckning än vad som idag görs. Jag anser att man i Skåne är på rätt väg med det fria vårdvalet vilket också gäller terapi. Det är viktigt att man kan få en terapeut som man känner förtroende för, chansen är större om man också har möjlighet att göra egna val. Vi i kåren är bra på att lyssna, men sämre på att finnas i det offentliga rummet och skapa diskussion som leder till förändring.

Jag önskar att familjeterapi får ett större utrymme i den offentliga debatten och på det viset en bredare plattform att verka på. Familjebehandling är bra många gånger men inte alltid tillräckligt. Vi bör bli bättre på att medvetandegöra människor om deras sammanhang. Det kan leda till önskan och motivation till en mer varaktig förändring.

Det som driver mig är mötet med människor, möjligheten att få vara med och göra skillnad."

Ulrika Geinäs är diakon och arbetar i Johannebergs kyrkan, där hon har en samtalsmottagning dit enskilda, par eller familjer kan söka sig. Hon läser just nu till psykoterapeut vid St Lukas på Ersta-Sköndals högskola i Stockholm. Tidigare har hon bland annat arbetat ideellt som jourhavande medmänniska.



Göteborgs Centrum för Kompetensutveckling

Workshops ht 2015 i Göteborg

Scott D Miller, PhD USA

Vad är verksamt
i psykosocialt behandlingsarbete?

24-25 september 2015

Bo Hejlskov Elvén

Hantering av problemskapande beteende
utifrån ett låg-affektivt förhållningssätt

9-10 december 2015

Utbildningar start ht 2015 i Göteborg

Guy Diamond,

Childrens Hospital of Philadelphia, USA

Anknytningsbaserad familjeterapi ABFT

9 november Introduktionsdag

10-11 november Utbildningsdagar

12 november Fördjupningsdag

Maggie Carey

Narrative Practices Adelaide, Australien

1-årig Narrativ Diplomutbildning

start ht 2015

För anmälan och mer information se www.gck.nu

Kontakta oss på info@gck.nu

Vi måste bli mer mänskliga inom psykiatrin

Allen Frances är makthavaren som bytt sida. Han var ordförande för DSM 3 och 4, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, som utges av American Psychiatric Association. När DSM 5 kom ut för ett år sedan blev han kringresande kritiker av densamma. Med kraft anklagar han läkemedelsföretagen för girighet och psykiaterna för flathet. I mars i år gästade han Sverige.

JAG MÅSTE ERKÄNNA att jag ofta har svårt att stanna hela tiden på heldagsföreläsningar. Det är inte alltid som både innehåll och presentation fångar. Så var inte fallet för mig med Allen Frances. Han var en person som höll mitt intresse uppe under hela dagen utan att visa en enda powerpointbild eller video. Jag fick lyssna på en person som var djupt kunnig och engagerad i psykiatrins utveckling ända sedan shamanernas och antikens tid. Det visade sig att det inte är särskilt mycket nytt under solen. På ett personligt, prestigelöst och humoristiskt sätt, på ett vardagligt språk, framförde han nog så utmanande åsikter och erfarenheter. Jag tror hans självkritiska och icke-konfrontativa sätt gjorde att de flesta kunde svälja hans ganska pessimistiska budskap.

Några spridda anteckningar från Allen Frances föreläsning:

Diagnoserna dödade familjeterapin

Vi lär inte av historien. Vi fortsätter att upprepa våra misstag. Gäller inte minst inom psykiatrin

Placeboeffekten är den bästa medicinen och ju dyrare - desto mer effektiv är den.

Dr Spyker, som forskade kring diagnoser, fick i uppdrag att upprätta psykiatrins nedsolkade rykte genom att utarbeta DSM-III i början av 70-talet. Den sålde oerhört bra även utanför professionella kretsar. Den bidrog i hör grad till att psykoanalysen och familjeterapin förlorat i betydelse och den ligger bland annat bakom uppsvinget för KBT.

Spyker samlade en grupp experter som skulle titta på existerande diagnoser och även utveckla nya. De träffades varje dag och det gällde att prata för sin sak på ett övertygande sätt. De som pratade mest hade mest inflytande. Så skapas historia.

Ju fler diagnoser desto mer medicinering. Läkemedelsbolagen ser att tillhandahålla en ny medicin för varje ny diagnos genom aggressiv marknadsföring. KBT har tagit idén vidare genom att skapa en metod för varje diagnos. Placeboeffekten visar sig igen.

Medicinerna idag är inte mer effektiva idag än de som fanns för 40 år sedan. Det man lyckats med är att minska biverkningarna i en del fall.

Idag använder 20 procent av USA:s befolkning någon typ av psykofarmaka. Det har bland annat lett till att man idag har mer dödliga överdoser från receptutskrivna mediciner än från gatulangad narkotika.

Den alltmer utbredda diagnostiseringen av barn och unga leder till mer utbredd medicinering av dessa grupper. Det är ett gigantiskt och riskfyllt experiment eftersom vi inte vet vad dessa mediciner gör med växande hjärnor på längre sikt. Diagnosen ska alltid komma sist. Först ska man pröva alla möjliga åtgärder och insatser innan man gör en sådan utredning. Barn är också mycket svåra att utreda eftersom de utvecklas hela tiden. Diagnosen är här ännu tydligare en färskvara.

Vi måste få tillbaks ett mer humanistiskt inslag i behandlingen och inte sträva efter att vara så "hög-teknologiska". Vi måste återvända till det grundläggande och inte göra mer än vad som är befogat. Överdiagnostisering och övermedicinering har blivit resultatet av kommersiella krafters intåg, minskade resurser ibland annat skolan samt att normalitetsbegreppet blivit allt snävare i vår kultur.

Bengt Weine

OMBEDD SKRIVA NED några synpunkter som stuckit ur från Allen Frances exposé har jag valt att nämna några trådar som fångats upp under dagen. Väl medveten om att ett mer grundläggande referat sker från annat håll. Särskilt då med sikte på vad som återges i DSM-5 och som uppfattats som avvikande från det normala i dagens trend att snäva in området normalitet och stöpa om det i flera underrubriker möjliga att diagnostisera och i förlängningen tillföra medicin.

Det jag inte förväntat mig höra vid hans föreläsning, men väl igenkänningsbart, är Frances påpekande att familjeterapin idag har hamnat i bakvattnet. Med andra ord är det tufft, svårt att hålla en vettig position och förkunna "sitt"

jämfört med andra insatser. Människan som gruppvarsele, knuten till ett sammanhang har fått mindre relevans, nu när den enskilda individen kan brytas ned till olika kemiska beståndsdelar och behandlas utifrån nya sjukdomsförklarande epitet. Då gäller inte detta: att hålla tassarna borta! Inte ens när vi vet att 1/3 blir bättre av sig själva, 1/3 lika med stand by och 1/3 genom en insats.

Glädjande nog berör Frances mitt favoritämne matchning och påstår framt att teorier är mindre viktiga än just hur relationen utformas. Han tar fasta på ett begrepp som jag trodde gått ur modet, nu när allt ska coachas. Med denna utsaga vill han hävda att mycket av godo kan ske bara vi har en match-

ning som stämmer. Det låter bekant och får mig att minnas hans kollega Karl Tomm, som vid sitt Sverigebesök 1998 deklarerade att när det var möjligt helst undvika att använda sig av diagnoser samtidigt som han tog fasta på att det inte finns något som heter motstånd i samtal utan hör hemma i begreppet mismatchning. Eller med Frances återkommande ord: Har vi en hammare så ser vi bara spikar. Som exempel på detta välkända fenomen nämner han hur frågor kan ställas till barn i förskolan kring temat sexövergrepp och hur dessa frågor inte sällan genererar förväntade svar. Som man frågar får man svar.

Barbro Bohm knuten till vårdcentraler i Stockholmsområdet

DEN 27 MARS hade vi en mycket uppskattad dag med en formidabel föreläsare. Allen Frances gjorde initialt en exposé över medicinens och psykiatris historia över 2500 år innan han kom in på DSM-systemet, dagens situation med massiv överförskrivning av psykofarmaka till dom som han menade inte skulle ha diagnoser utan hade bekymmer med livet. Samtidigt menade han också att det, åtminstone i USA, har skett en kolossal förskjutning med betoning på de som lönar sig och från de som är ordentligt sjuka, är för dyra och inte lönar sig. Antalet psykiatriska sjukhusplatser har sjunkit de senaste åren från 760 000 till ca 60 000 och de flesta sjuka finns nu i fängelserna.

