15   Authenticity: the Person as His or Her Own Author. Dialogical and Ethical Perspectives on Therapy as an Encounter Relationship. And Beyond.

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Abstract. *Authenticity essentially is an encounter attitude. In the context of the anthropological meaning of 'person' from a dialogical perspective, it designates a human being as the genuine author of his or her relationships, both to him- or herself (openness) and to other persons (transparency). Being authentic is a precondition to enter dialogue — the way of communicating between persons where the other is truly acknowledged as an Other (in the sense of encounter philosophy), who is opening up, revealing him- or herself. Thus, in an epistemological perspective, it is the foundation of personal and facilitative communication. From an ethical point of view, authenticity is the response-ability which answers the call to respond to another person's needs, whether in therapy, or in any personal relationship. To be authentic is a particular challenge, if we take account of the idea that in practice there is not one (idealistic) 'I-Thou-relationship', but rather that relationships are always embedded in groups, and in society as a whole. This also implies the need for applying judgement to find one's own stance and at the same time acknowledging each as an autonomous being. In this way, the 'We-perspective' of encounter, and presence in the dialectical play of 'being-with' and 'being-counter', is opened up with profound therapeutic, social and political consequences.*

> *This above all: to thine own self be true,*
> *And it must follow as the night the day,*
> *Thou canst not then be false to any man.*
> (Shakespeare *Hamlet*, Act I, Scene 3)

Congruence, as one of the basic therapeutic conditions, has been described many times by Carl Rogers and other person-centred theoreticians.[1] Such descriptions were mainly from a therapeutic perspective and referred to it as a *condition* with a facilitative impact in counselling and similar relationships. From the point of view of personal or dialogical anthropology[2] and ethics, the attitude which Rogers

1. E.g. Rogers, 1961, 1970, 1980, 1986; Wood, 1988; Tausch and Tausch, 1990; Thorne, 1991; Lietaer, 1993; Finke, 1994.
2. Footnote 2 appears overleaf.

called, among other things, congruence, genuineness or realness, is generally a *fundamental characteristic* of being and becoming a person, and so is much more than a therapeutic attitude or condition. In this chapter, I will consider this view in detail and look at some of the consequences for therapy and human communication in general.[3]

THE HUMAN BEING AS A PERSON — THE UNIQUE 'PERSON'-CENTRED PERSPECTIVE

Whatever other motives might have been important in introducing the term 'person-centred' — it is obvious and clear that this was done consciously and on purpose to denote an anthropology central for the 'person'-centred approach. As described earlier (Schmid 1991, 1998b, 1998c) the term 'person' denotes a specific view of the human being, thoroughly developed and elaborated in the Jewish-Christian tradition and hence in occidental theology and philosophy. It combines two unrenounceable dimensions of human existence: the substantial or individual aspect of being a person and the relational or dialogical aspect of becoming a person. Both of these ways of understanding the human being are contrary, even conflicting, yet it is exactly this tension of autonomy and interconnectedness (or relationality), independence and interdependence, self-reliance and commitment, sovereignty and solidarity, which uniquely characterises the human. Also it can clearly be shown that the meaning of the term 'person' in the original and genuine person-centred context precisely refers to these two dimensions which may be characterised by the catchwords 'actualising tendency' and 'fully functioning person' on the one hand and 'relationship' and 'encounter' on the other hand. Furthermore this anthropological stance, well elaborated by phenomenology and personalistic (or dialogic or encounter) philosophy, is the distinctive characteristic of person-centred understanding, thinking and action.

In 1955 Rogers had already given a process definition to the question 'What is a person?' Already, here, relationality and individuality can be very clearly found as the two characteristics of the person:

> [A] fluid process, potentiality, a continually changing constellation, configuration, matrix of feelings, thoughts, sensations, behaviours. The structure of the process seems configurational, not additive. . . Another way of stating this is that a person is a human process of becoming . . . The person as process seems to me most deeply revealed in a relationship of the most ultimate

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2. Personal or dialogical anthropology refers to twentieth century encounter philosophy (Martin Buber, Ferdinand Ebner, Franz Rosenzweig, Emmanuel Levinas, Romano Guardini, Paul Tillich, Bernhard Welte, Eberhard Grisebach, Fridolin Wiplinger, Gabriel Marcel, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Maurice Nédoncelle, Alain Finkielkraut, Frederik J. J. Buytendijk, Michael Theunissen and many others) rooted in the Jewish-Christian tradition and philosophical orientations deriving from it. It is characterised by a view of the image of the human person who from the very beginning of their life as a fellow human being must be understood in a relational context. It also has a commitment to the person-to-person (intersubjective) point of view as opposed to an objectivistic thinking which treats the other in the traditional scientific way as an object.
3. Thus 'authenticity' is used in a wider sense as a basic characteristic of genuinely being a person, not only in its aspect as a therapeutic condition.

and complete acceptance; a real I–Thou relationship. […] In my experience, the deepest contacts I have with persons reveal them, without exception, to be directional in process, and my experience of that direction is contained in such terms as positive, constructive, creative, toward autonomy, toward maturity, toward socialisation, in the direction of growth, toward greater richness or differentiation (Rogers, 1955, pp. 1–2; cf. also Schmid, 1994, p. 107).

