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European Association for Psychotherapy

hope

International Journal of PSYCHOTHERAPY

Journal of the European Association of Psychotherapy

Volume 26 | Number 2 | Summer 2022

ISSN: 1356-9082 (Print) ISSN: 1469-8498 (Online)

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The International Journal of Psychotherapy is a peer-reviewed, scientific journal and is published three times a year by the European Association of Psychotherapy (EAP). EAP is a member of the World Council for Psychotherapy (WCP) and is an International NGO member of the Council of Europe.

Published by: European Association of Psychotherapy (EAP)
Mariahilfer Straße 1d/e, Stock/Tür 13, A-1060 Vienna, Austria
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Website: www.europsyche.org

ISSN: 1356-9082 (Print); ISSN: 1469-8498 (Online)

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The International Journal of Psychotherapy is a leading professional and academic publication, which aims to inform, to stimulate debate, and to assist the profession of psychotherapy to develop throughout Europe and also internationally. It is properly (double-blind) peer-reviewed.

The Journal raises important issues in the field of European and international psychotherapy practice, professional development, and theory and research for psychotherapy practitioners, related professionals, academics & students. The Journal is published by the European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP), three times per annum. It has been published for 24 years. It is currently working towards obtaining a listing on several different Citation Indices and thus gaining an Impact Factor from each of these.

The focus of the Journal includes:

- Contributions from, and debates between, the different European methods and modalities in psychotherapy, and their respective traditions of theory, practice and research;
- Contemporary issues and new developments for individual, group and psychotherapy in specialist fields and settings;
- Matters related to the work of European professional psychotherapists in public, private and voluntary settings;
- Broad-ranging theoretical perspectives providing informed discussion and debate on a wide range of subjects in this fast expanding field;
- Professional, administrative, training and educational issues that arise from developments in the provision of psychotherapy and related services in European health care settings;
- Contributing to the wider debate about the future of psychotherapy and reflecting the internal dialogue within European psychotherapy and its wider relations with the rest of the world;
- Current research and practice developments – ensuring that new information is brought to the attention of professionals in an informed and clear way;
- Interactions between the psychological and the physical, the philosophical and the political, the theoretical and the practical, the traditional and the developing status of the profession;
- Connections, communications, relationships and association between the related professions of psychotherapy, psychology, psychiatry, counselling and health care;
- Exploration and affirmation of the similarities, uniqueness and differences of psychotherapy in the different European regions and in different areas of the profession;
- Reviews of new publications: highlighting and reviewing books & films of particular importance in this field;
- Comment and discussion on all aspects and important issues related to the clinical practice and provision of services in this profession;
- A dedication to publishing in European 'mother-tongue' languages, as well as in English.

This journal is therefore essential reading for informed psychological and psychotherapeutic academics, trainers, students and practitioners across these disciplines and geographic boundaries, who wish to develop a greater understanding of developments in psychotherapy in Europe and world-wide. We have recently developed several new 'Editorial Policies' that are available on the IJP website, via the 'Ethos' page: **www.ijp.org.uk**

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The IJP Website: www.ijp.org.uk

The IJP website is very comprehensive, with many different pages. It is fairly easy to negotiate using the tabs across the top of the website pages.

You are also able to subscribe to the Journal through the website – and we have several different 'categories' of subscriptions.

You can also purchase single articles and whole issues as directly downloaded PDF files by using the Catalogue on the IJP website. Payment is by PayPal. We still have some printed copies of most of the Back Issues available for sale.

Furthermore, we believe that **'Book Reviews'** form an essential component to the 'web of science'. We currently have about 60 books available to be reviewed: please consult the relevant pages of the IJP website and ask for the books that you would enjoy reviewing: and – as a reviewer – you would get to keep the book. All previously published Book Reviews are available as free PDF files.

There is also a whole cornucopia of material that is currently freely available on-line (see the top left-hand corner of the website). **Firstly**: there are several "Open Access" books on Psychotherapy available, free-of-charge; **next** there are an increasing number of free "Open Access" articles; **then** there are often a couple of articles available from the forthcoming issue, in advance of publication.

There is also an on-going, online 'Special Issue' on **"Psychotherapy vs. Spirituality"**. This 'Special Issue' is being built up from a number of already published articles and these are available freely on-line, soon after publication.

Finally, there are a number of previously published **Briefing Papers**. There is one on: *"What can Psychotherapy do for Refugees and Migrants in Europe?"*; and one on an important new direction: *"Mapping the ECP into ECTS to gain EQF-7: A Briefing Paper for a new 'forward strategy for the EAP."* Because of a particular interest that we have in what is called by "Intellectual Property", we have included a recent briefing paper: *"Can Psychotherapeutic Methods, Procedures and Techniques" be patented, and/or copyrighted, and/or trademarked? – A Position Paper."* Lastly, as part of the initiative to promote psychotherapy as an independent profession in Europe, we have: *"EAP Statement on the Legal Position of Psychotherapy in Europe"*, which we published in a recent issue.

International Journal of Psychotherapy

Editorial

Courtenay Young

Editor, International Journal of Psychotherapy

Dear **Readers of** – and **Subscribers to** – the **International Journal of Psychotherapy** (IJP),

This Special Issue is dedicated to the EAP's 30th Anniversary Conference, held in Vienna, Austria – and on Zoom – in March, 2022. The theme of the conference was ***"The Hope of Psychotherapy for our Endangered World"*** and it was introduced by Patricia Hunt, the current EAP President.

The whole of this issue is taken up with information about the presenters and the transcripts of the lectures and presentations, though – sadly, for us – two presenters felt that they didn't want their presentations transcribed for this issue and one of the presentations was deemed unsuitable for publication due to containing quite personal material. However, you can find most of the videos of the presentations (including these two, but not the third) on YouTube: we give you the links to these videos at the end of this Special Issue.

The videos were recorded with automatic transcription, but there were numerous 'mistakes' or 'misunderstandings' in the transcription, and so editing, clarifying and beautifying these transcriptions, and then getting them checked by the presenters themselves, has been quite a lot of work. However, during this process, I was able to reflect much more on the content of the presentation and so gained considerable depth and appreciation of the various presentations from these reflections. In their way, these presenters – from a variety of different backgrounds – show how significant psychotherapy can be, not just in understanding the threats to our world and our human society, but also how we can start to cope with these.

International Journal of Psychotherapy
Summer 2022, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 5-7; ISSN 1356-9082 (Print); ISSN 1469-8498 (Online)

Published Online: August 2022; Print publication: August 2022; DOI: 10.36075/IJP.2022.26.2.1/Young

In March 2022, there were still quite a few travel constrictions (due to Covid-19) extant in Europe, though these were beginning to ease up a bit and different countries were requiring different criteria from travellers. This had been anticipated and so it meant that a fairly large number of attendees at the Congress were participating via Zoom and contributing to the on-going 'dialog' via the "Chat" feature. At times, in some of the sessions, these Chat comments were fed back to the Congress presenter, but all of us attending via Zoom could see these and interact with them without disturbing the presentation. As far as is possible, we have included the record of the Chat from each presentation, after the main text of the presentation, although they were happening simultaneously.

However, what no-one realised in the planning stages was that just about two or three weeks before the Congress started, our world became exceptionally / exponentially much more 'endangered' with the aggressive Russian invasion of the Ukraine, that has since turned into a drawn-out, full-blown war. Many of the presenters and the participants (and not just those from the Ukraine and Russia) were deeply affected by these events and you can read some of their comments in the transcripts of the presentations and also in the Chats from the participants.

We have not been able to reproduce all of the interactive dialogue exactly, as the Chats were happening both during and after the presentations, but we have tried to reproduce the Chats as accurately as possible, with all the emojis, etc. The audience participation thus became a very significant part of the Congress, both from those present physically and via Zoom. There were about 50 people physically present in Vienna and over 200 people were attending by Zoom, though this figure varied from session to session.

There was one very dramatic event. During Sue Daniel's presentation, the person who was introducing Sue Daniel was the EAP General Secretary, Eugenijus Laurinaitis, who had just heard – that morning – that there was a 'threat' from the Russian President, Putin that, after the Ukraine, his home country Lithuania, was going to be next country to be invaded. This threat wasn't totally clear from the transcripts and the chats, but the general concern can be felt. This announcement – still hopefully only a threat – naturally caused some confusion (*'Was this fake news?'*) and also – of course – considerable distress – and not just to Eugenijus and other Lithuanians.

However, whilst the war and a number of social issues got several mentions, personally I felt that, throughout the Congress, insufficient emphasis was put on what we – as individuals, as professional clinicians, and as responsible members of society – need to, have to, do – in order to mitigate the increasingly negative environmental impact that human beings and their activities are making: – the cumulative effects of 7+ billion people all struggling to improve their standard of living on one small planet are environmentally disastrous. As I see it, there is no way that … just reducing CO_2 emissions; or trying to save this species from extinction; or trying to improve that fragile habitat from deg-

radation … will be somewhat ineffective, unless we also tackle the exponential population increase and the usage of limited natural resources. Several years ago, I wrote a series of 'environmental' poems, and (in about 1987) I wrote a poem, *"Our Children's Children"* [1] where the refrain was *"What are our children's children going to blame us for?"*: one of the lines was, *"And did you really still drive cars in twenty-twenty-four?"* Sadly, even though I am now a grandfather, that plea seems to have been largely ignored, and even though the advent of electric cars can be welcomed, the use of precious metals for their batteries is somewhat counter-productive. Anyway, enough of my stuff! Back to the Congress and this Special Issue. We hope that you will enjoy this issue.

Finally, please make sure that all your psychotherapy colleagues – in your practice, your professional association or organisation, or in your country – are aware of this Journal and especially this issue. We have potentially 120,000 readers and want to make sure that they are all aware of the Journal. If you are active within a professional association (national or European-wide organisation), please make sure that electronic (PDF) copies of all the issues of the Journal are circulated to all the members of your association, or that they know how to download them from the EAP website www.europsyche.org/about-eap/journals and/or IJP website: www.ijp.org.uk

As another point, we are currently looking for new members of the IJP Editorial Team, especially an English-language Editor: more details about this position are posted on the IJP website.

As a final note, we are extremely sorry to inform you that a previous Editor of the IJP and a dear colleague, Tom Ormay, passed away in February of this year, though we did not learn about this until April. We will be publishing an obituary, **"Remembering Tom Ormay"** in the next issue. As is our usual practice, we welcome and will publish any submissions, memories, condolences, etc. – please submit these as soon as possible to the IJP: admin@ijp.org.uk

1. www.courtenay-young.co.uk/courtenay/poetry/Our__Childrens__Children.pdf

Opening Address

by Patricia Hunt: EAP President

EAP PRESIDENT – PATRICIA HUNT

Patricia Hunt, **FRSA** [1], is the current President of the European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP), and Chairperson of the EAP 30th Anniversary Congress. She is a Psychotherapist, Consultant and Advisor with more than 30 years clinical experience in the public, national health and higher education sectors. She trained in psychotherapy following her work at the Hillsborough Disaster UK in 1989 (www.youtu.be/kp_c-eqaQj8). She also became director of a large psychotherapy and counselling service at the University of Nottingham, serving staff and students across their national and international campuses. She founded and established a new psychotherapy and counselling service at the University's international campus in Ningbo, China.

She is now playing a major role in the networking and development of EAP and in the establishment of the independent profession of psychotherapy in Europe.

Almost a year ago, as we began to work on this Congress, we wanted to use the moment of our 30th anniversary. To turn out towards to offer to the world, the wisdom of psychotherapy. And the hope of psychotherapy. The perspective, a year ago was that the world was endan-

1. **Fellow of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce** (FRSA) is an award granted to individuals that the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) judges to have made outstanding achievements toward social progress and development

International Journal of Psychotherapy
Summer 2022, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 9-22: ISSN 1356-9082 (Print); ISSN 1469-8498 (Online)

Submitted: March 2020; formatted: June/July 2022. DOI: 10.36075/IJP.2022.26.2.2/Hunt

gered by climate crisis, pollution, and environmental change. And that is, of course, still true but, as I stand here today, we have a new aspect of our endangered world, because of the invasion of Ukraine. Both Ukrainian and Russian colleagues are with us today: Ukraine and Russia are both part of EAP. And so, my message to you today is that we warmly welcome you to the Congress and we offer you support and care throughout the Congress.