På frågan om det fanns något hopp så jämförde han läkemedelsindustrin med tobaksföretagen och där har det trots allt hänt väldigt mycket. Även om läkemedelsindustrin har enorma mängder pengar, så hoppades han att det så småningom skulle ske en förändring, speciellt mot bakgrund av att de flesta psykofarmaka, för dem som har livsproblem, inte har mycket annat än biverkningar, åtminstone på längre sikt. Antalet människor som i USA dör på grund av intoxicationer med psykofarmaka är betydligt högre än de som dör på grund av överdosering av narkotika.

För dem som är intresserade av den här diskussionen, så har Svend Brinkmann, dansk psykolog och filosof skrivit ett mycket intressant kapitel i en bok: Det diagnosticerade livet.

MEN HUR GÖR DU för att undvika att bli cynisk, frågade jag. Vaddå, jag är ju cynisk, svarade han.

Inte undra på det. Han berättar att han hade de allra bästa uppsåten med sitt arbete inom DSM 3 och 4. Tanken var att skapa ett språk, koncensus kring hur vi talar om psykiatriska diagnoser.

- Vi borde vidga begreppen kring ADHD. sade någon. Det är ju så många som inte passar in i den gamla diagnosen men som borde få hjälp, fyllde en annan in med. Så dom vidgade begreppet och vips ökade antalet ADHD-diagnoser med 1000 procent.

-Vad vi inte förstod var att föräldrar, läkare, lärare, läkemedelsproducenter och många andra grupper skulle använda DSM för helt andra syften än vi hade



Allen Frances på Ersta. Foto: Mårten af Ekenstam

Det var lite synd att det kom så lite folk från barnpsyk, socialtjänst och skola och jag vet inte om vi kan göra mer för att försöka skapa lite mer engagemang. Det kom många från vuxenpsykiatri och det kan vi tacka Herman

Holm för, som verkligen engagerat sig i att få folk att tänka och kanske handla annorlunda.

Jag vet ju att många där ute är upprörda över det som händer.

Ulf Korman

tänkt oss. säger Allen och fortsätter med att säga att han är förtvivlad över att ha bidragit till den enorma överdiagnostikeringen.

Överhuvudtaget är Allen Frances ångerrfull, på ett lagom avspänt och underhållande sätt. Han hade inte en aning om att läkemedelsindustrin skulle utnyttja DSM-gruppens arbete så utstuderat.

Det finns inte snyggare människor än läkemedelsförsäljarna, berättar Allen, och dom paras ihop med läkarna på ett oerhört sofistikerat sätt. Allt för att sälja så mycket preparat som möjligt. Och vilka preparat som helst. Exempelvis ett medel mot bipoläritet som gav den hopplösa bieffekten att patienten somnade djupt. Då ändrade man förpackningen och sålde det som sömnmedel i stället

- utan att ha en aning om hur det egentligen fungerade och vilka andra biverkningar det hade.

Nästan ingenting av det som Allen talar om är nyheter för mig men jag blir ändå upprörd när han berättar. Det är något i hans sätt; lugnt, mjukt, litet humoristiskt med små exempel insprängda här och där. Övertygande. Och spränglärt.

Ständigt återkommer han till att vårdindustrin nu gjort helt normala mänskliga uttryck till sjukdomar som ska behandlas med mediciner. 10 000 barn mellan 2 och 4 år behandlas med ADHD-medicin i USA i dag. Sorg behandlas med lugnande medicin.

Det är klart jag blir upprörd.

Mårten af Ekenstam

Svårt vilket som

Svårt att vara gud från 2013 blev Aleksei Germans sista film. När han dog, 74 år gammal, hade han bakom sig bara sex filmer, som kom med långa mellanrum. En del såg German som jämbördig med Tarkovskij, men de sovjetiska myndigheterna hade inte mycket till övers för hans skapelser. Hemma visades de sparsamt, om alls. Oheroiska, okonventionellt berättade, närmare livet än ideologin – det passade inte. (Och skulle för övrigt inte heller passa i Putins Ryssland, om man tittar på den lista över godkända filmteman som ryska kulturministeriet nyligen tillkännagav.) Någon distribution utomlands att tala om blev det inte heller. Efter Sovjetunionens fall fick ändå hans (mar)drömspelsartade *Khrustaljov – min bil!* (1998) representera Ryssland på Cannesfestivalen. Martin Scorsese blev förtjust, men lyckades inte övertyga övriga jurymedlemmar så det blev ingen Guldpalm. På den kommersiella marknaden var filmens absurda och vildvuxna berättelse om ett par livsöden några dagar under Stalintidens terror för udda för att ha en chans.

Svårt att vara gud var Germans favoritprojekt, planerat sedan länge men försenat av både politiska och ekonomiska skäl. Filmen bygger på en science-fictionroman från 1964 av bröderna Arkadij och Boris Strugatskij. Det är inte svårt att i skildringen av förföljelse av intellektuella se en kommentar till läget i

Sovjetunionen då, när tövädersperioden efter Stalins död var förbi.

Någon gång i framtiden skickas ett antal samhällsforskare till planeten Arkanar. Den är bebodd av människor som är som vi, men man har bara kommit till en variant av medeltiden. Renässansen har inte inträffat, får vi höra. Vetenskapsmännen är där för att observera, inte ingripa. Hur ser den mänskliga historiens naturliga utveckling ut?

I ett underbart nyansrikt svartvitt foto skildras, med magnifik och ibland kväljande detaljrikedom, en medeltidstillsvar där människorna i stor utsträckning betar sig vedervärdigt mot varandra. Miljön, trånga, vindlande borgar i mer eller mindre oupphörligt regn, är både suggestiv, skrämmande och beklämmande. Bilden vi får av det dagliga livet ger plats åt mer gyttja, skit, urin och snor än i någon annan film jag känner till. Planetens befolkning består på ett välbekant sätt av styrande, underlydande och förtryckta. Systematiska förföljelser av dem som läser eller skriver har pågått länge. Det förekommer våld och blod också, och en del tortyr, men mindre än man kan se i många filmer på den vanliga biorepertoaren.

Huvudpersonen är en av forskarna, som kallas Don Rebata. Han anpassar sig i samhällslivet som planerat, håller sig med slavar och betar sig långt ifrån alltid hyggligt, även om han har trevliga

och sympatiska drag. Det finns i hans tillsvar också öar av kärlek och vänskap. På sin klarinett river han då och då av jazzimprovisationer, en svidande skön mix av eufori och nostalgi – outhärdligt enligt Arkanarbefolkningen. Han rider omkring i sin (hur det nu går till) ständigt bländande vita skjorta och är skicklig med svärdet. Till skillnad från människorna runt sig ogillar han att döda – han nöjer sig, när det behövs, med att hugga av öron. Han har rykte om sig att härstamma från en gud. Han verkar klara av att navigera i det mer eller mindre kaotiska maktspelet mellan olika hov, arméer och falanger som sätter ramarna för överlevnad på Arkanar.

”De gråa”, ett slags kombinerad armé och hemlig polis, med specialinriktning att utrota fritt tänkande, är på väg att få en betydande maktposition. En uppenbar parallell till terrorn i Stalintidens Sovjet (ledaren för ”De gråa” heter Don Reba, i en tidigare version Rebija, anagram på Berija, ökad NKVD-chef under Stalin) men totalitarism är ju inte en uteslutande rysk eller kommunistisk företeelse. Tar ”De gråa” över riskerar den gnutta av intellektuellt liv som överlevt undangömd i hörn och vrår att sopas bort.

Det vetenskapliga uppdraget är att observera, men till slut väljer Rebata att handla. **Svårt att vara gud** hade först arbetsnamnet ”Krönika över Arkanar-massakern” – och massakern inträffar



ERSTA
SKÖNDAL
HÖGSKOLA



Uppdragsutbildning för yrkesverksamma

Familje- och relationsorienterad psykoterapiutbildning
– med inriktning mot språkssystemiskt och narrativa traditioner

45 högskolepoäng, ht 2015-vt 2017 (motsvarande steg 1)

www.esh.se/uppdrag • uppdrag@esh.se • 08-555 051 19



också, men utanför bild. ”De gråa” slås ner, men det går inte att veta om det kanske bara är tillfälligt. Rebata väljer att stanna på Arkanar i stället för att återvända hem. I slutscenen är han på väg någonstans på landsbygden, tillsammans med några medarbetare, småpratar, låter klarinetten uttrycka vad han förmodligen känner. ”Jag får ont i magen av den där musiken” klagar ett barn som går förbi.

Leder Rebatas ingripande till att det blir bättre för människorna på Arkanar? Det finns inget svar, inget facit. Skulle vetenskapen kunna bidra till en utveckling som förbättrar förhållandena? Kanske det, men Rebata väljer bort den vetenskapliga metoden som förhållningssätt. Om vetenskaplig kunskap och överblick förutsätter distansering och icke-deltagande observation får det vara.