In the substantialistic[4] as well as in the relationalistic[5] conception of the person we find important approaches which render it impossible for a current point of view to regress to earlier conceptions. If the substantialistic approach underlines *what* the person is, then the relationalistic approach accentuates *how* this person has become a person. From the very beginning, the human being is an individual person and from the very beginning he or she is related in personal community with others. It is only through the relationships with other persons that he develops and actualises his being as a person: he becomes a personality. Thus essential elements of the person are both, independence *and* dependence on relationships, sovereignty *and* commitment, autonomy *and* solidarity. Only in the dialectic of both interpretations, not in an 'either–or', but in a 'both–and' does the mystery of the person become accessible to whoever allows himself or herself to become involved in a relationship from person to person. A conception gained from these two perspectives of the person contrasts with a privatistic conception of the human being just as it does with a collectivistic one.

For many years Rogers himself dealt more with the individual aspect of the person in a theoretical sense, emphasising the person as a unique and not-to-be-directed individual in therapy. It was only later that he concentrated more and more on the relational dimension. Furthermore, he did not document this in the structured way he wrote about the substantial aspect of the individual in the therapeutic relationship in his earlier writing. Nevertheless, contact and relationship were a central category of his anthropology from the very beginning (cf. Schmid, 2001c), and the formulation of the 'necessary and sufficient conditions of therapeutic personality change' could never have taken place without it.

To sum it up: the dialectic basic axiom in person-centred anthropology is the actualising tendency as the force of the individual embedded in the interconnectedness, the social nature of the person. Both strands of the axiom form the foundations of the understanding of personalisation — of authentically 'becoming a person' (Rogers 1961).

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4. The substantialistic (or individualistic) conception of the person was first defined by *Boëthius* (480–525 AD): 'Persona est rationalis naturae individua substantia [the person is the indivisible substance of a rational being]'. Substance derives from 'sub–stare' which literally means 'achieving a standing position from below', which therefore means standing by oneself, being based upon oneself and thus implies autonomy and independence.
5. The relationalistic notion was defined by *Richard of St. Victor* (died 1173 AD) in the tradition of patristic theology: he understood the person as 'naturae intellectualis existentia incommunicabilis [incommunicable existence of an intellectual nature]'. Here, person is not conceived as a sub-sistence, but as an ek-sistence, as coming into being from outside ('ex'), through others, as standing opposite to others. Therefore, a person is he or she who has become himself or herself precisely through others, which implies interdependence, solidarity and responsibility.

AUTHENTICITY: OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY

Two of the terms used to describe the way of being and becoming a person are 'genuineness' which mainly refers to the substantial aspect and 'congruence'[6] which also refers to the relational dimension.[7] (The term 'congruence' as such shows that there always has to be a relationship before we can make sense when talking about (something or someone) being congruent (with something or someone).

Carl Rogers (1961) prefaces a chapter about genuineness with a quote by Søren Kierkegaard (1849): 'to be that self which one truly is'. A genuine person deeply lives what he or she is: his or her ever-changing organismic experience from moment to moment is exactly — thus genuinely — represented by his or her awareness or consciousness about him- or herself. The person is open to his or her self. Self-actualising tendency and actualising tendency coincide. There is congruence between awareness and organism, self and person. This inner dimension of genuineness referring to the substantial aspect of individuality may be called *openness to oneself*.

It corresponds with an openness to the other. The outer, relational dimension of it is well characterised by the term *transparency* which stands for the correspondence of experience and communication towards others. The person shows him- or herself the way he or she experiences him- or herself in a given moment, not pretending to be different nor consciously or unconsciously showing a façade.[8]

Trust in one's own experiences and being trustworthy, seeing oneself as credible and credibility for others, go hand in hand: experience, its representation and its communication, coincide, are congruent.