And this will hopefully give you something through the vision and inspiration of this Congress and its participants – our message of the Hope of Psychotherapy for our Endangered World is so relevant for you. Now, in this present moment, the Hope of Psychotherapy has actually been expressed, in a very tangible way, through the World Council for Psychotherapy statement to the Russian government. The statement was written, just after the invasion of Ukraine, and this has now been translated into many languages, including Arabic, Hebrew and Persian. EAP is part of the World Council for Psychotherapy, and the statement, which has been submitted to the Russian government says:

> *"The World Council for Psychotherapy calls upon the Russian government to immediately cease the invasion of Ukraine, stop the war, respect the law of nations, and bring back all Russian troops and weapons to their home country. It is our view, as psychotherapists, that military invasion never solves problems, and never achieves its intended aims. Instead, it creates immense damage and causes destruction, on many levels, which can reverberate through the generations trans generationally. This includes the personal suffering and deep trauma of both families and individuals at somatic mental, and emotional levels psychotherapists are committed to peaceful negotiation dialogue and debate in conflict resolution. And we condemn war and violence. We call upon the Russian government to stop the war, and establish peace through diplomacy in a thoughtful and mutually respectful manner. We hope that the highest principles of the human spirit will prevail, and with all our hearts, we wish that a resolution can be found, which will restore freedom."*

The statement from the World Council for Psychotherapy has been submitted to the Russian government. Alfred has a phrase, "Use the door when it is open". I understand he used it at the start of the founding of EAP. And I think we have that moment now use the door, when it is open. We are an organization whose time has come, and the profession, whose time has come. The focus of this Congress is to discover if we can offer hope to humankind in the face of the worst catastrophe that we are facing: the threat of climate crisis, increasing pollution and reduced biodiversity. We are not engineers or politicians or policymakers, but we understand the human mind, the ways in which defences block, and distort thinking, the ways in which addictions hold the mind in their pathological grip. And we might think here of fossil fuels, the ways in which the human mind can change and heal. To become resilient, healthy, functional and effective. So, can we use our understanding, and our psychotherapeutic models to help in any way, in the process of changing attitudes on a global scale. A recent paper I read by an atmospheric scientist from New Zealand stated that, from the technological standpoint, we have all the solutions we need to solve the crisis. From the technological point, we have all the solutions we need to solve the crisis. But he said, 'What we don't have is the right mindset. We are living as though we are on an infinite planet with infinite resources. And, the change of human mindset is needed to live on our finite planet with finite resources.

Can we offer any help with this change in mindset? We don't know the answer to this yet. This is what we hope to discover through

this Congress. So, many of the approaches to the climate crisis and the problems of our endangered world are looking for solutions – and offering solutions. But, the psychotherapeutic approach doesn't look for solutions: solutions can so easily be misguided. And be much more about the person wishing to solve the problem than about the problem itself.

But it's worth looking for solutions, which is one more attempt to hold with ego to dominate with ego. And so, if we look for two men, if we just go for solutions, we might end up repeating some of the mistakes of the past and we can, perhaps, all think of ways in which we see what happens, what we have to offer the way in which this can change. We are in a privileged position as psychotherapists and yet it seems that this is increasing the pandemic has changed our work.

We have moved online: we did a survey across Europe of psychotherapists who are part of the EAP and asked them about their work during the pandemic, and it was moving and a source of pride to realize that psychotherapists had completely adapted their ways of working.

During the pandemic, the resistance to working online had gone, because the bigger need was to help those in need during the pandemic. And the way to do that was online. And so, psychotherapists moved online through the pandemic, and then became creative in discovering how are we able to give psychotherapy offer psychotherapy conduct the therapeutic process through on the online platforms.

And it seems that alongside this move online, our influence seems to have increased: lots of people describe increased demand and we're being told that people, including young people, are listening to us, noticing us. We have a voice. And we have the opportunity to use it to offer wisdom to our profession, the wisdom of our profession to the wider world. So, let us take a moment in this Congress to be the psychotherapists that we are. That is not be diminished by what we can't do, and be empowered by how we can be. That says let go. Be without memory or desire, the famous words of beyond without memory or desire.

Let us do what we do best, and are trained and experienced in that, with the greatest problems facing humankind, we speak and listen to each other: that is allow ourselves to be in the place of Unknowing – not knowing, and – in this way – clarity, imagination, insight and hope can emerge. It is within our expertise, and yet it is unfamiliar to us. We are used to working very invisibly and confidentially.

It goes against our professional and perhaps personal principles to work visibly and openly. But that is engage with this and see if we have anything to offer and give voice to it. We may discover that we haven't anything to offer, but it will still have been worth uniting together in the task of trying with people who work in a sustained rhythmical way.

And this strength changes how people talk to us. What they share with us how they trust us, how they heal. And this is similar; the need is similar. The response of humanity to the climate crisis is not going to be a quick fix. Our sustained therapeutic approach is relevant to this, and well attuned. How can we be as humanity to respond to the climate crisis and thrive and that word I think is going to come back and back during the course of the day thrive. How is it possible to thrive in this crisis?

But then we know that in times of adversity. There can be growth. We know this in our work. There's a very strong parallel process between conducting this Congress and the endangered world. Starting the preparation for the Congress, a year ago. We have had to face and deal with the harsh realities of the pandemic. We have had to continually adapt. I think this is the fifth model for this Congress.

We've had to be imaginative and do things, we wouldn't normally do. We've continually gone back to the principles of psychotherapy, to think about how to do things in the best way. We've discovered an experience that – in the need to adapt, again, and again – we have become sensitive, responsive, spontaneous, playful, even. And this has sparked our creativity and imagination and changed this Congress; it's had an impact, a positive impact on this Congress. We've had to collaborate with each other; support each other; inspire each other, and be a strong team.

We've also had to work incredibly hard; everybody involved in this Congress has worked incredibly hard. We have different gifts and areas of expertise, and we have brought these together fruitfully.

So, the parallel process here is that it is the same approach that is needed in our endangered world, endangered by climate crisis, endangered by current crisis, humanity will have to continually adapt humankind will have to be creative, imaginative and do things that we wouldn't normally do.

We will have to continually think about the most important principles to hold on to, and to work within that, this can become hope for our world. As part of my own personal response to our endangered world, last autumn, I began to drive an electric car. The whole experience of researching it, test driving it, purchasing it, was completely new. We never went to a car showroom. Instead, we went to an educational outlet, explaining the technology of the electric car, and then we configured and ordered the car, online – we ordered the car online. And it was delivered to our home, brought to our front gate, throughout the whole process. There was no pressure; there was no hard sell; there was no powerful ego trying to squeeze a bit more money out of us; no powerful ego at all, just freedom of choice.

My thinking about starting to drive an electric car was that this was a good thing to do for the planet. I was completely unprepared for the fact that driving it is such fun. It is extraordinary fun; you glide silently along. There's no noise of an engine, and the sensation is a floating, and moving smoothly, and gliding along my driving behaviour has completely changed. This is actually the most important part of the story: my driving behaviour has completely changed. I'll be honest and admit – I quite liked speed. But, with the electric car, suddenly, it's not about speed anymore. It's to do with my driving behaviour, and my thinking has just completely changed; my mindset when I'm driving has changed. It's not about speed. I enjoy the drive; I enjoy the journey. And the beauty of the journey. Nature outside the window, and the city outside the window. I'm a bit more closely connected to, and a bit more part of. So, I think my brain is engaged in a very different way. My ego is less; and my joy is more. My ego is less, and my joy is more. My hope is also more, because this is the future – and our shared future.

And I discover, it's rather wonderful. Just a few months ago, the COP-26 conference in Glasgow marked the beginning of the end of the fossil fuel era in the history of humankind: not the end, because it will take a long time to bring it to a close, and perhaps there is an element of addiction. As I mentioned earlier, which will mean, it will take a while to bring it to a close, and we will need a transition.

But this is the beginning of the end. We have already begun to lay the foundations for a new era: the green era. The green era that in addition to the technology needed can bring a new mindset, our behaviour can change as mine has our ego can become less. Perhaps, in the green era, we can live with increased imagination and creativity: an era in which we can discover; how we can thrive in new ways; ways which are natural to the human psyche and

help us with mental balance. The fossil fuel era began with industrialization, and it harnessed, not only the power of fossil fuels, but also the capacity of the human brain to think, scientifically, to forge progress, and through the power of the ego to imagine, and realize, incredible development.

The human ego was rewarded with better living conditions. And, in the years since industrialization, the ego of humankind has become strong. It's become too strong. Becoming dominant over the planet that supports this life. Some of you may be familiar with looking at the ways in which industrialization has changed our brains. I don't want to go into it in too much detail, but it seems that there's enough research evidence that we do have a sense that our brains have changed in a slightly asymmetric way: our scientific thinking, mostly in the left hemisphere, has become stronger, and our right hemisphere, which is much more closely connected with our world responds, receives incoming information is intuitive, is sensitive, is responsive as being less engaged, through the process of industrialization. And so perhaps there are ways in which our mindset really literally has changed during industrialization, but maybe there's the hope that even that can change in a green era. Once, we really begin to live within it. And also what we know is that what can bring healing and restore the balance is a therapeutic approach, individual therapy. Yes, but also therapeutic thinking on a bigger level. We work on coherence on rebalancing on communication, on connection, on metaphor, on creativity, on imagination, on enabling people to thrive.

During my preparation for the Congress, I've done extensive reading about all the most up-to-date literature in this area. Actually this, I'm pleased to say, this has increased my hope, about the ways in which humanity can rise, adapt and thrive. Nature can recover around us, if we give it the space to do so. I read about a wonderful example of this, where off the in the Gulf of California, off the coast of Mexico, the waters, had been overfished for so long that the sea had become sterile. Then, the natural fauna had disappeared because it had been overfished and then the whole web of life had disintegrated. And so, a natural park and National Park was created, in order to protect the area within the Gulf of Mexico, the Gulf of California, and fishing wasn't allowed.

They checked it after two years. And there was very little change. They checked it after 10 years and they discovered that the whole web of life had completely recovered. Every single element of the food-chain had recovered: the plankton, the smaller fish, the larger fish had all recovered; the stocks were there; and they were pleased because the sharks had come back. The shark – the fact that the sharks came back meant that there was a reliable food chain, which had built up, built up, built up. And so, there was food for the sharks. So, it was a success to them. When the sharks came back, and this is a really powerful example of the cycles of renewal that are there within our world, bringing healing, bringing health.

So, there are some signs of hope that if we can allow the world around us to recover. If we give it space, it will recover. It's vital to understand how our psychotherapy profession can ensure that we tackle the situation of the existential crisis where in in a holistic and considerate manner. How can we make sense of the situation? How can we retain the capacity to think? This is what we will do together in this Congress.

This is what our keynote speakers and our past Presidents will lead us to in this week-end, and this is what we can do for each other in the reflective discussion groups today and tomorrow. And, through this, we shall see how we can rise in our limited situation. We shall discover how we can shift upwards. We should

imagine the ways to adapt to our situation. And we'll find the ways to thrive, instead of being destroyed.

I'm really conscious that this is a two-day Congress. It needs to be a two-day congress, but also it's your weekend. It's your Saturday and Sunday that you are giving to this Congress. So, may I invite you to be attentive to yourself. In these two days, your humanity has more intensity and is more alive than you can possibly imagine. In carefully attending to yourself, you will live more fully, in your humanity, in living more fully in your humanity. You will discover, and perhaps you already know this that rather miraculously, you actually will relate better, more openly to the world, and to people.

If we take the moment, if we take the time to withdraw, and meet our own needs, then we're better able to re-engage. So, there are simple ways of living more fully in your humanity. In these two days, which I just offer to you when you're making a cup of tea or coffee in the breaks. Allow yourself to be attentive to the simple task of making the coffee. Sitting down, savouring it, that's an important bit, savouring it fully tasting it. Be attentive to your thoughts, your feelings, your emotions. If you feel tired at the end of the day, because of so much time on the screen, step outside and be attentive to the wind, the rain, the sun, the garden.

It is our full humanity that we wish to bring to these huge questions that we are facing. It is our full humanity that we need to live within need to live within, so that we can shift upwards and find ways to thrive: the part that we can play. Consistent with an informed, by our psychotherapeutic, approach is to analyze the mindset of humankind and recognize the part our own ego is playing in the tragedy, which is unfolding.

What we can do is help humanity to be aware of this, raise awareness of it as we would in individual work, raise awareness, not sleep through it, not only have it in the unconscious mind. We have superb and distinguished keynote speakers and a panel of honour the past presidents of EAP. And we all thank them from our heart. And we look forward so much to listening to them. All delegates online are part of this process, you are all part of this process, we, as much as we can be. Let's work together particularly in the discussion groups – one today and one tomorrow. There isn't an agenda; there isn't: there is just a time-frame and groups of up to 12 will be put together.

And then, if you open up the conversation with each other and share with each other, your thoughts, your feelings, your insights, about what do you see is the Hope of Psychotherapy for our Endangered World. So, it's your opportunity to speak, and to have a voice. It's your opportunity to be listened to. If you have wisdom that you feel you wish to offer from your group, either from the group collectively, or from yourself as an individual member of it, especially in today's group. This is true. Please put it in the chat that you have on your screen in front of you. Please put it in the chat, short phrases are better than long lines of text, the essence, the kernel; the centre; the focus of what is the hope of psychotherapy. I'm going to finish with a poem. The poem is called, *The Hill We Climb* and it's written by Amanda Gorman, that beautiful young woman. She wrote the poem for the inauguration of President Joe Biden. Some of you may have seen it. It's actually quite long: the poem, and I have shortened it for today.

The Hill We Climb.

When day comes, we ask ourselves
Where can we find light in this never-ending shade?
The loss we carry, the grief we have born, and yet, the dawn is ours before we knew it …
Let the planet, say, this is true, that even as we have grieved, we have grown,
That even as we hurt, we hope that even as we tire, we try.
If we are to live up to our own time.
How we thrive will lie in the bridges fit, we have made the hill, we climb.
If only we dare, when day comes, we step out of the shade on afraid, the new dawn begins.
For there is always light, if only we are brave enough to see it.
There is always light, if only we are brave enough to be it.
There is always light, if only we are brave enough to see it.
There is always light, if only we are brave enough to be it.