Intrigen i romanförlagan är inte så krånglig, men Germans 3 timmar långa filmversion är mindre action och mer som om Beckett dramatiserat en av Brueghels helvetesvisioner. Allt är bit för

bit begripligt, men sammanhangen går inte att bringa ordning i. Saker händer hela tiden, i alla hörn av bilden: förföljelser, konspirerande, festande, skojigheter, förtroliga samtal, avrättningar. Det är inte möjligt att fånga den här tillvaron i en formel, allt detta krälände, myllrande och surrande som är livet medan det pågår.

Svårt att vara gud är liksom Khrustaljov, min bil! en vanvettig tripp, rakt på, huvudstupa, utan möjlighet för åskådaren att hinna analysera vad som händer och varför, utan sammanfattning eller förklaring. Det historiska förloppet bara dånar fram, tar inte paus, har inget budskap och det finns varken utväg ur eller lösning på det. Bara, vare sig vi vill det eller inte, möjligheten att välja, att handla, mer eller mindre moraliskt (ja – vad det nu är), under omständigheter och utifrån förutsättningar som vi aldrig kan få riktigt grepp om. Aleksei German var både före och efter Sovjetstatens sammanbrott trogen sin egen vision, kompromisslöst personlig, och ställde

sig vid sidan av ideologiska uppdrag – oavsett om de var för eller mot vad det nu må vara.

Om du ser ner i avgrunden länge nog, hävdade Nietzsche, så kommer avgrunden att titta ner i dig. Så det är på egen risk man kan välja att se Svårt att vara gud. Filmen har visats en gång i Sverige, på Göteborgs filmfestival 2014, men den finns nu också på en rysk DVD (Трудно быть Богом – Hard to be a god) med engelsk textning. Det gör också den fantastiska Khrustaljov, min bil!

”Jag står ensam, allt dränks i falskhet. Livet är inte att vandra över en äng”, heter det i en dikt av Boris Pasternak. I en scen i Svårt att vara gud deklamerar Don Rebata, klädsamt lutad mot en pelare, dikten där raderna ingår. Han låtsas att han själv skrivit dem, för att – för övrigt utan framgång – försöka imponera på en ännu överlevande diktare på planeten. Det är svårt att vara gud, men människa är inte heller lätt.

Göran Nordström

Jesper Juul

WHEN ONE PARENT IS MORE INFLUENTIAL THAN THE OTHER THE INTUITIVE CONTACT

A CONNECTEDNESS BEYOND BONDING

ESSAY

© Jesper Juul, FamilyLab International, 2015.

INTRODUCTION

The following has been written because I have lost my normal voice and can no longer travel and teach as I used to. For many years I have been apprehensive about writing about it mainly due to my concerns that divorcing parents might use this phenomenon against each other and their children. I have very often given small lectures and had lengthy dialogues with parents and professionals on this subject, but for many reasons I always preferred to share it in an oral form. I felt more comfortable when I was able to take the time I and the groups needed, because I knew that it was a genuine surprise and revelation to many.

Another reason is that the idea of a special, existential connection between a child and one of its parents is without scientific basis - at least as far as I know. No scientists have been aware of the phenomenon or they have not found it important enough to study in depth.

All I have to offer is a lifetime as psychotherapist for individual adults, groups and families. It took me many years to overcome my own skepticism and I remember frequently reminding myself of the old saying, "When you have a hammer everything start looking like a nail!" in the process.

So my reason for writing this essay is not to convince you that I'm right. I have no need to for that. My motive is twofold: to inspire the reader to see her and himself and their children in a different light and to get the feedback and personal experiences, which they are willing to share with me. And, who knows, maybe even tickle a scientist or two?

Just a few hours ago I was counseling two parents on-line in relation to their concerns about their three-year-old daughter. The daughter was timid, did not really want to play with other children etc.

Both parents had a tendency to overprotect their daughter and their genuine empathy had created a relationship, where the girl's emotions and opinions were no longer merely a guide for her parents but an indisputable leader. This is a very common phenomenon in modern families and only when we know its composition in each family can we successfully show them a healthier path for all involved.

During our conversation it came up that the mother often felt uneasy around strangers and I asked if there was an especially close relationship between her and her daughter and suggested that this might be important in their attempts to care for her in a relevant way. The mother immediately dismissed my suggestion as "crap". She understood my question as an attempt to blame her for her daughter's difficulties. When I pointed out that this was not the issue - that she was not to blame for her daughter's difficulties but on the contrary might be instrumental in helping the girl, she was able to reflect on the matter. In the end it made sense to both her and her husband and she recognized the potential for mutual personal growth hand in hand with the girl.

If I was right in this particular case, the mother has a much bigger potential for guiding and helping their daughter than the father. Hopefully the following will explain why. Up to this point the father had been protecting his wife in different ways. He has been compensating for her anxieties and taken over where she felt inadequate. Since this is his way of loving he is bound to repeat the pattern in relation to their daughter and in this way anxiety will be passed on as the only known coping mechanism.

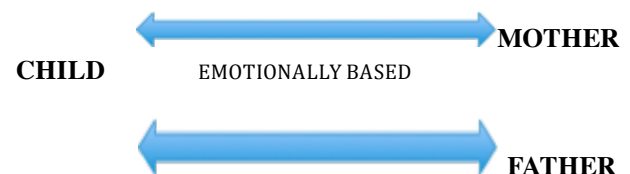
If, on the other hand Mother realizes her superior role in facilitating her daughter's development and is willing step out of her own comfort zone for her daughters sake, both of them will benefit and the father can make the switch from caring for and protecting "his girls" to enjoying them. This is albeit a very compromised version of what I aim to make clear in this essay - the huge potential of the intuitive contact, which exists between children and only one of their parents. Somebody else suggested the term "intuitive contact" and I'm uneasy with it - a little too much New age for me - but since I have not been able to come up with a more satisfying alternative I'll use it for now.

The full, constructive power of the intuitive contact unfolds as soon as both parent and child recognizes it's existence and especially when the other parent is able to support it. I have never met a young child or even a teenager who was not aware of it or recognized it immediately when described. Adults often need more time either because they are skeptical, doesn't want to be "special" or emotionally overwhelmed. The latter is often the case in families where fathers have lived in the belief that his wife was "better around the children" as in example 2 below.

If the content of this essay makes sense for you as a private person and/or as a professional counselor or therapist it is my hope that you will continue to meet other people with an open, interested and emphatic mind. Do not attempt to define relationships between others but share your awareness with them and leave it to them to decide how to process it.

Emotional and intuitive contact

This is a simple graphic illustration of the phenomenon:



In both relationships there is generally speaking mutual love and a desire to be of value to the other. When I speak of love I refer to the love in their hearts and minds and not to the quality of what is going on *between* them. In this case the relationship between child and father is visually stronger because it is enriched with an intuitive contact, which has a very strong existential element.

The father is a stronger, more influential role model in terms of the inner and outer behavior patterns the child will develop. It can just as well be the other way around with the mother as the designated parent.

Many adult children discover this only when their parents pass away. If the father was the designated parent it is sad when the mother dies and they mourn and miss her. When the father

dies they feel completely alone in the world. “For better or worse he always accompanied me, but from now on I walk alone” as a daughter once said it.

I believe that one of the important reasons why so many of us discover this connectedness late in life or not at all is the dominating taboo that we should love all of our children in the same way and one as much as the other. Every day thousands of children all over the world are asking their parents, “Do you love my sister more than me? And, “Why do you love my brother more?” Many are hushed to silence and others sense the taboo and struggle with the mystery within themselves.

The same is true for many parents who feel guilty because their connectedness with one child seems much stronger than with the other(s). Because they don't have any other words for this experience they think of it as love.

A mother once reacted to my attempt to explain what the intuitive contact is with tears of relief.

“I have always felt so bad because I'm thinking of my own family as two families. I have kept my maiden name and my nine-year-old son and I form the Johnson family and my husband and our fourteen-year-old daughter are the Campbells. It is clear to me now what one of the differences is.

When I ask my daughter to help me in the garden we often end up having a conflict because I have to tell her everything again and again. When my son is helping me he does everything right the first time and remembers it till the next time. Working with him is just so much easier.”

The most important thing to understand is that the intuitive contact has nothing to do with love. It does not belong in an emotional category and does not mean that this father loves his child more than the mother or his other children nor that the child loves her or his father more than the mother.

There is no reason for jealousy although the other parent sometimes has good reasons to be envious.

Over the past few decades Developmental Psychology has discovered “Attachment” as a vital factor in the relationships between children and their parents and rightfully so. The intuitive contact seems to exist independently of the success of the attachment process during the first four-five years of a child's life and co-existence with the parents. It has the potential of starting an attachment process at any point in time.

So if it's not love and independent of attachment what is it then?

According to my experience and the stories told by hundreds, the most accurate description I can find is this (described from the child's perspective): An existential connectedness, through which the child learns how the parent is coping with life's challenges and blessings and integrates these skills and patterns in its own being.

