

Annual Conference 2017

Science and Experience based Wisdom in the ISPPM

A (long) necessary discussion on spirituality and mindfulness

29th International Annual Conference of ISPPM

Hotel Christophorus, Berlin-Spandau, Germany

October 28/29, 2017

Dear members of the ISPPM,

We are very much looking forward to the internal dialogue, which we would like to have in our membership, in workshops and impulse lectures and expert opinions. The detailed program of parallel case-stories in small group sessions is also ready - very hearty thanks to all, who contribute something here! On our website you can see the complete program, which is certainly worth a trip to Berlin: <http://www.isppm.de/events/science-and-experience-based-wisdom-in-the-isppm-2/?lang=en>

The registration numbers are however still expandable.

We need binding registrations as soon as possible, so that we can comply with the terms of the contract with the conference hotel Christophorus.

Cancellations are free of charge up to 4 weeks prior to arrival, 50% of the room rate is charged between 2 and 4 weeks, 80% for cancellations from 2 weeks before arrival.

So please book your room quickly with the indication of being an ISPPM conference participant (Phone +49 (0) 30-33 60 60, Mail: info@hotel-christophorus.com, Web: <http://www.hotel-christophorus.com/>) and please register on our homepage for the conference. Many Thanks!

The full program, all information on the conference as well as the online registration can be found on our website:

<http://www.isppm.de/events/science-and-experience-based-wisdom-in-the-isppm-2/?lang=en>

Greetings to you, hoping to see you soon in Berlin!

Paula Diederichs, President

From the Extended Board

WG Research

A meeting of this working group is planned on Saturday morning before the beginning of the conference in Berlin. The focus will be the influence of prenatal and intrapartal events on the later development of the child and mother-child bonding.

If you are interested, please do not hesitate to contact the speaker of this working group Otwin Linderkamp olinderkamp@yahoo.de.

AG becoming parents

On Saturday, October 28th, at 11 a.m. I would like to inform interested members about the state of current networking. There are very interesting developments,

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among others the membership of ISPPM e.V. in the NC - National Coalition on the Implementation of the UN Children's Convention. The protection of the unique mother-child unit during pregnancy, birth and lactation finds expression in national parental rights and the UN Children's Rights Convention. Regarding this background, do we need an update of the [ISPPM Charter on the Rights of the Child from 2005](#)?

We are looking forward to welcome members and guests.

Spokesperson: Irene Behrmann; Marita Klippel-Heidekrüger, ISPPM Delegate for the National Coalition Germany.

I am glad about interest and prior contact: irene.behrmann@t-online.de

WG Cultural Psychology

The cultural psychology working group wants to follow the historical references of matriarchal social forms and prenatal psychology. We would therefore like to open the working group and invite interested members of the ISPPM to participate in the cultural psychology group.

The next meeting of the WG will be held within the next annual conference of ISPPM on 28./29. October 2017 in Berlin, on Saturday morning.

The spokesperson of the WG is Dr. Ludwig Janus. Interested people please send an e-mail to: janus.ludwig@gmail.com

WG Bonding Analysis

The next **conference** will be organized by Helga Blazy, please save the date: **June 1-3, 2018 in Cologne.**



Dear colleague, dear colleague,
we have to send you the sad news that Martina Gellert has died on 28 July at 8:05 after a long illness at the age of 60 years.
We are very sad.
We lost a friend and colleague.

Tina has worked professionally as a psychological psychotherapist with a focus on depth psychology for many years.

She was dedicated to combine depth psychological thinking and body psychotherapy. She was especially connected with pre- and perinatal therapy, which she learned from William Emerson and Karlton Terry.

In this area she has held self-experience seminars as well as further education for many years.

She was an engaged member of the ISPPM for many years. In our working group PfPP (prenatal-based psychotherapy and psychosomatics) she was active from the beginning on. We are grateful for the time spent together.

With cordial greetings as deputy of the AG PfPP

Ulrike and Joachim Lichtenberg

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Dear Colleagues,

We received a telephone call telling us of the "Birth Out" of Marshall Klaus. I asked her what this meant & she said, 'All human beings 'Birth In' to the world & when our work here is finished, we all 'Birth Out'.

In the case of Marshall Klaus, who with his wife Phyllis have moved 'Birthing Here' into dimensions which have humanized birth well into the future.

We extend our heartfelt condolences

to Phyllis & all those who have been touched by the creative energy of Marshall. Jon R.G Turner and Troya Turner

Marshall Klaus Bio: <http://www.bondingandbirth.org/marshall-klaus-bio.html>

From the Network

APPPAH

Upcoming Congress

"The Conscious Baby Emerges: Science, Medical, Psycho-Social and Somatic Discoveries"

Nov. 30 - Dec. 3, San Diego.

Information, Registration: <https://birthpsychology.com/2017-conference/welcome>

Our [Monday Live Series 3](#) is now up on our website! Anyone can take this awesome lecture series offered on Mondays at noon Eastern time. The first Monday of each month our Education Director Kate White gives a Tour of the Classroom and offers a Q & A segment.

We have designed these lectures to enhance your work, and also offer you the benefit of spending "virtual time" with visionaries and leaders in the field Pre and Perinatal Psychology and Health. Take the time to enjoy Kate White presenting The Conscious Baby Program for Parents Overview as part of [a free webinar series](#) for EHealth Learning.