The personalistic (encounter philosophical) term for the characterisation described is *authenticity*. To be authentic means to be entitled to acceptance or belief as being reliable, as being real not counterfeit. The Greek word 'auth-éntes' ('autós' = 'self') denotes the 'author', the originator of something, and might describe somebody who does something with his own hand (Duden, 1963). In this etymological view an authentic person is a human being who is the author of him- or herself. Self-authorship, then, is a true characterisation of a person termed 'genuine' or 'congruent' by Carl Rogers — someone who is the author of the symbolisation of his experiences and the author of his communications. Symbolised and verbalised experiences are not second-hand but first-hand. *An authentic person, therefore, is his or her own 'author' in the relationship both to his or her self, and to the others.*

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6. The Latin word 'congruens' means 'meet together, agree, correspond'; its root may be 'ruere', meaning 'fall, rush', but etymologists are not sure about this. 'Congruent' stands for 'conforming, accordant, agreeable' (Duden, 1963; Hoad, 1986).
7. 'Realness' points to the fact that something is truly (meaning 'real') what its name implies (Lat. 'res' = 'thing, fact'), that what you see coincides with reality, the opposites are counterfeit, unreal, idealistic.
8. Both aspects were already described by Lietaer in 1993 in a somewhat different terminology.

DIALOGUE AS MUTUAL REVELATION AND AUTHENTIC RECEIPT

Communication is both the reason for, and the consequence of, community. In a dialectical process,[9] authenticity fosters encounter and encounter fosters authenticity. Thus authenticity is the foundation for communicating *with* each other instead of talking *about* each other — in other words, to enter dialogue. Dialogue can only occur between authentic persons.

Dialogue is a concept category for a personalistic view of the human being and hence for person-centred anthropology. It requires each person to really see the other person as an 'other'. 'The Other' in an encounter philosophical sense (as the one who cannot be comprehended but empathised with) is crucial for the understanding of the way of relationship called 'encounter' by Carl Rogers. The other person in a communication is not primarily seen as somebody similar to me, as an 'alter me' (to whom I, let's say as a therapist, am simply the 'alter ego'), but as truly another, an absolutely different person, whom I (e.g. as the therapist) encounter as an enigma, being aware of the fundamental otherness of the other, facilitating his process of opening up but in no way directing it. Nor am I the one to comprehend him or her (in the original meaning of 'comprehending' as 'surrounding' or 'encircling' and thus 'taking in' the other person); it is he or she that is the one to open up and to reveal him- or herself. In terms of epistemology it happens in reverse to everyday communication — we do not try to understand the Other by making analogies from us to him or her, by assessing or rating the other, estimating how and who he or she is. Rather we try to understand the Other by opening up to whatever they show, experience, communicate or reveal. The direction goes from the Other to me, not from me to the Other.

This way of relating is truly called an 'en-counter', because the Other also stands 'counter' to me — challenging me and requiring me to change my views and thus myself in accepting and acknowledging him or her and urging me to respond, hence my response-ability (cf. Schmid, 2001a). Because the term 'encounter' in general and in the person-centred approach in particular has undergone inflation, it is necessary to mention here that the essential element of encounter requires that the human being meets a reality which moves him or her deeply. Encounter is not simply an experience, it is an 'experience counter-to' which opposes the affected one. Encounter is an essentially different experience from what an idealistic and subjectivistic understanding (of solely intrinsic development) presupposes, from an understanding of development or fulfilment coming completely from itself. However, it is an alien, an Other, another reality, another person, which or who en-counters my reality, which or who encounters me. This makes up the existential dimension and unavoidability of an encounter.

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9. 'Dialectical' (from 'dialogue') refers to a way of philosophizing or an art of dialogue which is oriented by a critical consideration of opposites and contradictions thus gaining knowledge and insight. The term is used throughout the article in the Hegelian tradition to indicate a couplet of linked yet contradictory concepts: from thesis and antithesis a synthesis is gained on a new level.

For Martin Buber (1923, 1948, 1951), being a person means communicating oneself: the event of encounter or dialogue actually constitutes the person. In a well-known statement, he says 'All real life is encounter' (Buber, 1923, p. 18). Thus the I is actually constituted *only* in the encounter of the Thou: 'The I becomes through the Thou; becoming an I, I say Thou' (ibid.). He describes encounter as an event in which one 'becomes presence' to the Other. An encounter according to Buber is particularly characterised by authenticity — the 'authenticity of being' instead of the 'breaking-in of seeming', of appearance only. This points to the fact that true revelation is in need of authentic receipt: revelation cannot take place without a personal receiving attitude. Defence, disguise, play-acting, role-playing, the façade of expertism, etc. are obstacles to a person who strives for authenticity — both epistemologically and practically a crucial moment, e.g. for the client's possibilities in therapy.