If this is all there is to it then nothing much is new. There is however more: When the parent is not available – i.e. dead, “never” at home or for other reasons not present in the child's life – it is almost impossible for the other parent to become a role model and therefore the child grows up in an existential vacuum and a severely limited sense of self.

One example is how deeply one child misses a parent after a divorce whereas it's sibling just misses the parent it only gets to be with a weekend now and then. The first child has been deprived of an existential need and her sibling “only” of a loved one. The first child is unhappy, lost and lonely. The other child is basically OK and adapts to the new reality.

No matter how much the child objects emotionally to parts of the parent's behavior – violence and alcoholism for instance – it will most likely develop similar behavior – i.e. a different kind of aggressive/self-destructive behavior. Both symptoms are external manifestations of how the individual is coping with internal conflict and pain. If the parent decides to get help and learn new coping strategies, the child will benefit.

Often the parent is either unaware of her or his own behavior patterns, cover them up, try to compensate or lie about them, which of course makes it extremely difficult for the child to feel good about itself. Another well-known strategy is that parents try to prevent their own behavior to “rub off” on the child and therefore promote and preach better ways – falsely assuming that existential development is a primarily cognitive process. This strategy places the child in a severe existential conflict and diminishes its ability to trust authorities.

The learning and integration process rarely takes place in the form of the parents “teaching”

It is more similar to “Osmosis” in the plant world. The best circumstances are a continuous contact within the same home. When this is not possible – due to divorce, parents travelling, work away home, city or country – it becomes difficult or even impossible for the child to learn and for the parent to enjoy.

Important: No outsider – family, friend or therapist – can determine whether or not the intuitive contact is a fact in a given parent-child-constellation. It can be suggested by others but only confirmed by the adult and child in question.

How does it happen?

When is this special connection made and who is choosing it – child, parent or both?

The short answer is, that I have no idea. I have known examples, which are beyond belief and others, which seem completely straightforward. Over a period of 15 years I met many young and adult adoptees from different countries and many of them had the urge to go back and find their parents (most often mothers). Among those who managed to find their biological mothers there were around 50% who found it a very meaningful experience, which gave them an identity they had missed and a lifelong contact with their parents and their extended families. For the other half the experience was satisfying because they got many of their questions answered but the relationships never became close and meaningful in the same existential sense.

The adoptees in the first half always nodded eagerly when I talked about the intuitive contact whereas the second half did not recognize the phenomenon. Interestingly enough none of them were able to identify one of their adoptive parents as a significant one.

One possible conclusion is that there has to be a biological bond between parent and child.

Can we imagine that those adoptees, which were not experiencing any intuitive contact with their mothers had it with their fathers whom they never met?

Example 1

I once met an eleven-year-old boy, who had been depressed (not merely sad or unhappy) for about a year. When his mother became pregnant with him the father immediately withdrew from the relationship and announced that he would never have any contact with or responsibility for the child. The mother had accepted this and never tried to contact him.

They boy had asked questions about his father when he was around 3, 6 and 9 years old and his mother had told him the truth

and this had put his mind at ease. Now the boy was inconsolable and had lost his desire to live.

With the mothers permission I wrote a letter to the father explaining the situation and asked him to visit, call or write his son and personally confirm his position. The father decided to write and two days after reading the letter the boy was out of his depression. When I checked with them three years later the boy had established a very powerful relationship with his male soccer coach and was as happy as the next teenager. His mother had realized that there were limitations in her ability to help her son and was still struggling to come to terms with her choice to support the fathers position eleven years earlier.

It seems possible then that the intuitive contact – albeit not it's benefits – can exist when there is no physical closeness and no interaction between parent and child.

I have experienced many other examples along similar lines, when I worked with groups of single mothers from the bottom of society over a period of ten years. In those days shared custody was not a possibility and 99% of the time mothers would have full custody of their children. Many of the fathers were more or less irresponsible, drank too much too often and had little sense of commitment to other people. Their children would not see or hear from them for months and suddenly they would call and insist to see the child. They would arrange a pick-up time and never show up or they would come, drive the child to their own mother or sister and go drinking.

Around half of the children in this painful situation would give up after a year or two and refuse future contact with their fathers. The other half would insist on keeping the contact in spite of pressure from their mothers, grandparents, siblings and social workers. These were also the children where the mothers always felt that no matter how hard they tried they were unable to influence their thinking and behavior. No matter how much professional support was given to these mothers and their children it would never really help. After a few days or weeks the mothers would feel helpless again and their children would be just as lonely and desperate as before the intervention. The costs in terms of self-esteem and self-confidence for both were very high.

I was often able to move things to a more constructive level by acknowledging the child's experience and say, "I know that you miss your father and that is bad enough. But you also really NEED him and that is much worse, because it makes you feel really lonely and lost." (Most children recognizes the difference between existential and social loneliness without further explanation).

More often than not the child would react immediately by crying and nodding and its tears would be tears of relief and thankfulness for the fact that somebody finally helped them with the relevant words, which they could not possibly have found in their own vocabulary.

"What can I do?" they and their mothers would ask. To the children I would say, "The best thing you can do is to realize what you already feel – that you are alone. You will have to find your own ways in life and be more responsible for yourself and your choices than any child should be. Your mother and other adults can guide you and give you suggestions, but they cannot be what your father should have been for you – and you can still make a very good life for yourself".

You might think that this is a lot of words for a three, six or ten-years-old, but they convey the right message, which child-

ren appreciate. They are not longing for intellectual understanding but for meaning and for the feeling of being "seen" rather than looked upon, observed and evaluated or judged for their behavior.

To the mothers, "I know how much you love your daughter/son and would love to help her/him, but you cannot do it in the same way as you can with your other child. You must try to live with the fact that in spite of your love and caring your child is lonely. He will accept your guidance and feedback if you give it to him in a clear and straightforward way, but if you put pressure on him or try to manipulate he will turn his back to you. You cannot have the kind of power, parents expect to have but if you respect that you can have a lot of influence."

Many a mother cannot grasp the difference between power and influence but this message helps them discharge their guilt and gives them something, which they actually can do for their child and thus feel valuable for its life again. It often took time and lengthy dialogues before these mothers were able to restrain their instinctive desire to comfort the child or make reassuring and optimistic promises. For many of them this was their first encounter with the fact that not everything, which comes from loving intentions, feels like love.

We might never learn how, when and why this special relationship is established and maybe it is not so important. For me the importance has always lied in the fact that a mutual recognition of its nature has an unbelievable healing potential, which is far more powerful than any kind of professional therapy or pedagogical strategies and methods.

Example 2

A family of three came to see me. They were: mother, teacher and a very warm, extrovert and lively woman; father, accountant, introvert and very sincere and responsible; daughter Elisabeth seven years old, pretty and with a sad face. The way they positioned themselves gave the first small hint of what turned out to be crucial. Mother sat alone in one small sofa, father and daughter in the other with app half a meter between them.

M: We have come to see you because Elisabeth has changed personality almost completely over the past two years. She used to be very cheerful, outgoing and humoristic and now she is depressed or maybe melancholy is a better word.

My first reaction was textbook routine:

J: I would like to know if anything happened around the time when you noticed this change?

10

M: Oh yes! First there was a terrible accident in her kindergarten. A little boy got strangulated and died on the slide, when his anorak got stuck on a bolt. Elisabeth was inside at the time and we have never been able to clarify if she saw something from the window.

E: I'm not really sure whether I saw something or we have been talking so much about it that I just imagine it. Now I never really think about it anymore.

M: The community provided the kindergarten with a crisis-psychologist. She told the parents of the children who were on the playground that they should only talk with their children about it if they asked questions. We were told not to talk about it, which we felt was wrong so we talked a lot with Elisabeth about it during the following weeks.

This happened in August and in September my mother got cancer. She came to stay with us and died within two months. In December my husband's father died suddenly from a hearth

attack, which was a chock to all of us. Especially to my husband because he was very close to his father

J: Tell me Elisabeth, how was it for you when your grandmother died?

E: (with a smile) I was very happy that she stayed with us and very sad when she died.

J: And when your grandfather died?

E: (In tears and shaking) The most awful was that I never got to say good-bye to him.

Elisabeth moved close to her father and they were both crying for a while. Mother were watching them with a lot of love and sympathy.

J: Your story and what I have learned from observing all of you leave me with a big question. Very often I meet families, where sad and painful things are not talked about, so we talk about them and it helps everybody to move on. In your family, you (mother) have all the wisdom and tools to deal with this kind of things, and Elisabeth's answers to my questions are relevant and healthy. So why has her joy of life left her soul?

M: Well I told my husband to take Elisabeth to the cemetery and say their farewells at his father's grave because he has the same pain.