I'm not sure how that comes across in the translation, but those final phrases are so important and what they mean is:

There is always light . . . . because we are the light. Each one of us and together, we are the light.
There is always hope . . . . because we are – all of us – the Hope

PARTICIPANT CONTRIBUTIONS in the "Chat" [2] Directly during / after the Opening Speech by Patricia Hunt

Pat Comerford: *Long live Ukraine* 💙

Gustavo Torres: *Give peace a real chance*

Renata Moraczewska: *Peace and freedom for Ukraine*

Liudmyla Ostapchuk, Ukraine: 💙💛

Azra Arnautović: *Peace and freedom for all word and Ukraine*

Dorota Dyjakon: *In solidarity with Ukraine* ✌️

Enver Cesko: *God bless Ukrainian people, let's pray for peace, freedom and for life. We in Kosovo stand for Ukraine.*

Irena Hysenaj: *In solidarity with colleagues and all the people in Ukraine*

EAP Support Team: *Choose your language in the Zoom menu via "Interpretation" button*

Elisabeth Lindner: *Dear colleagues from Ukraine* 🇺🇦*: Please let me know if you need any support for your family or friends who were expelled from your country and ended up here in Austria! With love Elizabeth*

Erzsebet Amalia Lukacs: *Peace and freedom for the WORD!*

Eglė Zubienė: *Tylos minutė Ukrainai. Karas vyksta dabar.*

EAP Support Team: *(Thank you all for your contributions in the Chat :-) Keep on chatting, exchanging with other participants* 🙏

Silvia Franke: *My Ukrainian colleague's addiction counselling and therapy NGO "Nova familija" is still working in Czernowitz, they want to stay as long as possible. Whoever wants to support them, see https://www.nf-ua.org (please chose their Ukrainian bank account, not the other two on the site). Donations are used for their growing refugee work, medication and petrol for their small evacuation transports. Direct money is fastest and they can still buy what they need. Thanks in advance in their name!*

EAP Support Team: *If you like, write where you attending from* 🌍

Martin Prokeš: *czech rep.*

Aleksandra Jeremic: *Beograd, Srbija*

Ljiljana Bastaic: *Zagreb, Croatia*

Mona Dittrich: *Germany*

Katarina Levatić: *Maybe we can add it to our names.*

Gustavo Torres: *Switzerland*

Angelina Pelevic: 🇷🇸 *Serbia*

Marijana Cvijović: *Montenegro*

Cornelia Munteanu: *Ireland*

Ivona Maričić Kukuljan: *Greetings from Rijeka, Croatia*

Maja Zajc: *Hello from Ljubljana.*

Sarah McAuley: *Hello from Dublin*

Peter Schulthess: *Bogota, Colombia*

Desiree Gonzalo: *Czech Republic*

2. **Editor's Note**: None of these Chat comments have been edited, except for removing the time (recorded in brackets) and a very few minor edits for obvious spelling / typing mistakes. All the emojis have been kept.

Dubravka Stijačić: *Croatia*

Višnja Janjić: *Belgrade, Serbia*

Ruxandra Marcu: *Romania*

Ingrid Grech Lanfranco: *Malta*

Tomaž Flajs: *Slovenia*

Silvia Franke: *Vienna, Austria*

Irena Kušić: *Rijeka, Croatia*

Natasa Stanojevic: *Serbia, Pozarevac*

Ljubica Tasic: *Greetings from Belgrade, Serbia*

Charalampos Efstathiou: *Hello from Cyprus*

Elisabeth Lindner: *Hello from Vienna*

Pavla Uzlová: *Czech* 🇨🇿

Marleen Van Leemput: *Hi from Belgium*

Azra Arnautović: *From Tuzla, Bosna i Hercegovina*

Renata Moraczewska: *Poland*

Daniela Ploesteanu-Sfirlea: *Romania*

Olga Šunjara: *Zagreb, Croatia*

Phil Hanlon: *Dublin, Ireland*

Yuliia Filonenko: *Ukraine*

Draženka Milinković: *Zagreb, Croatia*

Gabriele Waldherr: *Munich, Germany*

Zeljka Radosevic: *Split, Crotia*

Vasileios Papageorgiou: *Paderborn Germany*

Katarina Ilic: *Greetings from Belgrade, Serbia*

Prof Ninov: *Hello from Singapore* :)

Georget Niculescu: *Hello from Bucharest!*

Milica Lajbenšperger: *Belgrade, Serbia*

Dr Alena Večeřová Procházková: *Czech Republic, Prague, warm greetings to everybody.*

Mirjam Tiel van Buul: *Hello from the Netherlands* 🙂

Yulia Lukyanova: *Ukraine* 🇺🇦

Kristīne Eglīte-Reiša: *Latvia, Riga*

Christina Lagogianni: *Hello from Thessaloniki, Greece*

Pat Comerford: *The Republic of Cork, Ireland*

Igor Kundrát: *Hello from Slovakia!*

Simona ligia Tutunaru: *Hi from Bucharest*

Sanda Lepoiev: *Bucharest, Romania*

Nino Kobakhidze: *Tbilisi, Georgia*

Katerina Slabova: *Czech Republic*

Caslav Ninkovic: *Hello from Belgrade, Serbia*

Nadia Bisazza: *Malta*

Al-Ammar Kašić: *Hello from Podgorica, Montenegro!*

Mirela Badurina: *Hello from Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina*

Andrea Duškunović: *Greetings from Šabac, Serbia*

Nicole Aknin: *All the best from France*

Peter Edge: *Hello from Istanbul, Turkey*

Zilvinas Kunigelis: *Lithuania, Palanga*

Natalya Patturina: *Saint-Petersburg, Russia*

Liudmyla Ostapchuk Ukraine: *Ukraine, Ivano-Frankivsk*

Jirka Drahota Czech Rep: *Greetings from Czech Republic*

Ariana Igglezaki: *Hello from Athens, Greece*

Celia Avila-Rauch: *I am grateful that the association opened the door to individual members, so that we can participate in this development in psychotherapy throughout Europa. Greetings from Munich*

Marija Stojkoska Vasilevska: *Marija Skopje Macedonia*

Dia Georgaki: *Hello to all from Nicosia, Cyprus*

Andreas Kuermayr: *Hello from Vienna Austria*

Hana Scibranyova: *Warm greetings from Bratislava, Slovakia*

Bledar Zeneli: *Hello from Albania*

Despina Markaki: *Hello from Athens, Greece*

Jolanta Dojic: *Montenegro, Nikšić* 👏

Владимир Карикаш: *Ukraine Cherkassy*

Heward Wilkinson: *Hello from Scarborough (Scarborough Fair) England, UK*

Maria Nicoleta Mocanu: *Hello from Constanta, Romania*

Els Boumans: *Hello from The Netherlands*

Natasa Veselinovic: *Hello from Belgrade, Serbia*

Eleni Hadjichristodoulou: *hello from Nicosia Cyprus*

Dariia Zinchenko: *hi from Ukraine* :)

Demetris Shouer: *Good morning from Nicosia Cyprus. Wishing for good workings for the EAP Online-Conference 2022. "The Hope of Psychotherapy for our Endangered World"*

Barbara Karlin: *Peace and Love from Lake Constance, Germany*

Dragana Nikolić: *One more Hello from Belgrade...* 🌻

Zorka Vukovic: *Greetings from Pancevo, Serbia. Peace and Love*

Susan Ricketts: *Hello from Dublin Ireland*

Nelli Constantinou Papadopoulou: *Gd morning from Nicosia Cyprus – The Cyprus Biosynthesis Centre*

Alžběta Protivanská: *Warm greetings from Prague, Czechia*

Dominika Samková: *Hello from Czech*

Bojana Vukovic: *Hello from Belgrade, Serbia*

Daina Matusēviča: *Hello from Latvia*

Lora Velichkova: *Hello from Sofia, Bulgaria*

Ana Miletic Heric: *Hi from Slovenia!*

Roberta Farrugia Debono: *Hello from Malta*

Esmina Avdibegović: *Hello from Bosnia. Thanks for the wonderful words of hope*

Godehard Stadtmueller: *Hello from Lindau Germania and peace to everybody*

Gustavo Torres: *International Psychotherapy Family* 💪💖

Dr Coleen Jones: *Wonderful coming together in Peace, from Coleen in Cork, Ireland*

Eleonóra Hamar: *Greeting from Brno, Czechia*

Desiree Gonzalo CZ: 😉🌈🍀

Dorothy Casey: *Warm Greetings from Kilkenny ireland*

Gustavo Torres: *Psychotherapists sans frontières* 🏳

Francess Kenny-Denneny: *Hello from Dublin, Ireland* 🌍🏳

Elissavet Barbaliou: *Hello from Greece*

Magdalena Koťová: *Hello from Prague, Czech Republic*

Elisabeth Lindner: *Psychotherapists sans frontières* 🏳 *Gracias Gustavo!*

Gustavo Torres: *Glarus* 🇨🇭

Ilse Wolfram: *I suggest to reduce traffic with e-cars instead of enjoying the rides*

Irena Hysenaj: *My ego is less and my Joy is more. So great* 😍

Desiree Gonzalo CZ: *... and bicycles, also good for health!*

pitsa Abraham: *Hello form Nicosia, Cyprus. The only divided city in Europe since 1974 because of the Turkish invasion. PEACE to all the world and love and prayers to every woman, man, child suffering in all parts of this earth.*

Katarina Levatić, Croatia: *So glad you underline that we psychotherapist also have a role in contributing to rising consciousness on environmental protection.*

Anne-Marie Dixon: *Hello from Dublin, Ireland.*

Mara Priceputu: *The Romanian Psychotherapy Federation would like to extend our best wishes to all our colleagues and to salute this congress and the anniversary of all the generations of psychotherapists that bring their contribution to each individual's balance and the stability of our society. Our heart goes out to all the people that are affected by the Ukraine tragedy and we offer our support and resources to all the individuals that are in need.*

Phil Hanlon: *Very interesting to hear how the brain has changed with industrialisation.*

Nicole Aknin: *Thank you. Pat to discriminate ego and Soul. Thank you for your open heart! All together we are helping the world to reconnect peace and love*

Mirela Badurina: *We in Bosnia and Herzegovina strive to transform our conflictive past to a bright and wise future. We know what war is and we wish for all of them to cease to exist! In the spirit of EAP, we aim to further broaden our experience shaping a better and healthier society.*

Elissavet Barbaliou: *Elisabeth Barbaliou Hello from Greece*

Eglė Zubienė: *Gaila sumokėtų pinigų.*

Rosette Rozenberg: *Bonjour from France. It is wonderful to be here with so many colleagues from all over Europe. We are with the people of the Ukraine and Russia in our heart and in our mind.*

Amalia Deli: *Hello from Larnaca, Cyprus*

Marlies Lenglachner: *Here is a link for all of you in Ukraine: its a save and free Telemedical support website for UKRAINE Inkl.in/*

Kathrin Stauffer: *Cambridge, UK*

Sara Strieth-Vatsella: *Hello from Greece! It is exciting and inspiring to be part of this learning event with all participants.*

Courtenay Young: *Greetings from Scotland and a welcome to all these people and ideas. The International Journal of Psychotherapy hopes to produce a Special Issue (in July 2022) on this Congress. This will be available to all Participants free-of-charge as an e-Journal. We don't just want contributions from all the presenters, but also contributions from the attendees. These can be sent to admin@ijp.org.uk. They may be edited slightly for comprehension, syntax & punctuation.*

Andrea Sehic: *Brilliant opening speeches, just brilliant! Thank you* 💎 *Greetings from Serbia*

Marlies Lenglachner: *Here is the secure free Medical and therapeutic free Telemedical support for Ukraine link also for therapeutic support Link Inkl.in/embpcbq3*

Anne Colgan: *It is wonderful to be here among colleagues at this Congress. Greetings from Gorey, Co. Wexford, Ireland*

Liudmyla Moskalenko: *Warm greetings from Ukraine* 💛💙 *It's very important to be the part of Europe!*

Phil Hanlon: *Welcome from Ukraine.*

Marleen Van Leemput: *@Marlies are you sure this is the right link?*

Mariia Tyshchenko: *Kyiv, Ukraine.*

Adrijana Bjelajac: *Zagreb, Croatia*

Dr Alena Večeřová Procházková: *(Warm greetings to Kyiv, Dear Maia, all my thoughts are with you in Ukrajine now. Dear Mariia*

Елена Луценко: *Kharkov, Ukraine*

Marlies Lenglachner: *Take a look at Alon Shklarek at Linked In and you can find more informations there for this offer ok*

Marleen Van Leemput: *Thanx*

Marlies Lenglachner: *... and linked in*

Josephine Power-Anastasiou: *Thank you, Patricia Hunt for a lovely speech. Lovely inspiring poem.*

Desiree Gonzalo CZ: *Patricia, thank you. Such an inspiring and moving presentation. And poetry is just so right, right now.*

Peter Edge: *Beautiful*

Esmina Avdibegović: *Fantastic*

Ljubica Tasic: *Thank you so much for a wonderful speech.*

Adrijana Bjelajac: *Wonderful, thank you!*

Marleen Van Leemput: *Found it* ;)

Andreas Kuermayr: *Thank you, Patricia Hunt for reading this incredible poem of Amanda Gorman!!!!!*

Liudmyla Moskalenko: *Amazing speech!*

Dubravka Stijačić: *Humans are the hope for psychotherapy*

Mirela Badurina: *Thank you speakers for the wonderful and empowering speeches! Looking forward for more.*

Mirjam Tiel van Buul: *Thank you very much for such an inspirational speech! I am very touched by the poem.* 🙏

Clemens Schermann: *From a small Village in Austria*

Taxia Grili: *Inspiring words. A de profundis speech.*

Marlies Lenglachner: *What is the title of this poem ... Thank you dear Patricia Hunt for your creative presentation out of your heart.*

Aleksandra Kušić: *Very inspiring, thank you!*

Ljiljana Bastaic: *Presentation and Amanda's poem "The Hill we Climb" connects so beautifully together*

Konstantinos Mouzakitis: *Hello from Vienna!*

Ulrike von Hanffstengel: *Hello from Nuremberg, Germany!*

Gustavo Torres: *The EAP anticipated months ago, that hope is the key. We are the hope* 🌈

Marlies Lenglachner: *Thank you, dear Ljiljana for the title of this marvellous poem to share it with others too.*

ADDENDA – by Patricia Hunt

Thank you to everyone who has contributed – especially those 'backstage' as well as the presenters. They have shaped what you will receive today. And we owe a huge debt of thanks to them for all the work they've done for this Congress, and we are honoured to work with them. We are holding this Congress in the centre of Europe. And we're so conscious of the war, and terror in Ukraine. Our hearts go out to our Ukrainian psychotherapy colleagues, and to their families. During our Govering Board meetings just this last week, Ukrainian colleagues have joined us, and spoken of the horror that they are experiencing. We send our love and our thoughts to them, they are our dear colleagues in the EAP:

I'm pleased to have two addresses to the EAP on its 30th anniversary, which have been given to us, we're very honoured that the first one is from the President of the Austrian Association for Psychotherapy (ÖBVP), **Professor Peter Stippl**. And he writes to us on this important occasion on behalf of the Austrian Association for Psychotherapy.