AUTHENTICITY AS A DIALECTICAL PROCESS IN A PLURALISTIC WORLD

Thinking about congruence implies difference. You cannot reflect on being congruent if you don't experience and consider diversity. If there was no difference there would be no process and progress. But it is not only the difference between me and one other person. While the encounter between the I and the Thou is a main point in Martin Buber's philosophy, Emmanuel Levinas (1961, 1974, 1983) — the Lithuanian encounter philosopher whose ideas are not usually associated with the person-centred approach — develops the focus of the relationship: from 'the Other' to 'the Others'.

Levinas points out that the (relatively) closed relationship of the I-Thou is still a contained (and idealistic) concept. According to his thinking the relationship would be better understood as the 'Thou-I-relationship', because the Other always comes first (phenomenologically, developmental psychologically and ethically).

While Buber stresses the ontological aspect of the encounter relationship, Levinas (1983) is convinced that ethics has to be 'the first philosophy', if we do not want to continue 'egology' (this is how he characterises occidental philosophy until to date). Thus 'diakonia [diacony]' precedes dialogue — 'diakonia' means 'service' as 'therapy' does — so in other words: dialogue is a consequence of this basic conviction and attitude.

Furthermore, if ethics is to be the 'first philosophy' then it is clear that there will be many Others who will bring up the question of whom to trust, i.e. the question of justice. Maybe the friend of my friend is somebody who does seem trustworthy to him but not to me. Each person lives in a world with many Others and therefore has to choose and to judge. He or she has to leave the subjectivistic position of 'mere relating' and to take an objectivistic stance. If the relationship to another person is no longer self-evident when you consider that this person is standing in a context of other relationships, then you cannot limit yourself to a subject-to-subject-relationship. If we can make this step back and out of the relationship it becomes possible for the person to view the different Others from a point which increasingly becomes his or her own point of view, his or her own

standpoint. (It should be mentioned that at this stage most people do not get any further in almost all of their relationships.)

This introduces the notion of 'the Third One' — a concept by Levinas which denotes the breaking-up of the dyad. 'The Third One' is a cipher or symbol for the breaking through of idealistic concepts of enclosed relationships.

On this basis, the 'triadic' understanding of relationships becomes crucial for a person-centred understanding of the person. A comprehensive appreciation can no longer concentrate on the one-on-one-relationship alone. On the contrary it has its foundation in an understanding of the human being as always, and from the very beginning, being a member of a group. To be a person in this context means to relate to several significant Others. It implies — and this is especially relevant for counselling and therapy, etc. — not being in a somewhat 'primitive' relationship of 'simply' accepting and being empathic. It further implies deliberately acknowledging and being compassionate — after having gone through the stage of the necessity of judging and evaluating the fellow human beings as described above, it then means to actively open up in an adult way to the mystery of the other anew, trusting him or her and being *impressed* by his or her otherness.

This is the 'hour of congruence': to authentically and deliberately abstain from judgements and 'objective' positions and freshly enter a relationship with what Rogers (e.g. 1986) refers to as 'presence'. At this stage, being authentic is no longer naïve or purely spontaneous, by coincidence, but it is a deliberate step towards the Other and the Others facing them, encountering them face to face. A therapeutic relationship, then, as defined by Carl Rogers, is probably the best description of an encounter relationship of this kind in the literature.

However, it implies much more than probably even Rogers himself was aware. It not only shows the deep roots in philosophy and theology, it also involves the implementation and explication of the existential meaning of personal presence (see below). More than he ever thought, his image of the human is connected with the occidental history of philosophy in general and anthropology in particular (Schmid 1991, 1994, 1996): the question of authenticity is related to the unum-multum problem long discussed in occidental philosophy.[10] Is there ultimately one truth? Is, unity (the unum) the core and the goal to aim for? Or are there many truths? Is plurality (the plurum), variety, multidimensionality the basis of all and the goal to seek? This implies the question whether a person is authentic if he or she is at his or her core (whatever this might be) or is a person authentic if he or she is really in the relationship(s) he or she is in at the moment? The person-centred answer is that in a dialectical way both stances create a process of mutual tension — authenticity is a process term that encompasses unity *and* plurality.[11]

There also is an inherent theological parallel to the Christian image of the

10. The nub of the problem is the question: is there a 'universe'? ('Uni-verse' means 'turned to [the] one'.) This question can be seen, for example, in the constructivism debate on an epistemological level: do we grasp (parts of the) reality in the process of recognizing (because reality discloses, reveals itself) and thus strive towards unity or do we (maybe only) create our own realities and thus live in a 'pluri-verse'? Or both?
11. Rogers refers to this with his concept of the 'fully functioning person' who lives the processes he or she is.

human being as an image of God, the Tri-Unite One, being One *and* being Trinity, uniting the substantial and relational dimension in a unique way, so to speak, 'individual' *and* 'group'. In this conception, God is entirely uniqueness *and* community from the very beginning. And he is relating to the community of unique human beings which is founded by him in mutual communication and communion (cf. Schmid, 1998). Thus, in a Christian theological perspective authenticity also means co-creation: to take part in God's authorship of the world (creation) and his authorship of the relations among human beings.