F: (embarrassed) Yes, but that's not how I am.

J: He's right. Your idea is a good one, but it is also a typical feminine as well as a common psychotherapeutic idea. A lot of psychotherapy is based on so-called feminine values, so it does not always work for everybody. How are you dealing with your grief?

F: My father and I were very close and we talked everyday on the phone. He was a lawyer and we mostly talked about professional issues. I miss him terribly and I'm ashamed to admit that I still talk with him several times during the day. (As he talked his daughter moved closer to him and her eyes were glued to his face and her ears grew to double size)

At this point I fetched my flipchart and explained about the intuitive connection. The whole family was very attentive and both Elisabeth and her mother were nodding from time to time.

It is my idea that this connection is between you (F) and Elisabeth and if that is true, it means that you hold the key to her vitality.

The mother laughed out loud and said,

M: Oh yes, you bet you are spot on. Since the minute she was born she never took her eyes off of him.

Elisabeth looked very happy and clung even more to her father who was sobbing and covering his face with both hands. After a few minutes in silence he said:

F: I never thought about it. I feel in my hearth that it's true when you say it, but I always had the idea that my wife is better with children.

12

J: She might very well be with children in general, but in relation to Elisabeth you are her most important role model.

F: But what can I do?

J: Whenever you tug her in at night take a few minutes to share your feelings about your father and what you have been talking to him about.

He looked at me with disbelief,

F: Is that really all?

Elisabeth sat so close to him and with her head in is armpit that he was unable to see her smile happily and nodding in agreement with me.

J: Yes, that's all.

After a few more exchanges we finished the session and I never saw them again. Six months later I received a letter from the mother describing how Elisabeth had started on the path back to her old self the same day, they saw me and that she was now completely OK again.

Comment

In this case the profound commitment of all family members, their emotional maturity as well as intellectual flexibility, was very helpful. In other families it sometimes takes a few sessions before one or both parents can distinguish between mutual love and the intuitive contact. As long as they are stuck with this they are self-centered and unable to mobilize their empathy.

Sometimes when fathers are the significant parent, mothers get stuck in feeling that it is "unfair", because they always took care of the child almost singlehandedly and have been holding a grudge against their husbands for a long time. Sometimes even to the point where they question the love of these fathers towards their children. I have however also met fathers who grabbed the possibility to justify their absence when it became clear that their wives had the intuitive connection to a particular child. There are as many different reactions as you can imagine including maybe the most painful, where a child experiences the special connection to a parent who refuses to recognize his or her importance.

Troubled children

Many families have experienced how differently their children have reacted to a divorce and the fact that they were suddenly deprived of the possibility to be with one of their parents full-time. Out of three children two are missing their mother or father on an emotional level. They are mourning their loss over a couple of years and often miss the absent parent. Their lives and psychosocial development continues on a natural and healthy path apart from a dive in school performance, which mostly lasts app. a year. For the third child – who has the intuitive contact – the separation is almost unbearable – emotionally as well as existentially. They are often sad or melancholy (frequently misdiagnosed as "depression") and tend to withdraw or react aggressively, when the parent in charge tries to comfort or convince them that everything is going to be okay.

Example 3

Charlotte is fourteen and I meet with her and her mother as a part of a television series about youngsters who are having difficulties living up to the expectations from schools, parents and various social programs and institutions as well as their own (often secret) desire to learn. My role is to help each family discover what they can do to help their child.

C: I should probably tell you that I'm in the process of being diagnosed with ADHD.

J: And why is that?

C: Because I have been unable to concentrate on my school-work and homework for almost three years now.

J: What happened in your life back then?

M: Her father and I divorced because he found a new woman.

C: I visit him every second weekend, but I don't really enjoy it. His new wife decides everything and she insists that my father

and I cannot do things on our own. It always have to everybody – she has two small children – or not at all.

Charlotte was visibly in pain when she talked about her time with her father's new family. She cried silently for a few minutes.

C: I don't really know why I'm still so sad. I know that mom and dad are never going to live together again and it's three years ago....I should have moved on.

J: (I told her very shortly about the intuitive contact) I think you have this kind of relation to your father, so you are not only missing him, you need him and you need time alone with him.

Charlotte burst into tears, her upper body collapsed onto the table and for a while she was crying her heart out. She then looked up with a completely changed facial expression and said,

C: Tell the producer that I want a copy of this session to show my Dad!! Thank you for telling me this, I think I can learn now.

The last two weeks of the learning program proved her right. She was able to focus and her short term memory worked again. She had been stuck in her mourning-process because she did not realize what she had lost. Like so many other kids with one of the modern diagnosis she was just traumatized and in need of being recognized as such.

Comment:

Charlotte had a submissive father, who was completely unaware of her need for him. A stepmother who were nor really interested, a very loving and caring mother, who felt utterly helpless and teachers who were unable to see the bigger picture. More and more professional adults were ganging up on her with plenty of good intentions, but everybody got stuck on the emotional level (I miss my Dad) and thus could not be helpful. This happens to more and more children and adolescents: when nothing of what we do to help is helpful, we react by doing more of the same and label the child as not motivated instead of confronting our own limitations.

Example 4

William was nine years old and two minutes from being expelled from school because of his defiant and aggressive behavior towards his teachers. The fact that his school was the only one within miles was a huge problem for his mother, who was a single, divorced mother with three other children to care for as well.

Since their parents divorced two years earlier, William and two of his sisters had been travelling

(800 km to visit their father for a weekend twice a year. The father had a new family with two of his wife's children and a one-year old common child. The father was described to me as a stern, hardworking man with strict principles and little flexibility. One of these was, that there should not be any difference made between his biological children and his stepchildren. They should all be treated equally.

As his mother, sisters and I were talking, William walked back and forth in the other end of the room like a lion in a cage. Sometimes cursing and hammering a piece of chalk into a blackboard.

He had refused my invitation to join us from the beginning.

M: Two months ago William refused to visit his father although I know that he misses him. He claims that he will never go again. I don't know how to make sense of his behavior any more.

J: I have an idea. (I then started to explain about the intuitive contact and why I believed that

William had it with his father. William stood still in a corner and listened intensively.)

I think that William refuses to visit his father because he does not want to treat his children differently, but since their relationship is special it does not make sense for William to spend time with his father. (When I finished that sentence William pulled up a chair and joined us and I knew that my fantasy was a fact.)

I asked the mother if she felt comfortable explaining this to her ex-husband, which she did not.

Since there was a telephone in the room I offered to call the father. It took only a few sentences before the father began to sub.

F: I know what you are trying to say. I guess I always knew but I was too stubborn to admit it to myself. I wanted to be fair to my children and ended up being unfair to William. I would like to talk to him now, if it's ok with him.

The local school psychologist had witnessed the session and with his support, William was able to go back to school and later got a whole week alone with his father fishing in the mountains. His sisters were more than happy to oblige. Their personal puzzles had also become a little more complete.

Comment:

Williams mother was able to enjoy this revelation right away. Like so many other mums and dads, she always knew but never spoke about it. Williams father with all his strict principles and strong male-attitudes appeared to his son as a strong and powerful man who did not take any nonsense from anybody. His softer and warmer sides had been hidden from his families and maybe even from himself. William's pain manifested itself in a very "macho" behavior, because he had not (yet) had access to other ways of dealing with his emotions and experiences. His mother represented all the all the constructive alternatives, but William was not able to utilize them for his own being.

This session was a demonstration within a seminar for professionals and they spend the rest of the day reminiscing and discovering the patterns in their own families of origin as well the present ones. A gift from a courageous nine-year old who was brave enough to fight for his most urgent need and risk social exclusion.

Williams mother asked a very crucial question at the end of the session: Would it be better for William to live with his father? My answer was far from being clear:

- If his father did not sense or recognize their special contact, I'm not sure it would make a lot of difference in terms of helping Williams problems with adapting to school and relating to authorities. Fathers like his have an unfortunate tendency to respond to problems with blaming, lecturing, setting "boundaries" and installing consequences, which are making things worse and the children more lonely and alone.

- In a longer perspective it would most likely be better for him, simply because he would be able to integrate more of his fathers inner and outer behavior than he would otherwise be.

Two weekends per year is very far from enough and even one weekend per month plus two weeks of holidays is often more frustrating than helpful for all parties involved.

Many children feel this urgent need to live with the designated parents, which they are not legally allowed to live with. In the Scandinavian countries where more and more children from divorced families live half the time with one parent and half with the other, we often meet children around 11, 12, 13 who ask permission for a different solution, where they get to spend most of the time with the parent with whom they feel a special connection.

Very few of these children can verbalize their desire to change the agreed state of affairs. In cases where one or both parents are solely focused on their parental "right" to a certain percentage of their child's life and attention, children are in serious existential trouble. The girls still tend to become submissive, introvert and depressive and the boys develop psychosocial difficulties, which upsets the adult world. Both genders describe feelings of emptiness and a lack of meaning in their lives.