Date: September 5, Tuesday at 2 pm Eastern time.

Childhood and Early Parenting Principles (CEPPs)

The [International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics \(FIGO\)](#) has become a partner and signed a "Memorandum of Understanding."

We are preparing for the 2018 World Congress in Rio de Janeiro!

CEPPs is inviting professionals and organisations working in the field of maternal health and early childhood care to join the initiative and spread this message more widely in the community.

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Newsletter September/October 2017

Please share this project with all relevant organizations, and please invite them to partner with CEPPs!

Website: <https://cepprinciples.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CEPPPrinciples>

Twitter: @CEPPPrinciples <https://twitter.com/CEPPPrinciples>

International Journal of Prenatal & Life Science



The first ISSUE is out!

Information about the P&LS Centenary Anthology:

<http://www.journalprenatalife.com/index.php/prenatal/about>

CALL TO WRITERS

100 YEARS PRENATAL PSYCHOLOGY: VITAL KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING IN LIFE

Background: Otto Rank began his study of the possible effect of birth experiences in 1904 finally publishing *The Trauma of Birth* in 1923. With these two dates marking Rank's evolutionary hypothesis in mind, it can be said that Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology is approximately a Century or 100 years of age. The present era of its maturity dates from 1980s when Dr. Thomas R. Verny established the Pre- & Perinatal Psychology Association of North America (now APPPAH - the Association for Pre- and Perinatal Psychology & Health) and Prof. Peter G. Fedor-Freybergh established ISPPM - the International Society of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Medicine.

An Invitation: Marking Rank's evolutionary research, The International Journal of Prenatal & Life Sciences will publish a Centenary Anthology with a tentative working title 100 YEARS PRENATAL PSYCHOLOGY: VITAL KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING IN LIFE. The Editors are pleased to extend an Invitation to you as a Pioneer in Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology to submit a Chapter proposal to make this book a landmark Reference Volume. Date for submission of the complete paper will be in 2017 (end of October). Use the submissions button online.

<http://www.journalprenatalife.com/index.php/prenatal/about/submissions>

Briefly

Interview with Vivette Glover, on the concept of 'foetal programming':

<https://cepprinciples.org/interview-vivette-glover-concept-foetal-programming/>

Film project „The Safe Birth“

Tailer [here](#)

Donations are accepted by the ISPPM e.V.:

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Conscious Parenting News

CPN provides the latest headlines, research, features and insights of the Conscious Parenting Movement through its e-newsletter and web e-newspaper. CPN is an alternative media and nonprofit initiative of Families for Conscious Living.

<http://consciousparentingnews.com/>

You can visit FCL and discover more initiatives to support your conscious parenting choices at www.FamiliesforConsciousLiving.org.

Please share Conscious Parenting News with your friends and family. And thank you for your support!

Sincerely,

The Conscious Parenting News Team

Contact Us: info@familiesforconsciousliving.org

More interesting news from our field you can read on the **ISPPM Facebook site**:
<https://www.facebook.com/ISPPM-eV-124066644364106/?ref=bookmarks>

We have also set up an **ISPPM members forum on FB** for networking and sharing. If you are a member of the ISPPM (e.V. or Switzerland), you are welcome to join the group!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1524322761189091/requests/>

Article

Neurobiological Underpinnings of Bonding Analysis

By Christa Balkenhol-Wright

First published in The Neuropsychotherapist, volume 5, issue 8.
neuropsychotherapist.com

In the late 1980s, an eminent Hungarian psychotherapist, the late Dr Jenő Raffai, developed a new revolutionary method he later called "Bonding Analysis" with which he accompanied pregnant women throughout their pregnancy enabling the mothers-to-be to get into mental and emotional contact with their unborn babies, the primary objectives being on the one hand to satisfy the baby's primal needs for bonding that is to say for feeling accepted, secure, protected, and most of all loved and on the other hand to enhance the future mother's bonding capacity.

Origins of the Bonding Analysis

The origins of this new approach were rooted in Dr Raffai's psychoanalytical treatment of one particular psychotic youth. He discovered that his psychic disturbances were to be traced back to the time he had spent in his mother's womb. What he predominantly lacked was the conscious feeling of his physical boundaries which made it impossible for him to perceive himself as an

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autonomous being, and it made him feel devoid of having a body of his own. Searching for the causes of these phenomena Raffai found out that the youth's mother had suffered the loss of her husband during pregnancy. Instead of mourning that loss in an adequate way she had transferred this trauma to her unborn baby considering it thenceforward to be an integral part of her own body and not wanting to let it go, so she would not lose it as she had lost her husband. At that moment the development of the baby's self-perception of its physical boundaries came to a standstill.