PRESENCE — PSYCHOPHYSICAL 'BEING WITH' AND 'BEING COUNTER'

Rogers' (1986) description of the therapeutic relationship as being present to the Other seems to be, more than he himself noticed, a basic and comprehensive depiction of a therapeutic encounter relationship. Together, authenticity, unconditional positive regard and empathy constitute *one* human attitude, one fundamental way of being, relating and acting, truly characterised as psychophysical presence.

It is well known and quite often quoted that Carl Rogers (e.g. 1986) in his late years described a phenomenon in therapeutic relationships which he called 'presence'. On close examination of the phenomenon, I suggest that 'presence' is the existential foundation of the basic attitudes of congruence, unconditional positive regard and empathy (Schmid, 1996, pp. 228–44, 1998b, p. 85). From a personalistic view this is not a fourth or even additional core condition — as suggested by Thorne (1985) or Steuri (1992) — the concept comprehensively describes the basic attitudes in an existential way. What Carl Rogers described as authenticity, unconditional positive regard and empathy correspond with presence as understood on a deeper, dialogical–personal level. Presence (in German: 'Gegenwärtigkeit'), in the sense of encounter philosophy, is the existential core of the attitudes. It is further explained by the description of the conditions which themselves were always understood holistically by Rogers, intrinsically connected, a 'trias variable'. Each one of the conditions makes no therapeutic sense without the others. Presence can thus be regarded, in a dialectical sense, as what Hegel calls an 'Aufhebung' of the basic attitudes. The German word 'aufheben' means (1) to preserve, (2) to abolish and dissolve and (3) to supersede, transcend and give new meaning on a higher level. If one takes these meanings together at one and the same time, 'presence' can be understood as an 'Aufhebung' of the basic attitudes: they are preserved as well as dissolved by being superseded and transcended. Hence, encounter is 'more than the variables'. What is essential in the understanding and realization of the person-centred relationship is the transcendence of the single basic attitudes to form a fundamental and extensive, full way of *being* with each other. Thus the source and the goal of person-centred action is personal encounter. Then, presence is not only to be regarded as an altered, transcending state of consciousness, as Rogers (1986) writes, but as a way of being, as 'being in encounter' (Schmid 1996, p. 244; 1998b, p. 85).

Hence, presence is an expression of authenticity, as it is related to the

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immediately present flow of experiencing. It reflects congruence *and* difference between a person's experiencing and symbolisation and between his or her symbolisation and communication. Presence is an expression of empathy, because, in existential wonderment, it is related to what the Other is experiencing. And presence is an expression of positive regard, as acceptance of myself and personal acknowledgement of the Other, of whatever immediately present feelings he or she is experiencing. These basic attitudes — and presence as their 'Aufhebung' — can thus be understood as *the* encounter condition.

Presence — deriving from the Latin word 'esse' which means 'to be' — means to be authentic as a person; fully myself and fully open; whole; fully living the individual I am; fully living the relationships I am in and the relationships I am. (We are not only *in* relationships, we *are* relationships.) The challenge is, at one and the same time, to be oneself and in relationship. Being able to be touched, impressed, surprised, changed, altered, growing and also being able to stick to my own experiences and symbolisations (instead of taking the experiences, interpretations and stances of the others), to value from within (without judging *the person* of the other), to have one's own point of view. This is what being present means. This is what being authentic means. This is what being a person means.

In the 'way of being with' characterised by the term 'presence', being and acting coincide completely. The person is his or her experiences, the person does what he or she is and is what he or she does — a living congruence of profound impact to those the person relates to.