> *"I would like to welcome you to the 30th anniversary congress of the EAP here in Vienna. And to all those who are taking part in Congress via the Internet. The theme of the Congress, the hope of psychotherapy for our endangered world is highly topical here in Vienna we experience in our daily work, how affected and burdened people are on the one hand, due to the proximity of the current crisis areas, and the high proportion of refugees. And on the other hand, due to the covert pandemic.*
>
> *Good psychotherapy has never removed itself from the current burdens of the person. But it seeks, and offers help for mental health in the specific situation for the individual, as well as for social groups, and even for entire communities, states and regions. I wish to the Congress of the 30th anniversary of EAP that all contributions by participants will be made in the highest spirit of our profession.*
>
> *Have a good time. Stay healthy, and all the best, and good luck for the Congress. We are happy to have hosted the EAP in Austria during the last 30 years. With kind regards, Professor Peter Stippl."*

Thank you so much, Professor Stippl, for your warm and generous and important message to us. The second message comes from the Director General of CEPLIS, which is the European Council of the Liberal Professions and EAP is a member CEPLIS and this message comes from **Professor Dr Theodoros Koutroubas**, who we have been very fortunate to work with very closely.

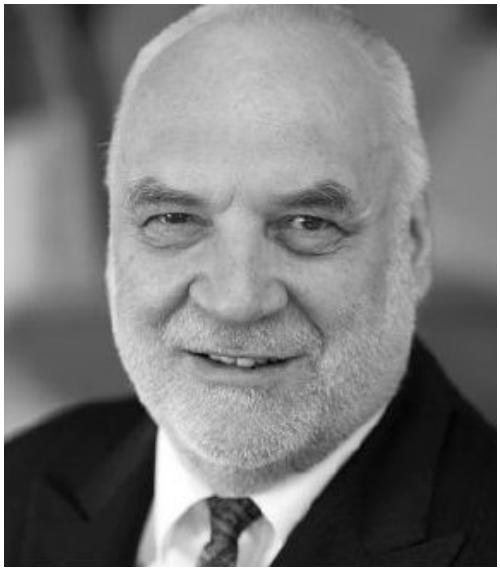
> *"On behalf of the President Koutroubas, Mr Gaetano Stellar, and on my own behalf, I'm very pleased to salute the 30th anniversary congress of the EAP, at a time when millions of our fellow citizens are experiencing ever growing problems relating to their mental health, because of the pandemic and the menace of war psychotherapists play a very important role for the well-being of our societies. They deserve to be supported by both national authorities and the European institutions.*
>
> *I have closely collaborated with your President, Patricia Hunt, and the members of the EAP, your lobbying group. And I must say I have a personal experience of the professionalism, the scientific rigor and the profound humanity that guides their actions. We are very proud to count EAP, amongst the membership of CEPLIS. I'm sure this Congress is going to mark another positive step for your profession, and I wish you from the heart success and inspiration for your work".*

Thank you very much indeed for associating CEPLIS with this important occasion. And we thank Professor Koutroubas so much for his warm generous and wonderful words to us.

Keynote Speaker: Professor Alfred Pritz

"The History of the EAP"

PROFESSOR ALFRED PRITZ



Alfred Pritz is a founding member and president of the World Council for Psychotherapy (WCP), as well as a founding member and General Secretary of the European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP).

He is also the founding father and principal of the Sigmund Freud Privat Universität, which was accredited in 2005 and keeps expanding and growing (further SFU locations so far: Paris, Linz, Berlin, Milano, Ljubljana).

The first three World Congresses of Psychotherapy in Vienna were organized by him and he was also a co-organizer for the World Congresses in Buenos Aires, Bejing, Sydney and Durban.

He is an active editor and author of various books, book series and professional articles in journals and textbooks.

Introduced by Patricia Hunt (EAP President)

PH: So, now I would like to introduce to you, Professor, Alfred Pritz. In essence, it was Alfred, who had the idea of EAP, it was his idea. And so, it is absolutely right that he is the first person to speak to us today. He had the vision for a paradigm for Europe for our profession. And he has held with our organization, and still is very close; he works very closely with us. So, he's been with us throughout the 30 years. I would

International Journal of Psychotherapy
Summer 2022, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 23-28: ISSN 1356-9082 (Print); ISSN 1469-8498 (Online)

Submitted: March 2020; formatted: June/July 2022. DOI: 10.36075/IJP.2022.26.2.3/Pritz

like now to invite Professor Pritz to come to the stage to give his address on the history of EAP.

AP: Dear Colleagues, dear friends. It's a pleasure for me to speak to you. To see old friends and old collaborators. And, as you are now guiding the future, I will speak about the past. Please go with me back to the 90s. The 1990s were quite a revolutionary time; the old Soviet Union broke down, new states came up: Ukraine, Russia, Belorusse, Kazakhstan etc. Also, in the rest of Europe. there were a lot of activities in the European Union. At that time, in 1992, there were 12 members; now, we are 27 members in the European Union.

So, this idea of gathering in Europe was not only the idea of EAP, to gather [together] the psychotherapists of Europe, but also on a much larger scale; it was the time, the spirit of the 90s. And, what might be a surprise for you: for me, it was ... I looked up when the internet started, and it started also in 1990. So, it also surfaced at one years old, and it started, it did not become a phenomenon of every person's life. But, but it started at that time: the digitalization of our society; of the world started in the 90s, by the way, by British scientist.

And, in this spirit, a few crazy people from Germany, from Austria, and from Switzerland, decided to meet, to start the European development of psychotherapy. Certainly, there were forerunners here and there, but we decided to go to Strasbourg and formulate the European – the Strasburg Declaration of Psychotherapy in 1990.

We had no authorization from anyone. We were about 18 people; we just authorized ourselves because we had the feeling that we were doing the right thing to formulate the Strasburg Declaration for Psychotherapy, which stated that psychotherapy – and this was new – that psychotherapy was its own profession, in its own scientific rights in, on a high-quality level.

We also brought in, at the end of the formulation, the entrance to psychotherapy training, we said: medicine, the profession of medical doctors, but also of human sciences, should [be able to] become psychotherapists.

At that time, we did not have, it was not in our brain that is, that it could be an academic profession in its own rights, as it is now, for instance, in Germany, since two years. But, that was quite a step, this Strasbourg Declaration.

And now, its 30th birthday, I will say this Strasbourg Declaration was something like that. But it was not EAP at that time, it was just a group of crazy people. We had a lot of fun and we enjoyed Strasbourg. And we had the hope that people will mix up the Strasbourg Declaration with the European institutions of Strasbourg: the European Council.

And often, I met this, this mistake that people told me that the European Council has made this Strasbourg Declaration of Psychotherapy. This was our hope; it worked.

So, and then we met a half a year later in Vienna. I invited the colleagues and some other colleagues, we were about 30 people. And, in Vienna, we had already the idea: let's [make/ do] a European Organization of Psychotherapists.

And you must imagine this conflict between medical doctors, psychologists, psychotherapists: What is the identity of psychotherapists? Is it necessary to be a doctor: Sigmund Freud was telling 1926:

No! But, in reality, it was not defined; it was a fight.

And what is the identity of psychotherapists? These questions came up immediately, but from the organizational point of view. We started in 1991. We wrote a paper, where we [all] signed, without any statutes, without anything. We just stated that: now, we founded EAP. Unfortunately, this paper [has] vanished. No one has it. We tried to get it, but it has vanished. Nevertheless, it doesn't matter, it's just interesting.

And [then] we decided to meet every year, in another European city, to have a little or a larger Congress, and so EAP thus, for 30 years, every year, [we have had] a Congress and the President should always be the one who organizes the Congress.

And I had the pleasure to serve as General Secretary [for] over 27 years. And I'm happy that now Eugenijus Laurinaitis takes over this difficult task. And in 1992, [when] we met, we appointed Janos Harmetta to be the first president, a Hungarian colleague, and we met [for the] first time in Budapest.

And these were exhausting days, because we were writing the Constitution; day and night, we were working and finished it successfully. And, at that time, the first British came. And we decided to have the next Congress in Berlin.

And, one year later, in 1993, we met in Berlin, and in Berlin already the British were there. The UKCP representative, Emmy van Deurzen; and, from Russia, Salutskey was his name, Professor Salutsky. And, certainly there were Ukraine colleagues: Alexander Filtz was one of the founding members. He was in Budapest, when we wrote the Constitution.

And, now it was clear that it is an European Association, not only the idea of a few people, but now it is European. I will not count all the stages: just a few elements. We had several tasks to fulfil. The first task was to gather [together] the psychotherapists: so different people; so different methodologies; so different ideas of what is important in psychotherapy; what is less important. To overcome the narcissistic idea of 'my method is the best'. To be more humble; to say, for me, it is the best.

So together, the representatives of methodologies, but also together, the people from the different countries: 47 countries in Europe, and [with] this idea to formulate umbrella organizations. [This] was, for most of the colleagues, totally new. And, in these first years, a lot of umbrella organizations developed. At that time, I only knew that the UKCP existed, it [started] a little earlier; the Austrian Association existed, and the Swiss Association existed, in Europe, at that time, and now you [can] find, you will find, a close collaboration of psychotherapists in every country. This has totally changed.

And, imagine, [with] no internet. And, at that time, in the 90s, no one knew anything about other countries, except a little, but in the field of psychotherapy, it was a desert. And now, look [at] today!

And, I think this task is [now] fulfilled: that the EAP is the representative of psychotherapists in Europe, and we [have] started to work with the European Commission and with the European Parliament.

And, in the late 90s, we were successful to bring a law to the European Parliament about psychotherapy. One political MEP, a

member of the European Parliament, Mrs Berger was helping us tremendously.

But, it stopped also at that point, because it became clear that [some of] the individual states would not support this, because they were eager to protect their own health system, with their own rules.

But, we have been in the game, in the political psychotherapy – political game. And we are still of Europe. And I was one who was always very much [wanting] for it to have the Eastern countries, as part of Europe, and not exclude them – knowing that when Psychoanalysis started in around 1900, many of the Eastern Europe colleagues came to Vienna, to Berlin, to other cities, and contributed a lot. And so, it is still today.

In the late 90s, we started [working on] the ECP. The task was to establish a system of quality measurement: making psychotherapists better.

And, now we have thousands of people, who have the European Certificate of Psychotherapy. It was so strong that even the Japanese copied our ECP, with the agreement of the EAP, and they developed their own Japanese Certificate of Psychotherapy.

And we checked, not only individuals, we also check institutions that they do in their modality, the proper training. And this is going on.

So, this quality assurance is very important on all levels, and one of the later tasks of the EAP was to develop guidelines, guidelines for different questions, so that people in Europe can go into the internet and look what EAP thinks about, for instance, Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy.

And, now we have an actual conflict: the government of Russia is attacking the state of Ukraine. And this is a tragedy, not only for our peace, but also for the whole of Europe.

But, the crime is that the life plans of human beings are destroyed, of millions of Ukrainians, but also millions in Russia, and, in other countries. But the victims are the Ukrainians colleagues, the Ukrainian people.

And, we had such a tragedy, also in the 90s, with the former provinces and the war in the former Yugoslavia. Starting in 1991, and ending in the late 95 to 99. We all suffered: we see some of you here. The representative of Croatia is here; the representative of Serbia is here. And, it was a very hard time for us, because we knew our people are not on the side of the war; and it was a hard time for the EAP, because we had to hold that relationship.