Raffai explained that by transferring that image to her baby it stopped perceiving itself as an autonomous being. The baby could no longer differentiate between its own body sensations, feelings and cognitive processes and those of its mother. The development of an autonomous self can only take place if the baby perceives its own self on the basis of the image that has developed in the mother's consciousness which is imperative for allowing the unfolding of fetal self-awareness. (Raffai, J., & Hidas, G. (2010). *Nabelschnur der Seele*, Giessen, Germany: Psychosozial-Verlag)

Prenatal Bonding

To be mirrored necessitates the existence of another person which leads to the creation of a relationship. With regard to the prenatal and postnatal relationship between mother and child the two appropriate terms are “bonding” (on the mother's side) and “attachment” (on the baby's side). Hence, Raffai concentrated his work on the development of a method that analyses pregnant women's bonding capacity, that thrives to strengthen it or in case of bonding deficiencies finds reasons for defaults, and makes the women aware of them, thus empowering them to establish a healthy, stable, protective, and supportive bonding relationship with their babies long before their birth. Consequently, securely attached babies in turn are being empowered to develop a healthy self and, later outside their mothers' wombs, socially and emotionally stable relationships. Raffai placed his main focus on the utmost importance of pregnant women's emotional and mental conditions during the gestation period and their impacts on the babies.

Bonding is the baby's most essential primal need because when fulfilled it secures its survival. The baby behaves in ways that elicits contact or proximity to the caregiver, in most cases the mother. The baby possesses the necessary innate instinct to use a certain behavioural repertoire transmitted via genetic programming and through the transfer of transgenerational experiences to ensure that its primal caregiver provides it with food and conveys the feeling of being protected and affectionately supported when catering for its needs. (Hüther, G. (2006) *The Compassionate Brain. How Empathy Creates Intelligence*. Boston & London: Shambhala Publications)

Importance of Prenatal Bonding, Its Functioning And the Supporting Neurobiological Processes

The essential questions are now first, why is PRENATAL bonding more important than bonding that starts after birth as is still the common assumption of the public at large? Secondly, how does prenatal bonding work and last but not least what are the neurobiological underpinnings of prenatal bonding and its impacts on the baby's brain development?

The answer to the first question is given by Professor Dr. Gerald Hüther, one of the most renowned German neurobiologist and brain researcher The first bonding that actually starts at conception is the very first and earliest bonding experience of every human being and it serves as an internal working model for all future relationships. This model is based on the experience that others are

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trustworthy, that one sees oneself as valuable and that this self is efficient when interacting with others.

Furthermore, and as essential as the first reason, prenatal bonding definitively has the most positive effect on the development of the fetal brain, especially that of the limbic system and the brainstem. The controlling system acting on the bonding behaviour is situated in the orbitofrontal cortex of the right brain hemisphere. This region harbours the circuitry between the lower emotional areas and the higher cognitive ones. This is the place where cognitive and emotional processes are being integrated and coordinated. It has been evidenced for example that emotional negligence and child abuse lead to a reduced formation of synapses within the orbitofrontal cortex. Synapses are the linking elements within the neuronal networks and the neurotransmitters take care of transporting information from cell to cell. The orbitofrontal cortex represents the highest level of behavioural control and regulation of the limbic excitation including the newborn's capacity of self-regulation. (Hüther, G. (2012). *Vorgeburtliche Einflüsse auf die Gehirnentwicklung*. Lecture at the University of Göttingen, Germany. Retrieved from www.gerald-huether.de)

The beginning of the pre-nate's brain development starts as early as the 18th day after conception with the forming of the neural tube which, within the next 6 weeks, grows into the main brain structures of cerebellum, thalamus, basal ganglia and cerebral cortex. Every day, around 700 new synaptic connections are being formed in the pre-nate's brain creating together around 60 million new neuronal networks per day. The baby is born with approximately 100 billion neurons.

The adult brain consists of hundreds of billions of neurons which in turn are connected via thousands of billions of neural synapses. The latter determine our cognitive, emotional and behavioural processes. The more synapses a human brain has the more complex and differentiated its neuronal networks become and the more intelligent and creative the person is going to be.

The setting up of the highly complex interconnected neuronal networks starts already in the womb comprising all cognitive and psychological processes that are linked together by means of neuro-electrical and neuro-chemical activities in those networks. Genetic information form the basis for the formation of the nervous system but the neuronal connections can for example be influenced by negative factors such as maternal stress, alcohol or drug abuse. This neural network can be altered with the help of a positive and effective early bonding experience which in turn has a positive impact on the development of a child's adult personality. The neuronal circuits are extremely plastic which means they can easily adapt to new circumstances.

Gerald Hüther explains the function of the synaptical connections as follows: They turn into inner representations, mental pictures that ingrain themselves into the baby's brain. With every new image the baby expands its knowledge about the world outside its mother's womb and the moment it is born it already possesses a vast amount of these mental images and associative connections. This experience also helps the baby to form a positive interior maternal image that is not only linked to the visual cortex but also associated with her special voice, her special scent and particularly marked by their common experiences. The more positive internal images the mother conveys to her baby the more anchored and consolidated that kind of experience becomes in the pre-nate's brain. (Hüther, G. (2008). *Die Macht der inneren Bilder*. Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht)

How does Raffai's Bonding Analysis work? The communication between mother and baby takes place via mental pictures, visualisations, verbal messages. Everything that is being sent and said is registered by the baby's mind and body. This communication process is made possible through the mirror neurons which