When a person in need addresses or reaches out to another person, they are asking for a response to their needs. Thus being present means being the response to another person, the response to being addressed by somebody — especially by another person in need. It is this capability of responsiveness from which response–ability evolves. Thus demonstrating the ethical foundation of this way of being and understanding the world. To authentically respond to another person, be it in therapy, be it in any personal relationship, is *the* ethical challenge.[12]

THERAPY AS FACILITATION OF THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE CLIENTS' LIVES

The anthropological and ethical considerations — the human being as a person, both autonomous and relationally interdependent, dialogue as mutual revelation, authenticity as a dialectical process of encounter, presence as 'being with' and response-ability — shed new light upon the therapeutic impact of authenticity. The obviously facilitative aspect of congruence is grounded in the understanding of the human being as a person and in the responsibility which derives from this — as Rogers (1977) put it: congruence begets congruence. Authenticity fosters authenticity, because it 'melts' rigidity and defensiveness in favour of the breaking through of the actualising tendency, of creative individuality and the striving for authentic relationships. In other words: person-centred therapy facilitates the client's wish and need to gradually become (again) the author of his life

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12. Ethics must not be misunderstand in a moralistic way; it denotes — from a phenomenological and anthropological point of view — the philosophy of the challenge of living in terms of how to live respons-ibly.

Authors know that gaining authorship is a process, not an instant flash of lightning. Therefore authentic people are patient, curious and full of the ability of being astonished and surprised. They know that the task is to *learn* and improve congruence, not to *have* it or not.

There is no authenticity, no presence in relationships to other persons without (at least a minimum of) mutuality. It requires at least some openness, some capability of awareness, of being able to be influenced by the other, of 'psychological contact' (cf. Schmid, 2001c). Person-centred therapy is the kind of encounter relationship which, starting at some point of more or less (even almost complete) impaired mutuality and openness, aims towards full mutuality.

The challenge in unequal relationships — e.g. for the therapist — is to relate to the authentic parts of the other person(s). There is a deep connection between authenticity, on the one hand, and spontaneity and creativity on the other hand. To act spontaneously is the opposite of acting artificially, of acting by copying a model or by acting according to a plan, may this be consciously or not. It is also different from copying oneself: what was helpful in one situation can be inappropriate in another context. Thus the question of the legitimate use of methods and techniques arises (see below). To act authentically always means to act creatively, out of one's inner sources, guided by trust in the actualising tendency. The two 'twin principles' spontaneity and creativity (Moreno, 1969),[13] are inherent to authenticity and essential for person-centred work in general and person-centred therapy in particular.

Authenticity also has eminent bodily aspects: there is no emotion without the body, no thought, no experience. Experiences are always organismic, basically grounded in bodily processes and sensations — and, in the same sense, communication does not exist outside of the bodies involved. Language always has a non-verbal dimension expressed by the body. To be fully present means to be physically there. It is the body which makes it possible that a person can be seen, heard, touched, smelled, tasted. It is the body which makes a person able to see, hear, touch, smell, taste. It is the body of the Other which 'stands counter' to my body, which I can feel and which thus makes the connection between two persons, but which on the contrary also sets the limits between the Other and me. The body is both, the 'incarnation' (the becoming flesh) of what the person is, and the initiator of the 'inspiration' (the becoming spirit) of what the person experiences. Thus becoming a person, always includes incarnation, embodiment. The body both reveals the person and also can hide him or her. There is no authenticity without the body.

This has profound consequences for the understanding of a truly *person-*centred therapy, especially for those who tend to reduce communication to verbal communication and therapy to talking therapy. (On the other hand it is also one-sided and of no use to set the body above the psyche — the respective slogan is that 'the body cannot lie' — or declaring it to be the main road to the understanding of the person or to doing therapy. This simply reduces the person to the body.) Therapists and counsellors who do not pay attention to their clients'

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13. Jacob L. Moreno, the founder of psychodrama, had already committed himself, ahead of his time, to the concept of encounter in the days of Sigmund Freud and showed many parallels to Rogers' understanding of the therapeutic relationship (Schmid, 1994).

bodies, and their own bodies, fail in facilitating the person as a whole. To facilitate the authorship of the clients' lives always includes the facilitation of their awareness of their body and its paramount importance in both self understanding and communication.

Here it should also be noticed that becoming present always includes dealing with the past, as what made the person become what he or she is, and the future, as what makes the person wish and fear, expect and live up to — but both, past and future, are always embedded in the presence; there is no past or future as such, there is only the present impact of the past and the future, there is only presence in the mode of past and future. This leads to a substantial conclusion: to fully become present by fully becoming authentic might well be a defined goal for psychotherapy and counselling — for the therapist as well as for the client. For the therapist this means to authorise and empower the client by facilitating his or her own struggles for authenticity in the moment-by-moment presence the therapist offers. For the client it means to be the author of his or her own future on the basis of his or her past by living in the moment-to-moment process of presence.