And I want just to give a personal anecdote. There was an embargo over Serbia, to fly to Serbia. And so, I decided to visit these friends in Serbia, because I knew these are against the war and they also victims. So, I visited them by train. And I had to change the train in Novi Sad, because the bridge was broken, [it] was bombed. And so, I had to go with one of our colleagues, with a car to Belgrade and it was terrible; exhausting, depressive mood, at that time. And I felt it, and all the other colleagues in the EAP Board, felt it.

And Ivana Slavkovic and me developed the idea to give a post-war seminar in the former cities of Yugoslavia, in Belgrade; then, half a year later, in Slovenia, in Ljubljana; in Zagreb, in Sarajevo, in Scopje, and finally in Kotor, the day before Montenegro decided to be its own state.

So, there was a lot of tension there, as you can imagine, not so much a focus on psychotherapy, but a focus on how we will live; will there be a war, when we vote for independence or not.

So, over the years, we dealt with these, with these topics.

And, to the Ukraine colleagues, you can be sure that EAP will support you; and to the Russian colleagues, we know you are also against the war. We are in accordance.

So, I'm coming to the end. I spoke about the past, and I wish you all the best for the future. It's – we cannot understand the future, we can only understand the past, but we can learn a little out of it. Most of the people don't learn anything about the past. And, maybe, we belong to them, but, hopefully, some ideas can be useful. And these ideas are that we try to listen to our colleagues. We try to understand them. We try to reflect with them. And, so far as we can, we try to support them. And, in the hope that the same will happen to ourselves when we are in despair, and when we have the need. Besides that, the work will go on.

I am happy about the spirit in the EAP, which showed us in a vivid and constructive discussion [over] the last days. And, we don't know what comes in the future. But I'm sure you will manage it. Thank you very much.

PH: Thank you so much, Alfred, and I thought it was beautiful what you said about the conflict resolution. Thank you so much.

PARTICIPANT CONTRIBUTIONS in the "Chat" Directly during / after the Keynote Speech by Dr. Alfred Pritz

Rosette Rozenberg: *Dear EAP, thank you so much for organising this conference especially at this extremely difficult time. Warmest wishes to you all.*

Tzvetelina Iossifova: *Thank you, Alfred!*

Dragana Nikolić: *Great speech! Thank you*

Phil Hanlon: *Great to hear something about the history of EAP*

Desiree Gonzalo: *It feels good to be part of EAP* :)

Josephine Power-Anastasiou: *Thank you, Alfred Pritz. Great to hear about the history of EAP.*

Ljiljana Bastaic: *Beautifully warm talk by Prof Pritz*

Katarina Levatić: *Its a wonderful message that psychotherapy unites all the sides and carries message of peace and collaboration.*

Adrijana Bjelajac: *Thank you deeply for these warm and inclusive words*

Dubravka Stijačić: *Alfred Pritz thank you for your inspiring speach!*

Hana Scibranyova: *Thank You dear Alfred and the whole group of founders for Your fondness, vision and wise actions for*

Marlies Lenglachner: *Thank you for organizing the 30. Anniversary of EAP. Even more important today that we are connected. Thanks, dear Alfred, together with your Team for being always present internationally as now for us psychotherapist. Thank you Marlies Lenglachner, Vienna*

Hana Scibranyova: *The hope and meaning of psychotherapy, so important since then to now and future*

Godehard Stadtmueller: *Yes, a very touching historical overview by Alfred, and a very inspiring speech by Patricia*

Keynote Speaker:
Professor Emmy van Deurzen

"Rising from our Existential Crisis: Widening the Human Horizon"

KEYNOTE PRESENTER: EMMY VAN DEURZEN

Emmy van Deurzen is a philosopher, counselling psychologist, existential therapist and international author and speaker, who has worked with people on transformative life events for nearly fifty years. She has just published her eighteenth book, entitled *Rising from Existential Crisis: Life Beyond Calamity* with PCCS books. Her books, *Paradox and Passion* (Wiley, 2nd edition, 2015) and *Psychotherapy and the Quest for Happiness* (Sage, 2009) are also relevant to this talk.

Emmy is also the founder director of the New School of Psychotherapy and Counselling and the Existential Academy in London, where she also runs her private practice, Dilemma Consultancy.

She writes: *"An existential crisis is a situation in which our entire existence and everything we used to take for granted is in the balance, so that we feel insecure and under threat. This affects all dimensions of life, the physical, social, personal, and spiritual. It means that our bodies are challenged; our relationships are changed; our sense of our self is altered; and our beliefs and values are shaken up. For most people, this is a very difficult experience to encompass as it leads to a revolution of our established patterns, routines, and habits. It always involves a lot of loss and therefore leads to feelings of bereavement and sorrow, as well as to experiences of confusion, fear, anger, doubt and panic.*

International Journal of Psychotherapy
Summer 2022, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 29-52: ISSN 1356-9082 (Print); ISSN 1469-8498 (Online)

Submitted: March 2020; formatted: June/July 2022. DOI: 10.36075/IJP.2022.26.2.4/vanDeurzen

As the world is plunged into an existential crisis, not just because of the pandemic, but also in facing potential ecological disaster, a global climate crisis and increasing pressure on international migration, it is vital to understand how our psychotherapy profession can ensure that we tackle the situation in a holistic and considerate manner. In this presentation, we shall consider how existential philosophers and therapists are able to make sense of such situations, be they caused by politics, society, personal choice or natural catastrophes. We shall explore the impact of the shattering of our most reliable connections to the world and the loss of meaning that ensues. Then we shall see how we can rise to such limit situations, to shift upwards and find ways to thrive instead of being destroyed by the radical change and global transformation that has become inexorable."

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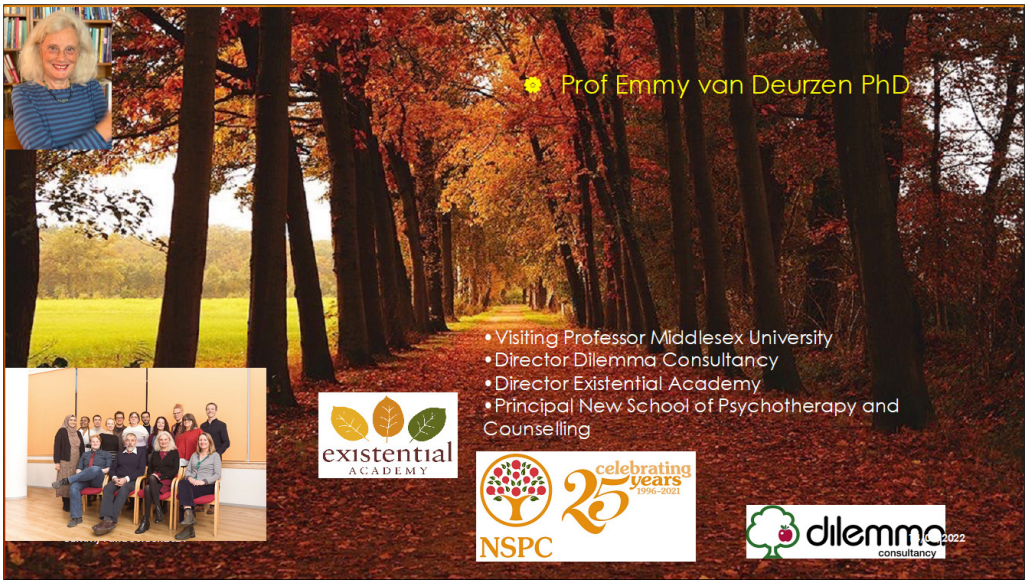
Introduced by Patricia Hunt (EAP President)

PH: We now begin with the first of our keynote speakers, and it's an absolute joy to welcome dear Emmy van Deurzen to give the first keynote speech, and she is so well known to the EAP, in fact, she is an honorary member of EAP, and she Is a philosopher, a Counselling, Psychologist, an Existential Therapist, an international author and speaker. I imagine that many of you, as part of this Congress, know Emmy's work and know that you're looking forward to something incredibly special. So, let me thank you so much for speaking at our Congress; you honour us greatly by giving the first keynote speech, and so I hand over to you now. And at the end of your speech, my colleague, Dr Catalin Zaharia, who is chair of EAP's Science and Research Committee, will oversee the questions



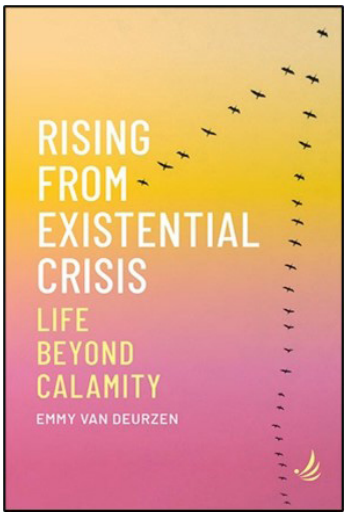
and answers at the end of your speech. So, if any of you [Participants] have a question, ple ase put it into the chat and Catalin will pick it up and give voice to it for you at the end of Emmy's words to us. Okay, now over to you.

EvD: Well, thank you, Pat, and thank you Catalin. It is something, as I'm sure everybody feels, extremely joyful, to have an opportunity to speak with our colleagues from around Europe in these horrendous days, where we're all reminded of the worst possible thing we can imagine: – war in Europe. So, I shall now start to share my screen and I hope you can all see it. I will be speaking about something that is very close to my heart: how we can arise from our existential crisis to widen the human horizon.

And this is me with my staff group, as it was just before the pandemic. It has grown a great deal over the last two years. This is where I worked at the New School of Psychotherapy and Counselling in London.

These are the books I have written, and it is this last book, which came out just a few months ago, called *Rising from Existential Crisis*, that my words today will be very much based on.

And the reasons that I wrote that book are that, my entire life has really been about thinking about crisis, and what happens to human beings when things go wrong. I grew up in the Netherlands, was born soon after the end of the Second World War, and I observed the pain and the trauma, not just in my parents who had had to hide during the war and who had starved, but of a whole population, which had been violently occupied for five years. So, my heart absolutely goes out to our Ukrainian colleagues

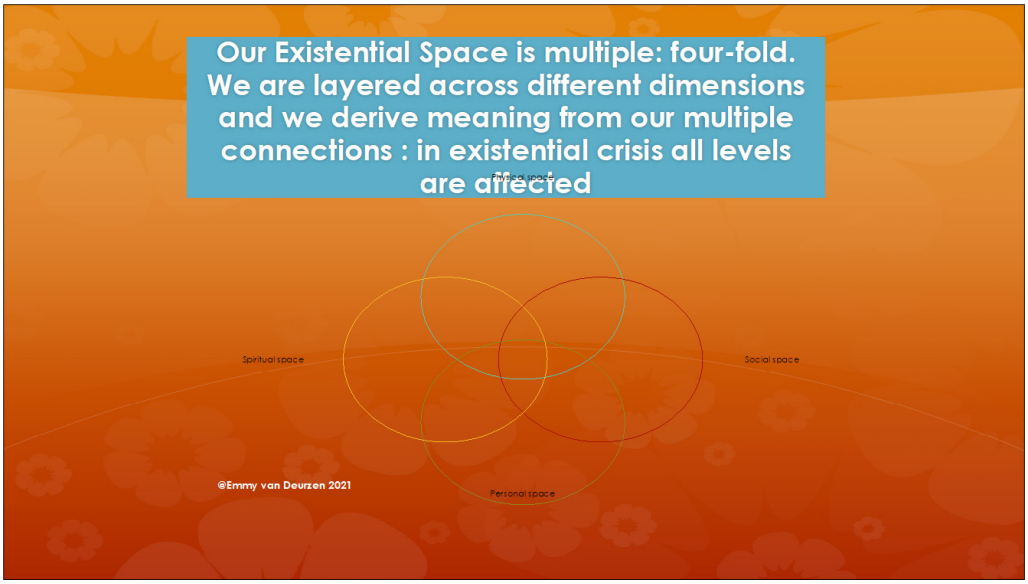


and I fervently wish to support them in every way we can. My book starts with this quote from Maya Angelou, which lots of people know well.

You may write me down in history
With your bitter twisted lies.
You may tread me in the very dirt.
But still, like dust, I'll rise.
You may shoot me with your words.
You may cut me with your eyes.
You may kill me with your hatefulness.
But still, like air, I'll rise.

Very appropriate words at the moment, as the world is burning once again. So, how do we as psychotherapists, and as human beings, make sense of human existence, when the world is constantly changing, and in danger?

And how can we help other people to find meaning again after crisis, despite their great adversity and their despair? How do we go down with our existential crisis, instead of going under? How do we learn to rise again, as Pat was saying this morning?



So, in the book, I speak about rising from the pandemic, which has been a kind of wake-up call to us all about how we are all linked in this global world and how the external conditions of our lives matter so greatly, and how we need to be in solidarity with each other. But we also have to do this because we are going to go into a period of non-stop crises, with the climate crisis, and now as we have seen in the last few horrible weeks with political threats and war. So, this is a message that is relevant to absolutely everybody: we need an existential turn, we need to bring into view philosophical Ideas that help us explore our ways of being in the world. We need to rediscover wisdom, as a guiding light.

And that's not about internal psychic realities, though it includes that, too, but it is to widen our view to the external realities that will impact on all of us.

So, we need to learn to approach these problems in real life: in the real world: in a creative, in a dynamic and in a very sensitive and reflective manner. But, it is also about how we find our meaning and purpose in the world. Ultimately, this is a search for truth, and a search for courage.