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i.a. form the neuronal basis of the human capacity for emotions such as empathy. After the first series of baby sessions the flow of information and communication becomes more and more intense and the mother develops her intuition for her baby's needs. That way the baby's learning ability is enhanced and its brain intensely stimulated. (Balkenhol-Wright, C., & Karrasch, Christine (2017) *Mit Deiner Liebe wächst meine Seele*. Zetel, Germany: Einklang Verlag) Another channel through which mother and baby communicate are the different brainwaves. At the root of all our thoughts, emotions and behaviours is the communication between neurons within our brains. Brainwaves are produced by synchronised electrical pulses from masses of neurons communicating with each other. Alpha brainwaves open the door to meditative states and facilitate the visualisation of mental images. Alpha waves aid overall mental coordination, calmness and mind/body integration. Delta brainwaves are generated in deepest meditation and dreamless sleep. Delta waves suspend external awareness and are the source of empathy. Theta brainwaves are dominant in sleep and deep meditation. They open the gates to learning and memorising. When these waves are active our senses are withdrawn from the external world and focused on signals originating from within. Vivid imagery is enhanced and intuition and information beyond our normal conscious awareness are being activated. This is exactly what happens when the pregnant woman is gently led into a meditative state during the bonding analysis sessions.

Impact of Maternal Stress during Pregnancy

In all the years Raffai accompanied pregnant women he saw that the majority of them were in more or less obvious stress situations. How does stress affect the development of the prenat's brain? If the unborn baby is flooded by its mother's stress hormones or if the mother's anxiety is transferred to the baby for a longer period of time then the baby might not be able to structure and understand the outside world and if there is no mental or emotional connection with the mother the brain's structuring process might risk to become destabilized or even fall into regression. The baby thus experiences the feeling of its own coping disability and incompetence whereupon both are structurally anchored in its brain instead of a problem-solving capacity. Maternal stress during pregnancy has numerous negative impacts on the baby's brain, for example it can lead to disorders of the hormone production of the hypothalamus, the hypophysis and the adrenal glands, the so-called HPA-Axis. The constant arousal of the HPA-Axis eventually leads to an impairment of the immune system and a higher level of cortisol hampers numerous genes that are responsible for the production of immune transmitters. (Balkenhol-Wright, C., & Karrasch, Christine (2017) *Mit Deiner Liebe wächst meine Seele*. Zetel, Germany: Einklang Verlag) During the bonding analysis sessions, bonding facilitator and mother-to-be search for the factors or circumstances that cause the stress and then both work out ways and means of how to deal with stress in such a way that relieves the pregnant woman's tension and consequently that of her baby. This also helps to put new impulses into the baby's brain.

Impact of Prenatal Influences - A Case History

To prove the role of prenatal influences, researchers have been using for some time now the experimental technique of „cross-fostering“ to find evidence in how far both prenatal and postnatal environmental factors interact with genetic disposition (nature versus nurture). To that end they changed the offspring of 2 rat mothers right after birth. The one mother had proved to be especially competent and caring with a previous rearing whereas the other had treated her offspring in a rather negligent and incompetent way. The result was evident: to

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turn into a caring mother does not necessitate a genetic disposition but very early positive experiences.

The scientists then took another step forward to verify whether the cross-fostering yielded the same results under intrauterine conditions. They transferred female rat embryos almost immediately after fertilization. They had chosen 2 different phyla, the first one had shown to be very cautious when experiencing new surroundings and the second one possessed good spacial orientation skills. Later, after birth and when grown up the 2 phyla behaved in the same way as the mothers that had born and reared them. The experiment clearly showed that intrauterine experiences prevail. (Hüther, G. (2012). Vorgeburtliche Einflüsse auf die Gehirnentwicklung. Lecture at the University of Göttingen, Germany. Retrieved from www.gerald-huether.de)

In how far these findings could be applied to the human species might be demonstrated by the following case history: Annette, a 24-year old German student, who „had learnt to love her baby.....“ (Balkenhol-Wright, C., & Karrasch, Christine (2017) *Mit Deiner Liebe wächst meine Seele*. Zetel, Germany: Einklang Verlag) started the bonding analysis in her 13th week of pregnancy. She did not like nor accept the idea of being pregnant. She had had a brief relationship with another student who when learning about the pregnancy was deeply appalled and furiously demanded an abortion. So, the first inner picture the fetus received was that of utter rejection from both sides, mother and father.

According to Rien Verdult, a renowned Belgian psychotherapist who specializes in the treatment of emotional problems rooted predominantly in life before and after birth, this very early rejection is one of many formative traumas that the unborn baby may suffer at the beginning of its intrauterine life. (Verdult, R., (2014) *Birth Psychology*. Presentation at the Annual Bonding Analysis Conference, Cologne, Germany)

Annette had also thought of having an abortion but being catholic she finally decided against it. Annette's inner deliberations about having an abortion or not reached the unborn baby and caused a second trauma. When she told her parents about her pregnancy it was particularly her mother who reacted quite violently and demanded that she should give the baby up for adoption immediately after birth.