AUTHENTICITY VERSUS METHODOLOGICAL AND TECHNICAL APPROACHES

This goal, discussed in the previous section, is achieved — and this is unique in psychotherapy — by a relationship *person to person* with all its consequences, and not by anything else. In his article: 'The interpersonal relationship: The core of guidance' Rogers (1962a, p. 90) describes the therapeutic relationship in the context of the congruence of the therapist as a 'direct personal encounter with his client, meeting him on a person-to-person basis'. He later emphasised the relationship and the genuineness of the therapist even more, and regarded 'therapy as relationship encounter' (Rogers, 1962b, p. 185). According to Rogers this has precedence over techniques, theory and ideology.

The transparent realness we are talking about implies the renunciation of the use of any preconceived methods or techniques in a therapeutic relationship. Authors prefer new stories to repeating themselves. Authenticity plays a decisive role inasmuch as the therapist is available for the client as a living person and not only in his or her capacity as a therapist. It is crucial for the development of both, client and therapist, that they direct their attention, as free of judgements and interpretations as possible, to the immediate presence of both persons in the relationship. This implies a radical counter-position to expert-oriented approaches (in terms of the contents as well as the process), emphasising that the person as such (and not techniques, methods or skills) is the active change factor. The therapist offers a way of being with the client making possible a process of communication and encounter which moves towards mutuality and dialogue.

A fundamental and principled non-directivity is the logical consequence of an image of the human being which prefers the uniqueness of the Other to standardising diagnosis and acknowledgement to knowledge (cf. Schmid, 2001a). Authenticity means that authors encounter authors and not copies. Authenticity is non-directive, because inherent in it is the notion that only the author of a life

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can change it. Thus authenticity strictly opposes any expert behaviour, be it in terms of contents and decisions or be it in terms of ways of how to get there, i.e. means, methods and techniques. If authenticity is what therapy is about, the only legitimate 'techné' (the original Greek word which means 'art') is im-media-cy, or im-media-te presence (presence without media), in other words, the encounter person to person. To be precise, therapy is a process to overcome preconceived techniques and methods (which always come in between humans) by making them superfluous.

This also shows that those directions of therapy, theory and practice which concentrate on the experience (and therefore calling themselves 'experiential') reduce the person as a whole to the experience as part of it. Thus they are no longer person-centred but focus only on one aspect of the person ('focusing-oriented therapy' or 'focusing therapy'). They not only pay less attention to the relationship in a dialogical way, and thus miss the essence of an encounter relationship, but also reintroduce the therapist as an expert in terms of directing the process ('process-directional'), even if they limit themselves to process-guiding activities and do not intend to influence the contents (cf. Prouty, 1999; Schmid, 2001d).

THE 'WE-PERSPECTIVE' AND ITS SOCIAL DIMENSION

Being really present is one of the most challenging tasks for human beings. Being true to oneself and being open to others (and not only to one other individual), being authentic in multidimensional relations is a dialectical and provoking ('pro-voke' = 'to call out of') way of being. It neither means pursuing stubbornly or stolidly to 'be always the same', regardless of the relationships the individual is in,[14] nor does it mean to follow the idea of being and behaving completely differently in the various relationships an individual has, continually changing, or being-without-substance.[15]

In regard to therapy, these aspects point to two main misunderstandings of congruence. First, the idea of 'anything is okay as long as it is honest or true' (which in reality, in groups for example, often turns out to be ignorant, even brutal) ignores the relational dimension: there is no congruence *except* in relationship, no 'congruence as such', on its own. The second misunderstanding is to hold the position of 'If I am with you I am completely identified with you and everything you say and do is okay'. This ignores the substantial dimension (and is a major misunderstanding of empathy by ignoring the 'as-if' perspective; cf. Schmid, 2001b).

In this respect, being authentic is particularly a problem when facing more than one person, e.g. in a group. As mentioned above, the person lives in more than one relationship, with more than one 'Other'. Thus the 'We-perspective' is the truly and genuine dialogical perspective.

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14. 'I am what I am and I don't give a damn, how I am perceived or what effects my being with others may have' — a position easily to be found with 'beginners' of therapeutic experience, especially in groups, or fanatics of the ego.
15. 'I am what you want me to be; I am what I am made by others; everything that is true *here* may be false *there*.'

Even in one-to-one therapy 'the Third One' (as the metaphor for all others, relationships and the external world) is always present: be it the subject talked about, the persons and relationships talked about, the context of the therapy, or the world as such.