I come from an existential background, and we believe in having a constructive dialogue with clients – beyond blame and shame. We don't believe in psychopathology, but in understanding people's modes of being.

We focus on the actual life, as the person lives it, and we call that onto-dynamics, the dynamics of being, on the dynamics of **ὄντος** · (óntos), rather than just on psycho-dynamics.

We make a map of the connections in the person's world, and we take a philosophical view of human existence, so we constantly ask ourselves, what is it that truly matters to this person now?

And we believe that anxiety, guilt, despair and suffering, are – paradoxically – the key to how change is arrived at.

I use this four-world model to always remind myself that the world is not simple. It is not a mechanistic world, nor is it just a dualistic world. It's a non-binary world and it is layered, it has many dimensions. And these four dimensions always need to be taken into account when a person is in an existential crisis: their physical space; their social space; their personal space; and their spiritual space – will all be affected. They will all have been disturbed and they will feel dis-orientated.

So, what is an existential crisis? It is exactly that. It is a sudden upheaval, a catastrophe, that affects, and potentially endangers, our entire life at all these different levels. It is a sudden shocking life-changing experience, where all of our normal connections that give us safety are destroyed at all these levels, usually at the same time.

So, we need desperately to secure the person. We need to help them find new actions, which will bring back the values in their world. In my book on existential crisis, I speak about many different things. I start talking about my own experience of existential crisis at the age of 10.

The first 10 years of my life were very much lived in the light of the Second World War, and the fear of the Cold War, and the threats of nuclear war.

But then, like lightning out of a blue sky, at the age of 10, I had a serious traffic accident and spend many, many weeks in hospital after many hours in a coma, with head injury. I was stuck in a bed, I couldn't move. I was told that my life was in danger – and I was absolutely having to reinvent myself and find my own security because I could have no visitors.

I described in the book, how I did that with the means at my disposal. And the novel *Das doppelte Lottchen* (Lottie and Lisa) by Erich Kästner, became a very important instrument in that process, because it taught me that, in the moment

of crisis when everything goes blank, as it were, and when it is as if nobody cares about what is happening to you, there is this empty space in which the world comes clear to you.

Suddenly, you know what has happened, who you are, what matters, and how you need to change your life, if you get a chance to do so. And that is what I did. This [Slide] was just after I came out of hospital and rehabilitation, about four months after the accident, when my parents took me on a holiday to Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Germany, all in aid of making connections with other European countries, so that wars, would never happen again. And I was hoping that wars had stopped happening in Europe, during my lifetime. But now, all these years later, we must face up to the reality of the mindless violence recommencing.

One thing I discovered in my little hospital bed is that a focus on nature, which for me meant looking at the flowers I had been sent, focusing on the goodwill that one senses is around one, rather than finding fault with it; building a rich inner world; having sound routines and basic habits that you religiously practice; having small things that bring you joy – and deep reflection, that allow you to process your emotions and your past difficulties, is the best way to set the world to rights again.

So, that was the beginning of my understanding of how we can find the vitality in ourselves when we come to the edge of death, and how we may find the courage to rise above our worst fears and our miseries, to learn to be fully, truly and freely beyond the difficulties that have been sent into our lives.

We must find a way to transcend or surpass our troubles and one of the best ways I have found of doing so is to widen my perspective, to look at the stars and remind myself of just how small our planet really is in the wider universe, and how it is all connected and regulated somehow and beyond my direct control.

So, there we are in that red spot (Slide). We are a tiny little spot of light in the Milky Way galaxy, and there are many, many, many, many more galaxies that we know nothing about, and there are 200 billion stars in one galaxy. It teaches us modesty, but also awe and wonder, to think about that. It is very similar to what is happening in our brains, where we have 85 billion neurons and 84 billion other cells, and we're making new cells, all the time. And though we do not control that process, which is automatic, we influence it through the way we live, all the time. And it's all about connectivity, adaptability and flexibility of consciousness.

When we stay vital, these neurons will make new synaptic connections, they will organize our experiences, and we will be able to make meaning of it all. So, while we have to trust that the universe does this too in some way, and keeps order (cosmos) in the chaos, we ourselves are responsible for making order in our own inner universe, no matter what happens in our outside world.

But of course, our inner world is also all about connections, as we are connected to the outside world in myriad ways. This is how we create meaning in life. By creating more and more connections in an orderly way in a harmonious way. And meaninglessness is all about disconnection. So, when an existential crisis happens, and it severs our connections, we are completely out of our balance.

This is how human beings basically are: an instrument for connectivity and meaning making. (Slide) We feel good when we can weave things together, because we can make sense of things.

The Latin word *religare*, means to connect. That's where the word 'religion' comes from: a system that brings everything together in a meaningful way. But it doesn't have to be a dogmatic system; it can be a system where we change our view, we are open to new facts, we in-

crease our understanding, because getting understanding is about putting the different pieces of the puzzle together as we discover them. As human beings, we aim to be in control of our connections. But, when we are faced with existential crisis, and we lose everything, there is sudden disconnection.

One of the examples I use in my book is that of the plight of the 5 million EU citizens who lived in the UK, when 'Brexit' was voted in. They were suddenly severed from what they took for granted, their home in the United Kingdom. Suddenly, they were being treated as intruders, as undesirable migrants. And this loss of human rights, and their sense of disenfranchisement, really made them feel that they were no longer welcome and they became afraid of deportation. I went through a crisis with this myself when my UK citizenship was refused, twice, when I applied for it, and I began to panic. And then I discovered that there were thousands and thousands of people who were in a similar position and who were becoming depressed and disconnected.

Nothing makes sense to you anymore when everything you took for granted, suddenly is in question. It is like going into a fog. We were called citizens of nowhere; second class citizens; bargaining chips; collateral damage. We did not matter anymore. We lost our humanity. We no longer had the right to stay in our own home and had to apply for the right of doing so. There was no more safety. It all felt nonsensical, Kafka-esque, Orwellian.

These words are even more applicable to anyone connected to the Ukrainian crisis. It is Kafka-esque, Orwellian, ridiculous, absurd, what is happening. And nevertheless, it is happening right in front of our eyes.

The European citizens in the UK felt – and still feel – betrayed, disappointed, angry, but also incredibly sad, worried,

anxious, frustrated, heartbroken. (slide) I can't even begin to imagine how Ukrainians feel right now.

Well, I know a little bit about it, because I am speaking to quite a lot of you, dear Ukrainian colleagues. And to those of you who are here, today: trust me, my heart is with you.

In my Crisis book, I interviewed two EU citizens, who had had breakdowns, because of this situation they suddenly found themselves in. They had never, in their lives, had a breakdown before. They were Joan Pons La Plana, a nurse from Spain and Luci Dun Rejchrtova, a well-known musician, from the Czech Republic, both of them surprised that they had become so deeply depressed and dysfunctional. They spoke candidly about how this happened and how they rose from that state to re-engage with life again.

I was in touch with thousands of other people, online, and at protests, who in the same way, felt that the loss of their Northern Star was a loss that they could not accept or encompass. They didn't know how to make that change, because they had become so identified with being an EU citizen, rather than being the citizen of one country or another, that it had become their very identity, their physical, mental and emotional security. With the loss of Britain's European status, their whole sense of being a respectable and valid person went down the drain.

So, that's when we set up our emotional support service, at the Existential Academy, which I'm happy to say we have now decided to extend into becoming an emotional support service for anyone who is touched by the Ukrainian crisis. For several years we provided emotional support for European citizens in the UK by phone or Zoom. We discovered that there were many reasons for people's upset, despair and deep sense of loss. In our sessions, we found that there were people who had a criminal record, because they had been arrested at protests (often at Greenham Common, against nuclear weapons) and that they had now no chance to remain in the UK: they were basically no longer wanted and had to leave, even if the UK had been their home for many decades and they had British children.

If you had never been in work because you were a mom or were looking after elderly relatives, you may not be able to claim your residency rights, either. There were people who had to split up their families and leave the country, because they became so afraid as they were sent government letters telling them they had to leave. Not many people realize what crazy situations happened in the UK around Brexit. Children were being bullied in school after they had to declare they had foreign parents. There was verbal abuse in shops and people were spat at in the street if they spoke their language of origin. It was incredible and terrible.

Working with the EU citizens was heart-wrenching. Many people were self-blaming, saying: *"Why did I trust that the UK would remain in the European Union?" "Why did I gamble my whole life on having faith that this would carry on?"* They said: *"Now my future is completely blocked, for I have nowhere else to go." "I can't sleep anymore." "I can't eat anymore." "I'm living in a nightmare."*

So, the loss of meaning went across all four levels: physically they felt they had

lost the safety of home and they couldn't feel secure enough to sleep and eat, socially they felt excluded and like second class citizens, who didn't belong, personally they felt a loss of identity and pride in who they were, spiritually, they were at a loss to understand how human beings could treat each other in this way and they despaired of humanity. Everything was in question. Now, apply this to the Ukrainian Crisis, and you'll see the same loss at all levels, in spades, multiplied by many degrees. Some have already removed themselves in fear for their future and their life. Similarly, thousands of EU citizens left the UK and some people became suicidal; feeling unaccepted, insecure, with no voice and no voting rights, suddenly without job security, being bullied and threatened, they had lost their standing in society. You can imagine how Ukrainians feel, having to leave their own country in their millions, with nothing much to take with them, seeing their lives, their homes and loved ones being destroyed behind them.

All these losses lead to a complete lack of purpose and meaning, as life no longer makes sense. EU citizens in the UK felt that the EU's values they had believed in so much, were being destroyed in the UK. How to live when people around you no longer value: collaboration, freedom, peace, loyalty, solidarity and fairness?

This is exactly what the Ukrainian war does to all of us. At all those levels, not just for them, but for all of us, everything is in question. In the UK, the Brexit situation happened because of deliberate misinformation about immigration. And, because of misleading propaganda, created by a hostile environment to immigration. In fact, immigration, in the UK and everywhere else, makes a net contribution to a society. It is essential in the UK for the NHS, academia, the food industry, logistics, hospitality and many other trades and professions. And, of course, immigration is a wonderful thing: you get cross-fertilization; you get new Ideas; and, the people who come in, you have not had to educate, so their skills and abilities come for free!

So, how could people do this? How could they make life sour for millions of EU citizens? How could they treat the Windrush generation with such disdain? And how can people be callous about the Ukrainian situation? How can they not see that such things are the epitome of what we call evil? Human beings harming other human beings, casually or deliberately, can become so trivial, that nobody bats an eyelid.

Because evil is banal, as Hannah Arendt said: *"The sad truth is that most evil is done by people who never make up their minds to be good or evil. They set themselves, aside from it. They don't take sides. They dare not to risk themselves."*

This may be part of why the record on asylum seekers is so appalling poor: the Mental Health Foundation statistics are shocking. They suggest that asylum seekers are five times more likely to have mental health needs than the general population. And more than 61% will experience serious mental distress: but they are also far less likely to receive support than the general population.

When people sacrifice everything to find sanctuary, they need support. There are 26.4 million asylum seekers in the world and there are going to be many, many more, after this war and when the climate change crisis really hits. Renos Papadopoulos, who I believe is a speak-

er at this Congress as well, says the loss of home is the only condition shared by all refugees, not trauma: do not fixate on trauma; fixate on the situation the person is in, and their courage in doing something about it, and support them, where and when you can.

The UK should be ashamed of itself. It is home to only approximately 1% of the 26.4 million refugees who have been displaced by war in the world. It is also one of the countries in Europe, which has offered the fewest visas, so far, to Ukrainians.

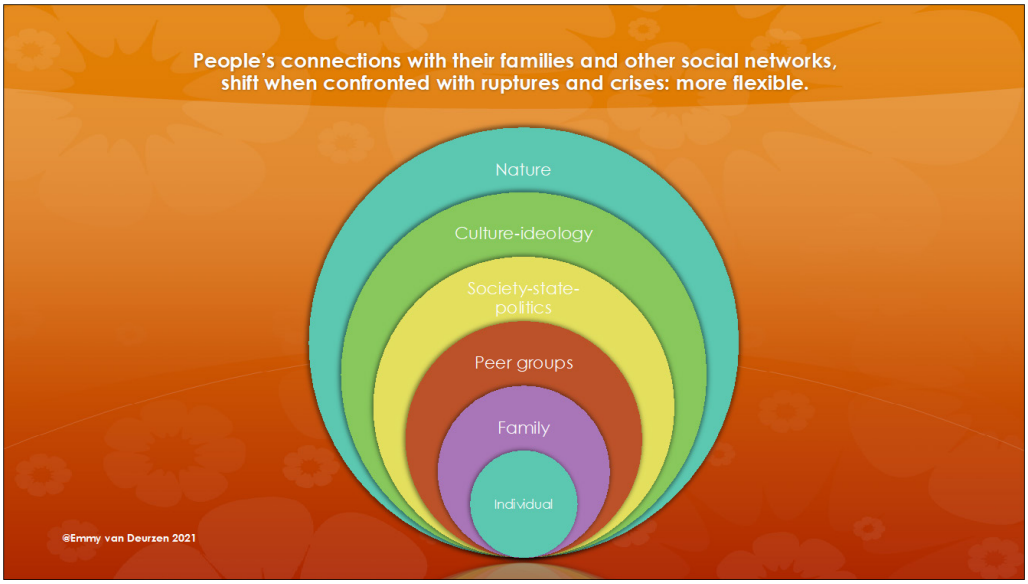
In my book, I drew on the doctoral research of three of my students: in the first place, on the work of Dr. Armin Danesh, who is a political refugee from Iran in the UK and who spoke about how refugees, who are driven from country to country represent the vanguard of their people. They are at the spearhead of change, and they bring tremendous power and courage and wisdom. They should be honoured, not put down into second rate places.