During the course of the bonding analysis it turned out that Annette's mother had never liked her daughter, as a matter of fact had always expressed her disappointment of having had a daughter as a first child and had clearly given preference to Annette's younger brother. So it seems that rejection runs in the family and when Annette learnt that she in turn was expecting a baby girl, she felt deep despair and even panic. With the help of the special techniques of the bonding analysis elaborated by Raffai, Annette succeeded in accepting her womanhood and accordingly her motherhood in the course of an intensive development and maturation process. Raffai's objective that „the pregnant woman should stop being her mother's child in order to become her baby's mother“ was thus achieved. (Raffai, J., & Hidas, G. (2010). *Nabelschnur der Seele*, Giessen, Germany: Psychosozial-Verlag)

Annette no longer saw her baby as an enemy, a sort of culprit that had ruined her life but at the end of the BA-sessions she perceived her baby girl even as an ally. By and by she got into a very affectionate contact with her baby during the inner dialogues. In her mind's eye she took her baby in her arms, caressed and cuddled it and most importantly smiled at it. She conveyed all those images to her baby through the channels previously explained. Moreover, by doing so she also triggered the mirror-neurons in her baby's brain to fire off!

Through her mother's mirroring the pre-nate internalizes and assimilates the image that her mother perceives of her allowing her to build up a positive

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representation of her own Self. This kind of emotional attention has a strong influence on the formation of neuronal connections and synaptic circuitry. Accepting the baby accompanied by affectionate feelings is an extremely strong bonding experience that forms the neurological basis for the baby's capacity to enter into emotionally solid relationships later in her adult life. (Balkenhol-Wright, C., & Karrasch, Christine (2017) *Mit Deiner Liebe wächst meine Seele*. Zetel, Germany: Einklang Verlag)

Translating Annette's transformation into neurobiological terms the evolving transformational process that took place in Annette's baby's brain can be described as follows: first, the baby's brain was flooded with negative inner images of rejection, but as Gerald Hüther so scholarly explains, the brain's plasticity always allows for alterations, so that new positive images can be superimposed. Before the integration of new images the corresponding brain regions get into a state of excitement which expands into the lower subcortical centers, They in turn have the power to alter the excitability of the higher cortical neurons via the release of neurotransmitters. This process generates a state of so-called „focused attention“ allowing the brain to integrate this new image into the brain's repertoire of inner images by superposing it on the former negative one. The more positive inner images reach the brain, the more stabilised and consolidated the neuronal pathways become. (Strüber, N., (2016). *Die erste Bindung*. Stuttgart, Germany: Klett-Cotta)

In the course of time, the structural pattern of neurons and dendrites form a matrix with which all subsequent neurons and dendrites align. For Annette's baby this meant that the moment Annette started to convey positive images of her as a caring and affectionate mother the former negative images of rejection faded away. Of course, it cannot be excluded that some kind of remaining elements of these negative images stay on and may be triggered when a situation arises similar to the negative one that was first experienced. However, when the bonding process between baby and mother continues to solidify it enables the baby to form what Hüther calls „durable coping strategies“ for dealing with stressful situations on the basis of the earlier experienced acceptance, support, empathy, affection, and understanding.

Today, Annette describes her 18-month old daughter as a lively, easy-going, affectionate little girl who is very creative, eager to discover her surroundings and who appears quite self-contained. This case history and particularly the little girl and the many other babies whose mothers had been accompanied by the Bonding Analysis are the living proof that this method is a tool qualified to help prevent the development of affective disorders such as anxiety or depression amongst others.

Further Prenatal Traumas

There are 2 other cases of traumas the prenatal experiences that are worth mentioning: the first one clearly being the birth process itself which every human being inevitably has to go through and the second one is an experience that can cause lifelong sadness and depression and concerns the loss of one or more siblings especially at the beginning of the intrauterine life.

Peter Bourquin, specialised in family constellations, reports about the research work of the biologist and geneticist, Charles Boklage who outlines that 12 % of all fertilized eggs produce multiple pregnancies, 76 % of them dissolve completely, 22 % end up in a single pregnancy and about 2 % lead to the birth of twins. This means that for every twin birth there are at least 10 babies that started their intrauterine life as a twin but were born as a singleton having lost a brother or sister early in their intrauterine life. (Bourquin, P. & Cortés, C. (2016). *Der allein geliebene Zwilling*. Köln, Germany: Innenwelt Verlag)

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The most tragic part of that experience is that the withering away of one of the twins often happens during the first trimester of the pregnancy that is to say at a time when the disappearance of one fetus remains mostly unnoticed by the pregnant woman. No one else but the remaining baby suffers that loss, and that means losing the most important person in its life, a person that is even more important than the mother as scientists specialized in twin research have found out.

Every psychotherapist who has a long track record of treating (adult) patients suffering from depression of various degrees of intensity caused by the loss of a beloved person knows how devastating this can be. It does not take a lot of imagination to conceive the impact of such a loss on the pre-nate. Extremely strong feelings are being triggered, on one side feelings of utter loneliness, abandonment, yearning, mourning but on the other side also feelings of guilt ("Did I kill him/her?" or "Why couldn't I save him/her?"), fury ("Why was I left behind?"), even feeling the terror of going to die, too. All these strong feelings have a deep, formative impact on the neurogenesis of the limbic system which might even lead to a state of shock-induced paralysis.