Example 5

Thomas is eight years old and his teacher is getting increasingly worried about his well-being. He has longer periods where he is quit and withdrawn and because his teachers treat him with compassion and respect, he has no difficulty sharing his thoughts and feelings with them. The statement was always the same: I miss my father and I wish he would come back to us.

Two years ago his parents divorced on the fathers initiative. His mother felt betrayed and was still living in denial – believing that her husband would come to his senses and return to his family.

After 16 months Thomas' father moved to another continent and planned to return for a few long visits every year. During their marriage he had allowed his wife to monopolize the parenting process and had taken refuge from her constant criticism. Consequently he distanced himself from his son as well.

I was asked to consult with Thomas' teacher and suggested that mother and son should be present. During our conversation I became more and more convinced that there was an intuitive contact between son and father. I did not want to create any more animosity on the mothers side, so I did not talk about my idea/phantasy, but asked permission to contact the father.

During a Skype Conference with the father I managed to make him aware of the nature of their relationship and he responded by regretting the fact that he had withdrawn and by realizing his own loss for the first time. We agreed that he should come back and share this with Thomas and establish the best contact possible under the given circumstances.

These dialogues between father and son turned out to be very constructive and two years later the situation is, that they spend minimum 2 x 1 month together. Thomas is feeling and doing much better, but is still sad weeks before his father's arrival and weeks after. He is now old enough to use

Skype and they often meet in this way.

Comment

The mutual realization of the special relationship between son and father has been a big relief for both of them, and Thomas' mother collaborates as much as she can. My guess is that Thomas will try to move to his fathers in a few years.

Example 6

Lisa is a five-year old girl living with her father. Her parents divorced when she was two and her mother has been struggling with a mental disorder for many years. She is heavily medicated and every now and then she commits herself to a psychiatric hospital for a few weeks. She loves her daughter to pieces but always knew that if she should live as a single mom, she would fail as a mother.

Unfortunately the majority of professionals involved with the mother have recommended, that

Lisa does not spend a lot of time with her mother and does not stay over night. Lisa's father actually disagrees intuitively (!), but find it difficult to go up against the more eloquent "experts".

Lisa's signals are very similar to Thomas' and even her kindergarten teachers recommend a minimum of contact with the mother, because they notice her unhappiness, when she has spend time with her. They fail to recognize it as a healthy reaction to the separation.

In this case the father asked me to step in by, and I chose to invite both parents, Lisa, three grandparents, Mothers social worker and the leader of the kindergarten. I started our meeting by giving a fifteen-minute orientation about the possible existence of an intuitive connection between a child and one of its parents.

Lisa was all ears and looked more and more happy and finally moved over at sat on her mother's lab.

Father had tears in his eyes and stated how he had always felt "inadequate" or "not enough" as a parent.

His mother said that she had always known this and that her son had this contact with her.

Lisa's mother was smiling and crying simultaneously. Smiling because she felt of validated as a mother for the first time and crying because she was afraid of the negative influence she might have.

F: does this mean that Lisa can spend more time with her mother?

J: Lisa can spend as much time with her mother as both of them can manage, but for many years to come she will need you to balance her mothers influence and to provide her with experiences, which her mother is unable to give her. Your ex-wife has a lot of empathy and wisdom and some severe limitations. Her wisdom will prevent her from harming Lisa.

L: Papa, I know that Mama is not well.

Lisa's last statement proved that she had inherited her mother's wisdom and it seemed an appropriate moment to end the session.

Comment:

I had a few talks with Lisa and her father during the following months and the good news was, that her whole network was now trying their best to support her instead of demonizing her mother.

They had all sensed the significance of the relationship but failed to recognize its nature and potential.

Troubled parents

As I have already pointed out the identification and acceptance of the intuitive contact can make an enormous difference especially for single parents or parents who live with their children part time.

Sometimes when a child, an adolescent and even an adult child is having trouble with social behavior, adjustment to school, learning difficulties, loneliness, drugs, the law, studies etc. one parent gets intensively and wholeheartedly involved in various attempts to help and support. But no matter how dedicated the parent is it simply does not help. In fact it is sometimes counterproductive and becomes a risk for the very relationship between parent and child. Either because both of them feel more and more failure, or because the parent is putting all the blame on the child.

Very often the many attempts to be of value to the child threatens the parents new relationship with another adult as well.

When this happens soon after a destructive divorce process, where both parents have abused a child as a weapon in their power struggle, two phenomenons occur. One as a result of the child's grief and difficulties adjusting to the new situation (two homes etc.). The sign is, that it takes the child a day or two to find its balance after each shift. This imbalance is not

recognized by the parents for what it is but merely interpreted as proof that the child is feeling terrible with the antagonist. The other occurs when a child lives most of the time with one parent in a more or less dysfunctional relationship, which (along with missing the significant parent) causes it to “misbehave” at home, outside or both. Teachers, psychologists, social welfare agents are often not recognizing the nature of the relationship and the child is defined as the problem. We must never forget that the child loves both parents and feels equally loyal and responsible for their wellbeing.

How to recognize and identify the intuitive contact

Whenever a phenomenon like “intuitive contact”, which many people recognize and find interesting, occurs two things tend to happen:

- One is that laymen as well as professionals ask for a general signs, which might “prove” the existence of (in this case) the intuitive contact.

- The other is the search for an answer to the question “why” is it like that? Is there a purpose

- or a meaning and if I don’t recognize it in my own family, does that mean that we are “wrong”?

The first question is easy for me to answer: I have never come across any objective signs. Even when I describe the intuitive contact to a family and the two people involved recognizes it and are able to utilize it, this is still a very subjective experience and the fact that it is shared by 2,3 or 5 people close to them does not make it an objective truth. My tendency is to trust peoples own perception no matter if it confirms my experience or not.

I’m pointing this out because we live in a time where everything must be based on evidence in order to be taken seriously. This demand almost excludes experience as a source of “knowledge”, which in my opinion is a sign of intellectual and spiritual poverty, but so be it. And again that might just be a convenient standpoint from a non-scientist?

A feasible first step in your own investigation is to reflect on your connectedness to each of your own parents. How did the saying go in your family: “You are the spitting image of your mother/father”, “You have your fathers looks and your mothers soul”? This might very well be true and the next step is to contemplate on the emotional state of this relationship. Was/is there a steady flow of emotional exchange between the two of you, or is this more true in your relationship with the other parent? Or look at your immediate family. Who is connected to whom and how does it manifest itself in words, body language, behavior etc.? Beware of the difference between having the intuitive contact and being branded as “Daddy’s princess”, “Mamma-boy”. These definitions are often misleading and have their own intriguing phenomenology.

Beware also that actual contact in the form of verbal exchange, physical closeness and outspoken interest – or lack of the same – from the parent is of minor importance. For many children the phenomenon of “absent fathers” has meant living in a life-long existential void often accompanied by severe emotional issues in close relationships. Regardless of age and gender the awareness of what was really missing often helps people to stand on more solid ground and explore the possibility of finding alternative role models. In order to be successful this must be a personal choice as opposed to being staged by others.

My best advice is to trust your intuition, gut-feeling and your observations. When a combination of those leads you to assume that the intuitive contact between two people does exist

and plays an important role in their lives, personal issues and interpersonal conflicts – just tell them and see how they react. Never try to convince any of them! That will merely feed your own ego.

If you are a parent and your child is 2-3 years old or more, you should also ask, “I often feel that I have a special connection to you. Do you feel something like that too?”

No matter what the answer/reaction is you can tell the child a little about your own experience and thoughts and maybe also, which of your own parents you were connected to in this way. Make it short and leave it to simmer. If you feel that the special connection is between your partner and your child, talk only with your partner about it! (The only exception from this rule is if the other parent is dead or has broken all contact with the child.)

The second question – why it is like that – I’m not able to answer and to be honest, I’m not so interested. We have all kinds of role models when we grow up. Some are important and leave lifelong imprints, others are intense and short and of a more social nature, so it is only natural that we also have existential ones. Don’t worry if you do not recognize latter within your own family.

Personally I had this connection with my father, but it was only “active” about five minutes when

I was seventeen and again a short moment minutes before he died. My own son had it with his mother and they both enjoyed it. He has it with his son and they are both aware of it.

What is a role model supposed to do?

However we look at it, all parents serve as role models for all their children. The reason is children’s desire and ability to *cooperate*, which I have described in a few books over the years (jesperjuul.com). It basically means that children are copying the inner and outer behavior of both parents, but not 50% from one and 50% from the other. A complex host of factors are involved, such as attachment/emotional closeness, the emotional, physical and mental availability of each parent etc.