Danesh says: 'all the participants in my study, all of whom were political refugees from Iran to the UK, suffered many losses, not only family members and friends who were executed, or having lost their homes and their possessions, but also their support networks, their natural and cultural environment, and their identity, their meanings.' He found that adaptability is the key factor for them to thrive. And what helps them adapt, is for them to focus on the affirmation of their human rights. We will do well to remember this: that going through the fire creates resilience, and courage. The world needs such people more than ever before.

Read the works of Mandela, Gandhi and Luther King, and you'll find out exactly what that looks like. Gabor Maté says people who are not adaptive may seem to function well, as long as nothing is actually disturbing them, and they can keep their ordinary lives going, but they will become frustrated and helpless when confronted with loss and difficulty. They will typically blame themselves, or blame others, and this is what we saw in the EU citizens who weren't expecting to be in this new difficult position, and who often were despairing about it until they realized they had to be adaptable and they had to find their courage. So, it's about endurance, and daring to show the world what we have learnt in that process. How would you fare in a situation where you were suddenly put to the test?

I would like you to do a thought experiment. It is a nasty one, but please do it. Imagine the Chernobyl nuclear generator being bombarded in this war, which is quite possible, and exploding into a giant mushroom cloud, which will wipe out the whole of Western Europe. How would you feel? Where would you go? What would you do? How would you survive as a refugee if you survived the impact? What would become of you?

The second student on whose work I drew in my book on Existential Crisis was Dr. Nancy Hakim Dowek. She researched people who had moved to a new country, and who had had to put down new roots. She found that when they were feeling lost to tended to find their bearings in new ways because they realize, everything is in question. They turned to the moon, the sun and the planets: these become their allies, as they were stable and steady, predictable in their movements, and always with them wherever they



went. So, do the seasons, and the weather. We widen our horizon to get a bigger picture of our world and larger base, because the foundation we previously had is no longer safe. People in that situation value turning their face to the sun, but also to the wind and the rain. They relish extreme conditions sometimes because they match their experiences: hurricanes, snow; and their identity becomes much less ego-centred and much more relative.

They have great compassion for others, and their adaptability increases. They appreciate their connection to their families, though they have often become separated from their families.

In this slide, you can see where the individual is. We are a small circle with many other rings around us, our families, our peer groups, our society; our state and its politics. Refugees have been removed from all those circles around them and often even find that their culture and their ideology have been destroyed too. They need to build it all from scratch. Only nature is still reliable and sometimes even the earth may have been scorched. Now, sometimes, it can just become too much.

The third piece of work that I drew on in my book was the research by Dr. Susan Iacovou on the aftermath and emotional impact of the bombing of HMS Sheffield in the Falklands War. She was well placed to do this work as she was married to one of its survivors. She quotes from [Bessel] van der Kolk: 'traumatized people are terrified to feel deeply, because it's too much. They are afraid to experience their emotions because emotions lead to loss of control. The essence of trauma is feeling god-forsaken, cut off from the human race itself.' Bear this in mind! People in this position feel disenfranchised, outcast, misunderstood and isolated.

And one of the people Iacovou interviewed said: *"So, unless you actually had that [same] experience, to me it seems that*

you will never understand it. And hence I'd fail to see the point of telling anybody about it, because they couldn't really understand it." If nobody can understand you, there is no point in communicating.

Thus, people cut themselves off and isolate themselves with their pain. Someone else said: '*When you actually watch somebody getting shot; when you see somebody, who is stood on a landmine, actually behind them and watch them go up. That also is a futility and a waste of life. And, it's something you don't forget.*'

It is the same thing that I was saying earlier. We are altered by such experiences and our perspective changes. The only way in which we can help, as therapists, is if we can change our perspective to meet them where they stand, rather than speak to them about the small things that no longer matter to them. Crisis can lead to a vacuum of meaning and we need to dare go into the abyss with the person to begin retrieving some meaning again.

Iacovou said very wise words at the end of her research: '*Combat doesn't cause trauma symptoms; combat causes individuals to question all that they think they know about the world; everything that they valued; all their actions and priorities to date; and for the future. And, in doing so, creates an existential crisis in which they have to cope with a sudden vacuum of meaning.*'

And that is what we will find when we work with people who have come through wars. They will have flashbacks, and they will have all kinds of other things [that] have been written about and know about. But what matters, greatly, is that they will feel alienated and lost in their worldview and their values.

When our freedom is quashed by political events, [or] by the state, [or] by wars, we are pushed into a corner. Simone de Beauvoir, in her novel *The Mandarin* said, 'You can't lead a proper life in a society which isn't proper. Whichever way you turn you are always caught.' And that's exactly what people experience. 'You can't draw a straight line in a curved space.' So, our role is to understand that and to set the world to rights as best we can.

So, how do we help people survive a crisis? It is about finding inner coherence and trust in the principles that give us our integrity, and knowing that you did what you did, and being able to be proud of what you did and stand by it, and to be in community with others. We need to feel there is a continuity of respect and understanding, and that we are given a platform to speak from to be heard and validated.

We need to feel love, and a sense of meaning in our lives, so that we're not destroyed and therapy, especially relationship therapy may help in re-establishing communication. We need to work with the intention of withstanding the pain, holding it, not diminishing it, but drawing on it. We need to understand how all this suffering can be distilled into something that makes us a better person. And that allows us to give something to the world, that the world, otherwise can never know. There needs to be the hope that the record can be set straight one day, and that we can trust our own labour in overcoming our devastation and shattering, and that time will help us in doing so. There needs to be a belief in the slow force of justice. That's the only way we can keep going.

My friend and colleague, Anna Lelyk, for whom I taught in Kiev, some years ago: (see these pictures of that occasion) replied to people on Facebook, who were telling her to stay positive and have good self-care and keep her emotions calm and not listen to the news too much.

She wrote: 'Nonsense! You have no idea what it is like to be in a war. This is my message to the people who are in the war: "*Be yourself. Panic, be angry, cry! Give yourself some space, live and express your emotions. The more we can live our grief now, the easier PTSD will be. There will be less impulsive aggression. Live. Routine is everything for us now. Simple routines that are still possible are stabilising. War is also life; horrible, perverted, inhuman, but still life. Read the news. Yeah, read as much news as you can. It's an illusion of control: at least, you get a sense of what's happening. You need to know that. Do it on purpose. Realize it is now your crutch. Do a roll call of your loved ones when you can, friends. We need to know we are links in the same chain. Do your best to stay alive. The rest – we'll take apart and figure out later.*"

It is about the basics of life. Doing what is possible. Being realistic. Let's never offend people, who go through things like this, with our views based in theory. They live it, in practice and reality. We need to allow ourselves to imagine what it is truly like, when so many layers of a person's life are ruined, or destroyed. What can we help them hold on to and still build up again?

Of course, we've had a general dress rehearsal with Covid; it's brought us together. It's made us aware we are a global world, and life cannot be taken for granted.

So, let's learn from those experiences, and let's remember that, when we go through that fear and that isolation, we hurt. And we are humbled by life, and we learn that we need to have new moral strength, as well as emotional strength. We need to find our existential courage. Paul Tillich said: "*Courage is the universal self-affirmation of our being in the presence of the threat of non-being.*" The average person has only a limited capacity to deal with life-threatening situations.

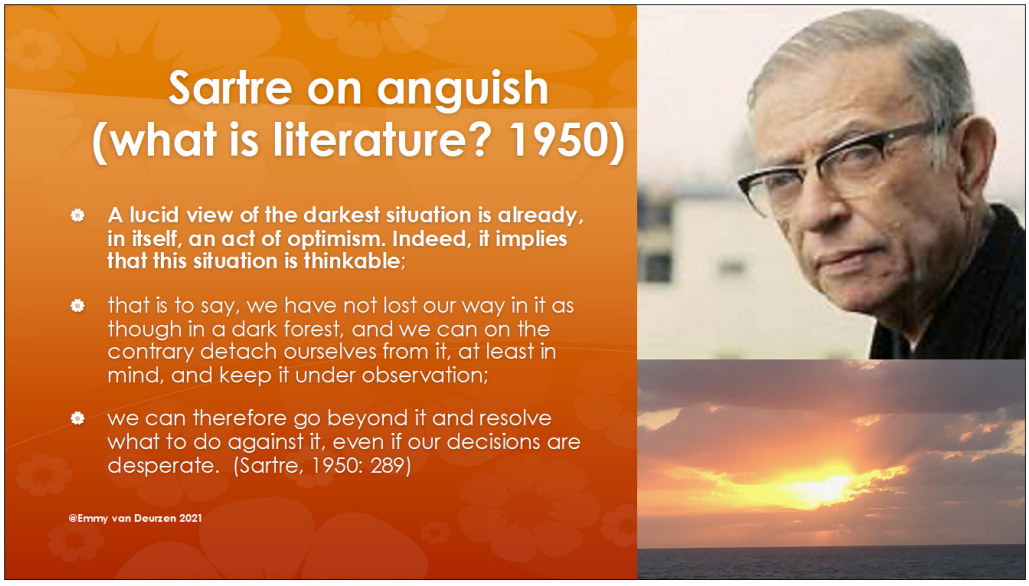
Neurotic people can hardly take any of it at all, because they're actually not 'neurotic', but simply very vulnerable. Creative people can take on board a lot of non-being, and that's usually because they've already dealt with destructive situations and built resilience.

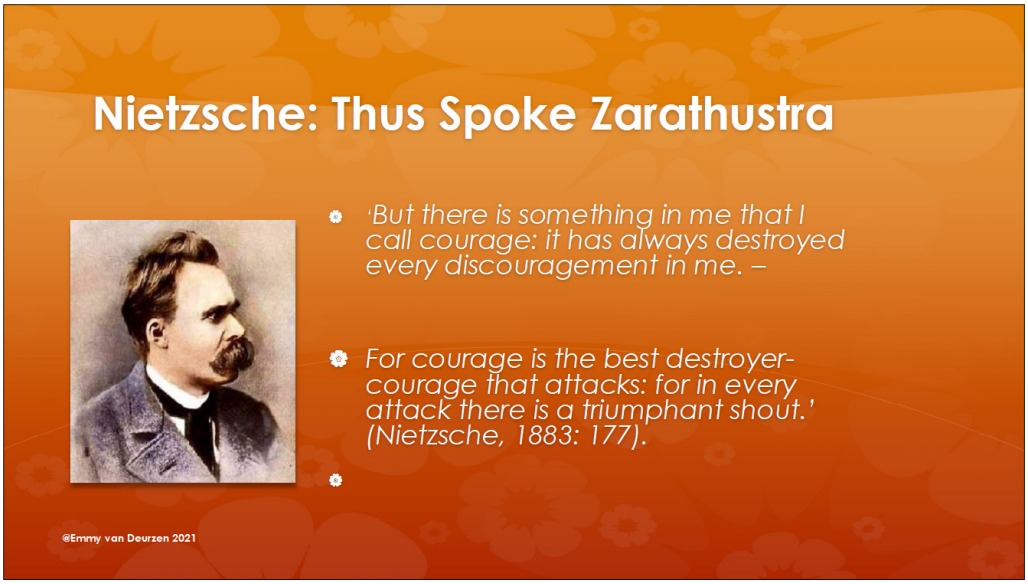
God is defined, by Tillich, a theologian, as that Being that can take on an infinite amount of non-being.

Now, I will need to go quite quickly because time is going by faster than I wanted it to and there is still such a lot to say. The Stoics can be very helpful, because they lived through a lot of wars and thought carefully about how to be staunch in the face of pain. Marcus Aurelius said: 'it's not death that a man should fear, but he should fear, never beginning to live'. And by that, he meant, that we should learn to live with our eyes open, with our whole-body emotions, all our senses, all of our compassion and passion. These troubles, we need them, for they will help us to open up and become real. They wake us up to the awareness of what is truly the case.

So, you need to be prepared to go through your crisis and meet your challenges and face the facts at all the different levels, starting from facing your temporality, the fact that you are subject to gravity, to entropy, to labour, to illness, to failure, and finally to death. And to have those things at the back of your mind and realize that, much of the time, we try to forget about such things, and we forget that other people have fought to give us our freedom, allowing us to take things for granted. Becoming aware of the limits is important. We cannot just be afraid of them, or run away from them. We have to learn to brave them.

Danish philosopher Kierkegaard said, 'anxiety is the dizziness of freedom'. If you don't allow yourself to feel that anxiety, you will never be free. And, when the difficulties come, you will not know what to do with them.





So, you need to prepare for hard times, and allow your anxiety to be there, to give you the necessary energy to rise to the challenge.