In his book Raffai describes how pregnant women gained that kind of experience actually receiving the image of their unborn baby crouched in the womb, often motionless, not able to react to the mother's trying to get into mental contact. In a number of cases the loss of a twin was represented in the womb by a black spot and the surviving baby avoided moving to that place. (Raffai, J. (2015). *Gesammelte Aufsätze*. Heidelberg, Germany: Mattes Verlag) Evidently, no research is possible on a pre-nate's brain's reaction to the loss of a twin, but by extrapolating the results of research carried out on the adult brain it can be assumed that identical processes take place in the unborn baby's brain, even with more intensity as the baby has not yet developed appropriate resiliences and cognitive emotional and behavioral coping strategies to handle such an absolutely traumatic experience.

Research on adults' mourning reactions has shown that the longer the mourning period goes on - and eventually turning into a deep depression - the neurogenesis of the hippocampus comes to a standstill and massive disorders arise in the same neuronal circuitry of the brain regions that also react to stress, the most important one being the HPA-Axis. The hypothalamus produces too much of the CRF (Corticotropin-Releasing-Factor) which in turn causes the pituitary gland to release Corticotropin or ACTH which again stimulates the adrenal cortex to produce the stress hormone cortisol. So there are the same operating processes going on in the pre-nate's brain independently whether it suffers from maternal stress or the loss of a twin brother or sister. (Roth, G. & Strüber, N. (2015) *Wie das Gehirn die Seele macht*. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta)

If in the course of the BA-sessions the bonding facilitator notices indications that the pregnancy had started as a twin or even multiple one the pregnant woman is invited to mentally visualize her uterus and to see whether she finds traces of a twin loss often taking on the form of a dark spot as Raffai found out in quite a number of cases. Raffai's corresponding instructions are clear and quite simple. The mother-to-be is to explain to her baby that she has become aware of the loss and then she invites her baby to mourn together. In many cases the baby reacts positively and Raffai had actually experienced that babies had woken up from their stupor-like state. The baby then gains the experience that its feelings of sorrow are perceived and mirrored. This process, made possible due to the brain's enormous plasticity, contributes to the formation of resiliences and strengthens the acquisition of the coping capacities mentioned earlier. (Raffai, J., & Hidas, G. (2010). *Nabelschnur der Seele*, Giessen, Germany: Psychosozial-Verlag)

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With regard to the trauma of twin loss the ART Technologies (Assisted Reproductive Technologies) may probably produce a lot of traumatised babies caused in the beginning by the conception that takes place in the totally sterile surroundings of a laboratory and the eventually by what is known as “embryo selection”. In those cases again the Bonding Analysis can serve as a salutogenic instrument to offset the sequelae of these kinds of traumatic experience. (Balkenhol-Wright, C., & Karrasch, Christine (2017) *Mit Deiner Liebe wächst meine Seele*. Zetel, Germany: Einklang Verlag)

Birth trauma is another broad topic that would also need comprehensive analysis and description. Suffice it to say that the birth process elicits enormous fear, even mortal fear especially if the umbilical cord happens to hamper the free moving forward through the parturient channel. The most vital and the most helpful part of Raffai's Bonding Analysis concerns the birth preparation sessions where mother and baby go through an intense and repetitive rehearsal of the birth procedure together. Birth thus becomes team work giving the baby a strong feeling of security and support through the constant contact with its mother. (Raffai, J. (2015). *Gesammelte Aufsätze*. Heidelberg, Germany: Mattes Verlag)

If for medical reasons a caesarean must be performed, again mother and baby prepare this surgical intervention together thus preventing the enormous horror experience of being abruptly extracted from the motherly womb. By the way, researchers have found out that the genetic expression of babies born the natural way differs in some special regards from that of babies brought into the world via a caesarean operation. (Hildebrandt, S. (2015) *Schwangerschaft und Geburt prägen das Leben*. Heidelberg, Germany: Mattes Verlag)

The Neurobiological Underpinnings of the Bonding Analysis

That finally leads to the answer of the last question, what are the neurobiological underpinnings of the bonding analysis?

The genetic program of the human genome determines the brain's structural blueprint. The function-related structuring however is primarily the result of the interaction of the prenatals' cells with the maternal organism and her metabolites. The maturation process of the baby's organs is the effect of the dialogue between fetal and maternal cells. The pregnant woman communicates with her environment taking in countless substances and experiences that are being transferred to the fetus through different channels. Especially the way a pregnant woman deals with stressful situations shapes the control functions of the prenatal brain and may consequently change the baby's gene expression!

Moreover, one of the most prominent features of the human brain is its plasticity also named neuro-plasticity allowing the brain to develop adaptive capacities under various environmental conditions. As explained before, the earliest bonding experiences are being memorized in the prenatals' cells. One of the most striking scientific discoveries concerns the so-called cellular memory or consciousness which refers to a kind of preverbal memory, contained within the physical body of experiences that babies gain in the womb and which are transmitted to them by their mothers via chemical and biological processes. All negative and positive feelings the mother-to-be goes through are being transferred to the baby, stress, impacts of violence perpetrated against her, depression, but also feelings of joy, harmony and strength.