Learning from a role model often includes striving for the opposite. My father was an artist at heart, but conservative parents and a dominating wife made him give up his painting soon after he and my mother married. I did the opposite in the sense that I never gave in to any direct attempts to push or manipulate me but steered my own course in life and yet every day I had to struggle with a faint shadow of submissiveness. My father was a very accurate man with a sometimes ridiculous obsession with details – and so am I. I can rise above this personality trait intellectually but never get rid of it.

In todays world where most children spend very little time (compared to what they would like) with their parents and therefore have limited possibilities to acquire the necessary life skills and wisdom through “Osmosis”, observing and experience. Parents and professional pedagogues are trying to substitute this organic learning process by using methods and strategies but with less than convincing results. Worst of all the adults tend to believe more and more in lecturing and preaching to their children and this never worked. Not even in the “good old days”. In this way children will at best learn how to *behave* but not how to *be*.

Since children’s need for parents as role models has not changed with the development of society, many children never get the possibility to build an inner foundation – be is more or less solid. As teenagers, young adults and adults we can have valuable role models outside our family, but as children we need

adults with whom we have a love-based relationship. Sometimes – but rarely – this can happen with a stepparent, aunt or uncle, grandparent or a foster parent.

In this context it might be very important for parents and others to be aware of the intuitive contact. It will certainly help their children and it will also specify what the significant parent can do and should refrain from doing instead of the more general advice “spend time with your child”.

Example 7

Five-year old Suzan got involved in too many conflicts in kindergarten. Her younger sister went to the same kindergarten and never got in trouble. For a while it helped to attach a male teacher to

Suzan's group but as soon as he was off duty the old pattern surfaced. The teachers felt that S's behavior might be related to a problem within her family and the parents agreed to consult with me.

Unfortunately they did not bring the two girls to our first session but two things became clear to me during our conversation:

- The family was under stress because the man and father worked so far from home, that he had to live away from home five days a week. This was a time of high unemployment so he did not really have a choice. He missed his family and felt guilty towards his wife and daughters. As far as S's behavior problem was concerned the parents had the same theory

as the teachers: Suzan was missing her father.

- During our meeting I was wondering if Suzan and her father had an intuitive connection because just missing a parent emotionally should not create such a disturbing change of behavior. Especially since their relationship was close and enjoyable for both of them.

Their second session included the two girls and it was obvious that there was a special bond between Suzan and her father, which everybody agreed to, when I suggested it. It turned out, that the fathers “mistake” was a simple and very loving one: he simply wanted to divide his time and attention equally between the girls when he was at home during weekends.

Every Saturday morning he would go to the petrol station to service and wash his car. Most mornings the girls were playing and he went alone thinking that it was better for them to play. I asked him to do test where he took the youngest one morning and the oldest the following Saturday.

The result was as expected. The little one got bored after fifteen minutes and wanted to go back home. Suzan had the opposite reaction. She was all eyes and ears and absorbed all her father's jokes and stories, which he exchanged with the other men in the line. She enjoyed a deeply meaningful hour with her most needed role model.

Once the father was able to see and recognize their special connection Suzan's behavior outside their home changed back to normal. I have no doubt that Suzan would have preferred to have her father available every day of the week, but there was a look in his eyes now (his wife pointed out) when he looked at her, which made her feel connected and seen and this in turn restored her balance.

Our common history is full of “absent” parents. Not only absent fathers who were always working or resting, but also mothers and fathers who had withdrawn into depressive states, drank too much and too often, suffered from various undiagnosed or unrecognized mental disorders. Since the

Middle Ages the wealthy, nobility and royalty have left the majority of contact with and care for their children to strangers – wet-nurses, governesses, boarding schools etc.

After World War 2 millions of children have been without fathers because these had to live and work in another country in order to take care of their families economically. Many of their children were not only lonely and separated from the designated parents but also living in extended families where their fathers were idealized heroes. The past few decades we are often meeting very troubled children and youth among emigrants, refugees and displaced people as well as among unaccompanied refugee children. We cannot reunite them with their absent or deceased parents nor make constructive role models out of their traumatized and victimized parents. These children have no existential anchor and rarely a meaningful cultural base and thus their status as social outcasts becomes the only identity.

The current problem for small children is often a deep frustration over the mixed signals they get from their parents, who are verbalizing their love and adoration all the time and are simultaneously preoccupied with smartphones, tablets etc. A similar frustration and insecurity derives from parents who are frequently using Marijuana and Hash or drinking too much. They are in the vicinity but not present and thus not available for what their children need the most: to be seen, heard and taken seriously. This is much more difficult for children to cope with than physical absence due to work, travel and divorce.

The most valuable thing a significant parent can do is not really to play with or entertain the child but rather to invite the child into her or his own life – chaws, hobby, work, pleasure – i.e. everything, which gives joy and meaning to the parent's life. So,

If you like walking in the forest, talk about why and what you experience. Answer all your child's questions, but do not teach biology.

If you love to bake go in the kitchen and begin. Talk about your passion for baking and do not make special arrangements for the child, just let it participate or watch you however it wants. For your child you and who you are is more interesting than baking.

If you enjoy going to the stadium and watch soccer, bring your child and share your experience.

If you are passionate about art, take your child to museums and galleries.

If you love to spend time with an elderly relative, bring your child along.

The essence is to make it possible for your child to discover how you think and feel, what your passions and fears are as well as your talents and shortcomings. Don't try to be “child-friendly” and ask it what it feels like doing all the time. Tell you child what you feel like and that you want her or him to tag along. As long as you do this, there is absolutely nothing wrong with doing things according to the child's wishes and desires as well.

Now it gets difficult! As your child grows up and matures you will see behavior, which you recognize from your self and know does not serve your best interests. When this happens, find a quiet moment to share your thoughts and experiences and trust your child to do the best it can to avoid your mistakes. The more frantically you try to prevent your child from making the same mistakes as you once made, the more you pave the way for exactly that to happen.

When you see your child behave in a way, which makes you angry, annoyed, sad or scared take a good look at yourself in the

mirror before you rush into action. There is not much, which hurts and confuses a child more than being criticized for being like his parent.

If you want to avoid this, some of these things will force you to change your own ways and patterns and that is after all maybe the most valuable example to set for a child.

Living with and raising children inspires, motivates and sometimes forces parents to change their ways and values. When most successful the same is true for close, love-based relationships with another adult. The challenges and rewards of both make us grow and mature as human beings. I knew a mother with a very troubled son who for her 50th birthday wore a t-shirt with this inscription: I'm 50 and my son raised me well! This mutual influence and inspiration has always been a fact of family life but it is only fifty years we began to take it into account. Until then childrearing and education was generally considered a one-way street where wisdom and insights flew from parents to children and never the opposite direction.

As mentioned above, the significant parent, who is unaware of her/his importance in the child's life, will often have more destructive confrontations with the child. This happens partly because of the child's longing for the parent's recognition and validation of their special bond and partly because of the frustration and desperation, which follows when this does not happen. Some children will keep a low profile hoping that the parent will make a move and other children will bang on the door. Old-fashioned psychology would label their behavior as "attention-seeking" which it is not.

The child is not trying to draw attention to itself but to the quality of contact, which is missing. For children this is a primary existential need with the potential of becoming an existential challenge for the significant parents. A challenge, which she or he is often innocently ignorant about.

Often these parents are equally frustrated and doubting their own value as parents and tend to react by turning up the volume of their attempts to act like what they believe is good and responsible parents. This is what we all do – regardless of age – when we don't feel of value in a relationship. The more this happens the more distance is created and the lonelier both of them become.

The rewards on the other hand are numerous. The term "quality time" has become increasingly popular, as parents have begun to spend more and more time at work. In my opinion the general understanding of the term is self-contradictory as long as it means time spend with children on their terms. This just adds yet another entertainer to the lives of children. If we want to use the term at all, it is important to realize that there are only "quality moments" – i.e. brief moments of deep contact and mutual understanding – often silent.

In order to experience these moments, parents must cultivate the soil. In this respect there is no difference between the two parents – or grandparents, friends a.m. There are in fact an infinite number of possible situations and activities to choose from and there are two important phenomenon, which parents must bring on the table: He or she must enjoy the activity or lack of such and be aware that being together is more important than the activity itself. Children know this instinctively and often invite their parents by suggesting mutual. They only become demanding when their need for closeness is not being met.

Here are some possibilities: Read aloud or read together; create a collection of the child's treasures; look at old family photos; sit on the beach, by the lake or river; sing and play music; find a reason to celebrate; look at the stars or the rain; cook and bake; go fishing; play cards; visit the significant locations from your own childhood. Whatever you do, do it primarily for the enjoyment of the moment. Any kind of educational agenda or objective will spoil it. Your child will learn about the world, mathematics and all that from others but only with you can he learn about you.