The 'We' overcomes the duality of the pair, of the either–or, of the contradiction, of the thinking according to the principles of linear causality; it opens a new level of plurality, of variety, of as-well-as, of being 'whole' (and thus 'healing' — both are etymologically and from a holistic perspective related to 'holy'). This is often expressed in terms of religion or mysticism, because it expresses deep personal experiences: what Buber calls the 'sanctification [the making holy] of everyday life', what Hycner (cf. 1989, pp. 94–5) calls 'the sanctifying presence of the therapist in therapy'. Less solemnly it might be expressed as being to do with the experiences of becoming more whole, of the coming together of split-off or alienated parts of the person, or it might be called 'mystical' as Rogers (1986) does. But this must not be mixed up with 'mysterious' in the sense of 'irrational' or 'esoteric'. It is nothing more or less than the very experience of growth itself, of gaining authorship of one's own life, of personalisation, of becoming a person. And personalisation is never a matter of the individual, nor is it a matter of a single relationship, it is always a matter of a multidimensional being in relations.

The We-perspective stresses the importance of the group. Usually people live in groups; the relationship of two, the pair, is a special case of a group, always embedded in other groups. The group is the 'normal place' of living, the primary locus of life. People depend on groups from the very beginning of their life: the family, groups of friends, groups at the work place, etc. It is in groups where we learn to be authentic and where it really is the task to be authentic. Therefore groups are highly rated and valued in person-centred therapy. It might even be said that they are *the* 'original' therapeutic setting and it can be shown that Carl Rogers historically, psychologically, philosophically and practically was concerned with groups from the very beginning of his work, although he dedicated most of his academic writings in the earlier years to the one-to-one-therapy (Schmid, 1996).

Taking the human seriously as a social being results in a re-evaluation of the indication for single and group therapy. Out of the fundamental understanding of the human being in his or her social relations, as a person in the group, out of the realisation of the fact that working on conflicts is best done where conflicts originate, namely in groups, the question is: when will the group be the chosen therapeutic place and when will the individual therapeutic relationship — as a special and especially protected relationship — be indicated? Looked at in this way, individual therapy should only be chosen when special protection is needed or some other specific reason calls for it. The person-centred approach is a deeply social, and thus, a group approach. This is contrary to how it is usually regarded because of its historical development and the group is considered to be a central aspect in the future of the approach. This also refutes the 'pathology' of over-emphasising individual therapy, e.g. in German-speaking countries, where it is particularly in evidence in training programmes, as opposed to those in Anglo-American countries (ibid.) which emphasise group or community.

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THE POLITICAL DIMENSION OF AUTHENTICITY

Thus the political significance of authenticity becomes obvious. Groups are smaller segments of the society. They are the interface of the person and the society. Here a social and political dimension of authenticity becomes obvious. Authenticity is a challenge for solidarity and autonomy. The task is not only to be authentic in intimate relationships and in therapy, but also in everyday life, in society and politics.

It was not by coincidence that Carl Rogers found that the more he dealt with and valued congruence, the more he got interested in groups, large groups and intergroup communication, in intercultural subjects, in social and political questions, such as his peace-facilitating efforts.

The challenge to be an authentic person definitely reaches beyond the individual. The ultimate questions are: 'Who are you? Who am I?' These questions always transcend the immediate situation (in therapy, in a partnership, among friends, in a group). At a closer look, they turn out to be the question: 'Who are we — now and beyond this situation?' (cf. also Wood, 1988, p. 109).

This has profound consequences for the person-centred approach itself. It suggests a paradigm shift lies ahead *within* the approach, which started during the later work of Carl Rogers. The more we understand the social and political implications, the more the person-centred approach faces a challenge to itself. If ethics and the underlying image of the human being are taken seriously it becomes obvious that the approach needs further development towards a truly social approach.

In respect of an ethically founded anthropology — the step from the individual to the person, from relationship to encounter, will be made as a change from the view of the person–centred relationship as an I–Thou–relationship to the view of a We–relationship as well, and therefore arriving at a social therapy. Then the I will not only be found as a response to a Thou, but the I will also be a response to a We. Then the approach will consequently be seen as a social approach. Sociotherapy, besides psychotherapy, will be ranked highly in the frame of an overall therapeutic point of view. Such an overall therapeutic perspective would include the communities in which the human being lives. (Schmid, 2001e)

The human society (starting with parts thereof) has to overcome the one-sided position of only stressing the (individual) dimension of unity as well as the one-sided position of 'whatever you like' and of 'anything goes'. It will have to enter the necessarily dialectical stage of the tension between unity and plurality (cf. also O'Hara, 1998). Once this is achieved, authenticity will be the only possibility to live as a person in a globalised, confusing and technical world. Authenticity is the very opposite of alienation. Authentic persons challenge others to become authentic because they themselves are challenged by really accepting the others as they are.

It is to the great merit of Carl Rogers that he described this for the theory and practice of therapy and similar relationships. It is his legacy to us now to authentically implement the essence of it into all fields of life.

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