Maternal care influences the formation of neurological structures in the prenatal's brain releasing endogenous neurotransmitters such as endorphins and oxytocin which is also known as the most efficient bonding hormone. The oxytocin system is the neurobiological mechanism responsible for the regulation of multifaceted social behavioural patterns and the bonding capacity. Higher doses of oxytocin reduce for example the quantity of stress hormones, increase social interactions and enhance bonding behaviour. (Balkenhol-Wright, C., & Karrasch,

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Christine (2017) Mit Deiner Liebe wächst meine Seele. Zetel, Germany: Einklang Verlag)

To sum up, the influence of the genes and the environmental that is to say the intrauterine conditions interact with each other which means that the genes determine how intensive the effect of all experiences is and the experiences in turn determine which genes are activated. The prenat's overall learning and particularly bonding experience are the main prerequisites for an enhanced brain development and serve as a working model for behaving adequately within social interactions.

The Bonding Analysis can be considered a very efficient salutogenetic instrument that serves to enhance the healthy development of the fetal brain throughout the nine months of intrauterine life. It strengthens the bonding between mother and baby by fostering the pregnant woman's bonding capacity. It is also a prevention method due to the fact that it allows for the baby's acquisition of strong, efficient coping skills, of healthy behavioural patterns and the growing of resiliences mainly through advancing the creation of a great variety of neuronal pathways and synaptic connections in the brain.

Christa Balkenhol-Wright has a Master's Degree in Translation from the University of Geneva, Switzerland. She worked for many years at a government Ministry in the Language and Translation Department. Furthermore, she has been lecturing at various universities for over 15 years, teaching Biotechnology, Biomedical Engineering, Chemistry, Academic and Scientific Writing.

She is also a bonding facilitator, with expertise in prenatal psychology and hypnotherapy. She is founder and chair of PRENATUS e.V (<http://prenatus-ev.de/Impressum/>) and the editor and author (together with Christine Karrasch) of Mit Deiner Liebe wächst meine Seele [Rough translation: Your love makes my mind and soul grow]. The prenat's life and experience. Bonding Analysis in theory and practice: A method to promote prenatal bonding (Einklang Verlag, Zetel, Germany, to be published in October 2017).

For more information about Bonding Analysis and Prenatus e.V, please contact Christa at Prenatus-ev@gmx.de or kriba@gmx.net

Events Diary

ISPPM Dates

October 28/29, 2017

Ev. Johannisstift Berlin Spandau, Germany

April 5 - 7, 2018 (ATTENTION: Thursday to Saturday!)

International Cooperation Congress with GAIMH, ISPPM Switzerland and ISPPM e.V.

Kreuzlingen, Switzerland

Theme: Touch shapes

Congress language: German

June 1-3, 2018 Bonding Analysis conference

Cologne

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October 26/27, 2018

Conference „Single born twin“

Berlin

Other Congresses and Conferences

September 19 – 22, 2017

VI International Congress

Young Generation of the XXI Century: Actual Problems of Social-Psychological Health

Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation, St. Petersburg State Pediatric Medical University, Association of Child Psychiatrists and Psychologists
St. Petersburg

Information: acpp@inbox.ru and igra-msk@mail.ru

September 22 – 24, 2017

International Stillbirth Alliance Conference

University College Cork, Ireland

isacork2017.com

October 8 – 10, 2017

VIIIth RECENT ADVANCES IN NEONATAL MEDICINE

Würzburg, Germany

www.recent-advances.com

October 29, 2017

4th Biodynamic Body-Psychotherapy London Conference

London, United Kingdom

www.biodynamic-bodypsychotherapy.co.uk/

November 1 – 5, 2017

XI INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF BODY PSYCHOTHERAPY

Mexico, Mexico

iscforbodypsychotherapy.org

November 11/12, 2017

PCS World Conference of Reproductive Health (WCRH-2017)

Bridging Basic Research and Clinical Practice

Athens, Greece

<http://www.pcscongress.com/wcrh2017/>

November 24/25, 2017

AIPC 3de Congresso Nazionale La Psicoterapia Prende Corpo

ROMA, Italy

<http://www.psicoterapiecorporee.it/>

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November 29 – December 4, 2017

20th APPPAH International Congress

The Conscious Baby Emerges: Scientific, Medical, Psycho-Social, and Somatic Discoveries

San Diego

<https://birthpsychology.com/2017-conference/welcome>

February 22 – 25, 2018

5th International Congress on Cardiac Problems in Pregnancy (CPP)

Bologna, Italy

September 6 – 9, 2018

EABP Congress 2018

Body Psychotherapy and Challenges of Today.....Alienation - Vitality - Flow

Berlin, Germany

<https://congress.eabp.org>

Further Education

In Germany:

Training in Bonding Analysis

With Dr. Helga Blazy and Hannelore Dehne

In Cologne

Interested people please contact

Helga Blazy: nc-blazyhe@netcologne.de

In Austria:

IPPE-Foundation Course

with Max Peschek, Claudia Versluis und Team

Beginning November 2019

Information: www.ippe.at/kurse/foundation

Registration: Claudia Versluis: claudia.versluis@aon.at

In England:

Integrative Baby Therapy Training

With Matthew Appleton & Jenni Meyer

An in-depth training designed for people already working with babies and children. Previous participants have included midwives, doulas, craniosacral therapists, osteopaths, paediatricians, paediatric nurses, lactation consultants, massage therapists, body psychotherapists, psychologists and ante-natal yoga teachers. The course consists of 6 modules, each 3 days long, and spread over 18 months. It is grounded in the practicalities of working with parents and their babies and aimed at developing the confidence and skills to identify and help resolve prenatal and birth trauma.