Adult couples sometimes enjoy a similar experience, when they suddenly have unstructured and unplanned time together. When everything on the agenda has been talked about, a comfortable silence follows and each of them begins to say things, which they never even knew, they were thinking. This kind of presence and closeness is equally meaningful to all love-relationships between adults as it is to the relationship between parents and children.

Preparing the ground for these moments between a child and one or both parents is the responsibility of the parent(s) and especially for the significant parent it is important to demonstrate initiative and leadership. So asking, "Would you like to go fishing with me?" is not such a good idea, simply because the parent is hiding her or his own feelings and desires behind the question. It is much more productive to say, "I feel like going fishing tomorrow and I would like you to come too". In other words: say what you want and pay attention to the child's reaction.

When the special contact is recognized there is another kind of "quality time", which is when the parent includes the child in her or his own world, whether it is thoughts, personal experiences, favorite activity or dreams in life. It could also be taking the child to the carwash, visiting your own family, invite it to spend time with you at work or helping you when you paint the house or work in the garden. This is the ultimate way for a child to get to know its parents, whether or not there is an intuitive contact.

As a significant parent your huge potential for supporting and helping your child through rough patches in life is not only valuable for your child and your family, it is also a very privileged position where you can enjoy and grow from the ultimate experience of being of value as one human being to another.

When parents divorce

My main reason for not writing about the intuitive contact has always been my fear that parents might use it against each other and their children as part of the divorce process. Some parents tend to forget that what they are doing in order to hurt each other always hurts their children as well.

Some divorces get so mean and ugly that the parents - in my professional opinion - should be denied the privilege of living with their children until they can behave civilized. Others are just messy for a while and most are okay in the sense that parents are mature enough to avoid fighting about the children and able to come to reasonable decisions based on the best interests of the children. For this majority of parents the awareness and recognition of the intuitive connection can become a very constructive element in everybody's future.

Sometimes parents need the help of their child in order to become aware. They make the best possible decision about the child's future living conditions and contact with each parent and talk it over with the child. Loosing their family, as they have

always known it is painful for children regardless of age and they must go through a grieving process, which for most children is characterized by alternating periods of sadness and low energy and periods of balance and energy.

It happens fairly often that a child becomes more permanently sad and loses its former vitality.

Getting behind those obvious reactions to what is really going on can be almost impossible for parents because children come to their own conclusions about which kind of cooperation and loyalty the new family situation demands from them. These conclusions are far from always correct but they are what they are and they change only slowly, because they simply define for the child itself how it can be most valuable to each parent and the whole family situation including the wellbeing of siblings.

Sometimes this reduced vitality is accompanied by outspoken desires or complaints like, "Why can't I live with my mother/father all the time?" or "I don't want to visit my father so often because his new girlfriend dislikes me."

It takes a lot of moral integrity and empathy to ask your own child (living with you most of the time) if it would prefer to live with your ex-partner and the child's answer is not always easy to interpret, but the invitation to verbalize is in itself a relief for the child. A door is now ajar and the child is free to open it if need be.

In my experience it is very difficult for many children over five to get what they need from the significant parent on a part time basis. It seems to be easier for children when parents have decided for a 50/50 and even 40/60 settlement when they were between one and five years old. I could very well be wrong about this because I don't have enough statements from adult children, who have grown up under these circumstances.

The important question is of course, what significant parents and their children can do when circumstances does not allow a continuous flow of input between them. At this point in time I know very little about how the use of Skype, Social Media, Chat etc. might help.

According to my experience the best thing to do is to be open and share the thoughts and feelings related to this unfulfilled need for sharing the same space and breathing the same air. When the other parent who is living with the child on a daily basis is willing to recognize and sympathize with the child's feelings of longing, emptiness and frustration it is a big comfort

for the child. It can now be allowed to have those emotions and share them without feeling disloyal.

As Charlotte in Example 3 proved by her fast recovery it's a lot easier to deal with a loss when we know what we have lost. The sharing of thoughts and feelings, which I recommend, does in no way compensate for the loss and the pain, but it sets the child free to seek meaningful connections with other adults. It also frees the child from the burden of feeling different and maybe even "sick" because many of its friends whose parents also divorced seem to cope much better.

We never knew

In my experience most people over forty or thereabouts have grown up without a mutual realization of the special connection with their mother or father. I did and survived. Without any conscious deliberation I managed to connect in very meaningful and mutually beneficial ways with four very different men, who were twenty – thirty years my seniors. I never thought of them as "substitute fathers" as Sigmund Freud might have said. They were teachers, friends and adversaries in their own right and from each of them I was able to pick valuable material for the foundation under my own life. They were real role models in the sense that I got to experience them at their best as well as their worst. Compared to the optimal scenario this meant a thirty years delay and that is okay with me.

Over the years I have worked and talked with many adults who have suddenly realized what was missing and what they had been yearning for all their lives. After a good cry most of them were able to point out several very creative, wise and helpful choices they had made in terms of friends, teachers, spouses and careers. For some the most revealing realization was the fact that they had been able to find the closeness and profound inspiration in relationship with their own children.

My conclusion is that no matter how valuable it is when parent and child are both aware of and able to utilize the intuitive contact, it is fully possible for the child to create a good life without this mutual recognition. At this point I don't know enough about how the same phenomenon affects the quality of life for the mothers and fathers.

List of national and English publications:

National FL web site

FLA- web site

Jesperjuul.com

Efterlysning!

Finns det någon i vårt avlånga land som har utbildats i och/eller jobbat enligt Virginia Satir? Vi familjeteamet i Huddinge kommun nosar lite på hennes arbetssätt att arbeta med skulpturer i vårt familjearbete. Vi är intresserade av att komma i kontakt med någon som skulle kunna berätta om och dela med sig av sina erfarenheter.

Känner du att du har erfarenheter i Virginia Satirs arbetssätt så vore vi mycket tacksamma om du kunde sända oss ett mejl, så kanske vi kan få ta del av dina erfarenheter på något sätt. Eller så vet du något, kanske kan ge oss ett tips som leder oss vidare på vägen.

Hör av dig till: katarina.jansson@huddinge.se

B-FÖRENINGSBREV

RETURADRESS:

SFT
c/o Anita Blom af Ekenstam
Ringvägen 47b
181 51 Lidingö

www.sfft.se

KALENDARIUM 2015

3-4 SEPTEMBER

FAMILJETERAPIKONGRESS 2015

SÅ HÄR GÖR VI FAMILJETERAPI – FOKUS
PÅ PRAKTISKA ERFARENHETER, METODER
OCH FÖRHÅLLNINGSSÄTT

WWW.SFFT.SE

VÄXJÖ

KALLELSE TILL ÅRSMÖTE!

SFFT:S ÅRSMÖTE HÅLLS DEN

3 SEPTEMBER I SAMBAND MED

FAMILJETERAPIKONGRESSEN I VÄXJÖ.

TID OCH LOKAL MEDDELAS I

KONGRESSPROGRAMMET.

VÄLKOMNA ÖNSKAR STYRELSEN I

SVENSKA FÖRENINGEN FÖR FAMILJETERAPI

11 SEPTEMBER

1-ÅRIG VIDAREUTBILDNING FÖR
SOCIALARBETARE STARTAR. KURSLEDARE
CALLE FJELLMAN OCH BENGT WEINE
WWW.MAGELAKADEMIEN.SE
STOCKHOLM

24-25 SEPTEMBER

VAD ÄR VERKSAMT I PSYKOSOCIALT
BEHANDLINGSARBETE? WORKSHOP MED
SCOTT D MILLER
WWW.GCK.NU
GÖTEBORG

16-18 OKTOBER

DRIVING US CRAZY, INTERNATIONELL
FILMFESTIVAL FAMILJEVÅRDSSTIFTELSEN I
SAMARBETE MED MADINAMERICA WWW.
FAMILJEVÅRDSSTIFTELSEN.SE
GÖTEBORG

9-10 DECEMBER

HANTERING AV PROBLEMSKAPANDE
BETEENDE UTIFRÅN ETT LÅGAFFEKTIVT
FÖRHÅLLNINGSSÄTT. WORKSHOP MED BO
HJELSKOV ELVÉN
WWW.GCK.NU
GÖTEBORG

Vårutflykt med ny-familjen.



Illustration: Rosanne Macke Alström

ANNONSERA I SFT – SVENSK FAMILJETERAPI. HELSIDA 4 000 KR, HALVSIDA 3 000 KR

KVARTSSIDA 2 000 KR PLATSANNONS KVARTSSIDA 4 000 KR.

NÄSTA NUMMER KOMMER UT I BÖRJAN AV SEPTEMBER. MANUSSTOPP 15/8

KONTAKTA REDAKTIONEN SFTRED@TELIA.COM