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More information:

<http://www.conscious-embodiment.co.uk/courses/integrative-baby-therapy-training>

Workshops/Seminars

In Germany:

Early Imprints

With [Charisse Basquin](#)

Max. Number of participants: 6

September 27-30, 2017 in Erlangen

Further information: Charisse Basquin, Anstruther, Scotland, Tel. 0044 (0) 7531 863160, E-mail: EarlyimprintsUK@gmail.com

Praxis Susanne von der Emde, Leithenstrasse 4a, 91080 Marloffstein, Tel. 0049 9131 – 5300191, E-mail: Susanne.vonderemde@t-online.de

<https://cbasquin.wordpress.com/contact-me/>

In Switzerland:

ISPPM Switzerland workshop program here: <https://www.isppm.ch/programm>

In Belgium:

"Healing from the very beginning"

Pre- and Perinatal Psychotherapy

With Max Peschek (IPPE), Assistants: Sylvie Geerdens and Marleen Dols

The course will be held in English. Translation in German and Dutch is possible.

Information: Marleen Dols, marleendols@online.nl

Website: <http://www.birthimprints.com>

In Austria:

Karlton Terry, Claudia Versluis, Max Peschek & team:

- **Discovery**
29. october - 3. november 2017
- **Umbilical Affect**
20. - 25. march 2018

These courses are open to all students who have finished an IPPE- foundationcourse in the past: It will for a long time be the last opportunity to participate in English with Karlton Terry as teacher in Europe.

If you want to continue your prenatal journey researching these themes, then there is an opportunity now: there are a few places left for students who have already finished the foundationcourse in former years.

Please let us know soon if you're interested, there are only few places that might be filled up fast.

We start 14:00 the first day and end 13:00 the last day

Seminarhouse Die Lichtung: www.die-lichtung.at

Travel: close to Krems; flight to Vienna, then train and/or travel with other participants

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tuition each course € 740,-

Information and registration: Claudia Versluis, claudia.versluis@aon.at, Mobil 00 43 664 5517235

More: www.ippe.at

In Slovenia:

Self-Experiential Workshop "Journey to one's own pregnancy, childbirth and early childhood"

(Body psychotherapy according to Franz Renggli)

with Michaela Mardonovic and Michael Josef Egarter

Location: Horus Center Ljubljana

Contact: Michaela Mardonovic, info@horus-center.com, mobil +386 51 747 545

In England:



Workshop mit Antonella Sansone

Gems of Ancient Wisdom

Before Conception throughout Pregnancy, Birth and Parenting

A visit to the Himba, a tribe of Namibia, with images of their social life and allomothering

For further details please contact: antonellasansone8@gmail.com

Online:

Professional Seminars with APPPAH:

You can see about the complete Education Department offerings at

birthpsychology.com

Publication Announcement

Child-Rearing: Practices, Attitudes and Cultural Differences

Editor: Goetz Egloff (Psychoanalyst, Practice for Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy, Mannheim, Germany)

Nova Science Publishers

Series: Family Issues in the 21st Century

Pub. Date: 2017 - 4th quarter

ISBN: 978-1-53612-777-5

Book Description:

Family research has developed into a broad discipline. It encompasses psychological, sociological and anthropological aspects, and has synchronic and diachronic research perspectives. Child-rearing conditions depend on many factors, and socio-cultural aspects are seminal to understanding family and childhood development. The volume contributes to the tradition of integrating theory and practice through presenting both family and childhood research findings, emphasizing the connections between society and the lives of

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individuals. Methodological individualist approaches are augmented by both psychological and sociological perspectives on society. The volume places emphases on empirical-quantitative findings, on empirical-qualitative ones, and on aspects of theory. It covers child-rearing in different aspects, providing insight into the basic assumptions of socialization. The international contributions examine what is at the time crucial in their respective cultural surroundings and what had influence on people in the past. Topics included are cross-national collaboration on parenting and child adjustment; parenting in psycho-social medicine; child-rearing in China; violence prevention with the Second Step; child-rearing and Triple P in Japan; depression, motherhood and family in literature; emancipation in the early republic; original sin and psychoanalysis; and psychoanalytic assumptions and their implications for socialization concepts and child-rearing.

The beginning of the 21st century brought along an aggravation of living conditions in many parts of the world. On the other hand, several global achievements have been accomplished, and freedom in issues of personal life has increased. Child-rearing has certainly not become easier due to the fragmentation of traditional societal structure, and even to what Richard Sennett called corrosion of character. Socio-economic upheaval and precarization have increased in the western world, so that Alain Ehrenberg coined depression to be one consequence. The volume dedicates itself to such topics from different angles, examining experience and behavior of people and putting child-rearing characteristics in the socio-cultural context. Views from Asia, from Europe, and from the United States make for a broad perspective, so that the volume can serve a panoramic view of different practices and approaches, and provide the reader with seminal issues of family and childhood. (Nova)

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We wish you a golden autumn and look forward to seeing you again soon or to get to know you in Berlin at the ISPPM working conference!

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