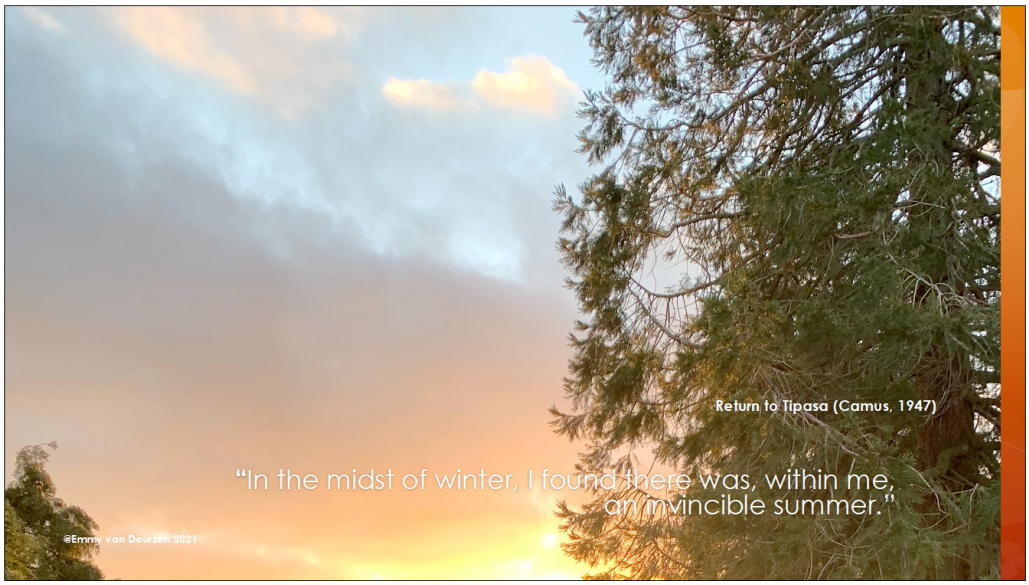
We have to befriend our anxiety, and dare to lose our footing momentarily, rather than losing ourselves. Sartre said: '*A lucid view of the darkest situation is already, in itself, an act of optimism. Indeed, it implies that this situation is thinkable.*' If we can talk about it, we can begin to make sense of it. (Slide)

We may feel lost at first, but, as we begin to find our direction, we uncover new truths we never knew before. It's Heidegger's notion of aletheia (ἀλήθεια), which means truth, but literally means: to unveil what was hidden. Heidegger spoke about the way in which human beings tend to close off their freedom, because they want to keep their anxiety at bay. They'd rather be distracted, or fallen in with other people, or tranquilize themselves by protective sheltering, backing away from difficulties, comfort-seeking, being in the rapture, or forgetting, becoming opaque, evasive, distracted, unauthentic, than to find truth.

We need to challenge ourselves, especially when life gets difficult, and seek truth, facing facts and challenges, instead of hiding. We need courage to do so. Nietzsche said, '*But there is something in me that I call courage. It has always destroyed every discouragement in me, for courage is the best destroyer; courage that attacks. For in every attack, there is a triumphant shout.*' (Slide)

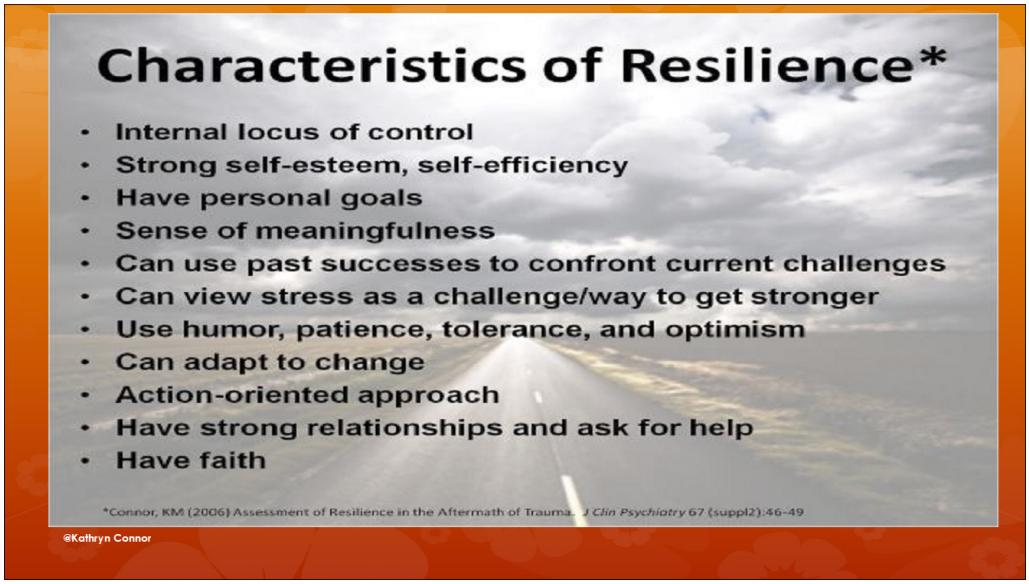
Camus said: '*In the midst of winter, I found there was within me an invincible summer.*' (Slide)

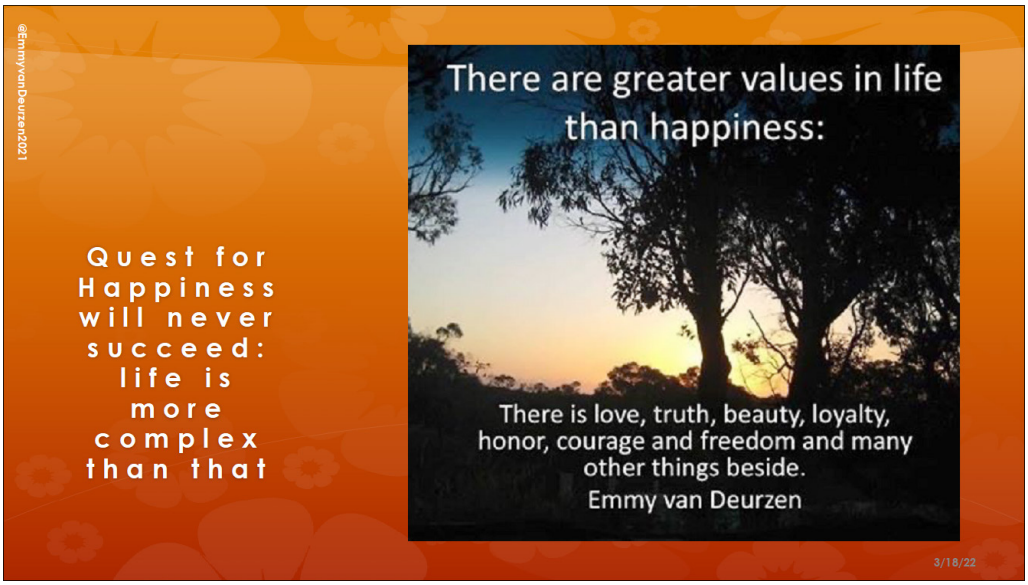
When we are in the depth of despair, we eventually recover the desire to reaffirm life; to find our breakthrough, rather than breaking down. We reclaim our existential space at all levels and we reaffirm the right to experience everything that makes life worth having: our



sensations, our feelings, our thoughts, our intuitions, our relationships, our environment, our values, our beliefs, our identity – all of that together. And it is important to understand how we can build it up again when it is lost, by finding our resilience.

The work of Kathryn Connor on resilience is essential for any of us working with such situations. It is a summary of all the research on resilience. It shows the need for an internal locus of control; not believing what other people tell you, but believe yourself to be self-sufficient





and efficient; have your own goals; have a sense of meaningfulness; use your past successes to confront new challenges and see them as a way to get stronger. Keep using humour, and patience, and tolerance, and optimism, and keep adapting to change – and to be action-orientated, and have strong relationships, and have faith in something, if it's only the fact that after the night, the morning will come again. (Slide)

As Viktor Frankl pointed out, in difficult circumstances we are confronted with our freedom to choose how we are going to be and who we are going to be. This is true, not just in Ukraine, not just in Russia, but for all of us.

We are now responseable. We need to respond to the situation. We are responsible for our choices of values and ways of being. Hardship will open us up to the fundamental aspects of being human, and we will discover that being human was never about having a comfy existence, or about maximum happiness.

We discover that there are other values than happiness: there is love, truth, beauty, loyalty, honour, courage, and freedom and many other things beside. (slide). Remember to connect, physically, by creating safety and harmony. Use your skills, find out the facts. Build a safe world in every way you can. Socially, connect with each other with affection and a sense of kinship, an affiliation with generosity.

People need good institutions to safeguard that and to work together. Connect with yourself so that you live with inner integrity and can establish inner peace.

Create safety for yourself in every way you can. We need education, support, creativity, philosophical thinking and leisure to do so. We cannot reconnect spiritually to what is true and what is of value, without that. We cannot transcend human error and human hatred unless we are willing to learn.

Seek meaning in the world; create together a credible vision, a belief system, which is free from creed and dogmatism, but which gives us a joint framework for morality and commitment to truth, justice and freedom at all levels. We will find new meaning if we stand together, and if we are willing to understand these things. In lived truth, we will find deeper meanings than we ever felt, or found before. Remember David Bohm's idea of the implicit order of the universe: we are all a part of that.

And each of us carries inside of us, an entire universe, that we are responsible for. Don't underestimate the importance of that, as Mandela said when he took on the mantle of leadership. *"We might have our differences, but we are one people with a common destiny in our rich variety of culture, race, and tradition."* Dare to take that broad perspective in your work. As therapists we are the guardians of the art of living. We need to enable ourselves and others to keep travelling in the right direction of human collaboration, understanding and solidarity. This will give us purpose.

Thank you very much for listening to me. Here are some websites, if you're interested. And here is the Ukraine fundraiser event: all proceeds of which will go to support Ukraine.

Thank you very much! *(Applause)*

PH: Emmy: I'm deeply moved by what you have just presented to us. We invited you to give this keynote speech before the Crisis in Ukraine. And what you have done today is speak to us of the existential crisis to come in terms of climate crisis, but also the existential crisis that is right here in the heart of Europe. And I feel sure that your words will have deeply touched our Ukrainian and Russian colleagues, taking part in this Congress. Thank you so much. I'm really pleased that you came, and you completed your presentation. At one point, you said oh I'm running out of time, so we just have a couple of minutes. So, I suggest we take just a couple of questions with apologies to everyone that we can't take them all.

(Caitlin Zaharia is also on stage)

CZ: Yeah, yeah. I'm checking here the questions when they show up. May I put a question before you see any questions here? So, in this situation [of] existential crisis, how do you see the connection between the 'being-connected' and binding and transfers, with the borders and separations, how those to call borders can be undermining in a way [of each] other.

EvD: Yes, well this is why we have to work together, isn't it? If this situation shows us anything, it is that we need to be much more flexible about how we work across borders, and we need to have much greater solidarity with each other than we've had in the past. You know, a lot of the work that we did on creating the European Union, creating the United Nations, was done after the Second World War. And over the years it has faded a little bit; it's become something else, and it's become something that people have started attacking and criticizing because we lost sight of how essential it is for the future of our planet, and this world that we share. So, there is a huge task ahead of us. And psychotherapists have an enormous role to play in that. In the past, I might have said philosophers have an enormous role to play in that. But it is a philosophical form of psychotherapy that does it, because psycho-

therapists work with the people, in reality, instead of thinking in the abstract. As therapists we know what happens to the people; we've done the research; we know what these things do to human beings. Hardship can destroy what's best in us. And what we absolutely must do is create a world in which we educate and we stimulate, and we cultivate, what is best in human beings, and we need to understand how it gets lost. How we allow some people to go astray.

And when I say that, I don't mean the people who are traumatized. I mean, the people who go astray in their thinking about who they are, and what they are entitled to do to others in this world.

CZ: I think there's one more: I have a question here: *"What was one of the main challenges for you as a woman, working with these essential issues across borders; how do you as a person and professional look after yourself."*

EvD: Thank you. Thank you very much for that. Well, I can tell you I have struggled a great deal in my life with these things. Oh well, what a wonderful question. I have never found a place in established cultures; I've always had to create them myself. Which is why I was always delighted to work with the EAP, which was a great example of a coming together of diverse cultures, where we work together, and we try to create something new, rather than sitting on a throne in an existing organization. And it is so important that we remember that, and that we don't stand in judgment of each other, but we go back to that basic idea. It's important the EAP is an important organization and its voice should be heard, not just in working with the misery that war is creating for people, but also in getting to the root of it: why wars are such a bad idea, and how therapists know so much about conflict intervention and resolution.

Digby Tantam and myself, used to co-direct the Centre for the Study of Conflict and Reconciliation at the University of Sheffield, and we worked with the idea that therapists needed to be there in political negotiations. If we are to overcome personal conflicts we need to have this broader, wider view of what is right for the planet, right for humanity, right for all of us.

CZ: So, another question here was: *'How we can help from outside in this conflict between the two countries'.*

PH: I think we're going to draw this to a close because I'm really conscious that I think what our Congress participants will want to do now is gather in groups and talk and be able to listen and speak to each other so me.

Thank you. You've said generous words to us as the EAP, but you have honoured us and honoured the Congress by being part of it, and this collaboration with you is has felt extremely important, especially in this time. So, our heartfelt thanks to you for your excellent [talk]. Thank you much. We appreciate it. Thank you. *(Applause)*

PARTICIPANT CONTRIBUTIONS in the "Chat" [1] Directly after the Keynote Speech by Dr. Emmy van Deurzen

Silvia Franke: *Will there be a transcript or recording of the speeches? I ask for my Russian colleague who is very sad for not being able to participate and sends greeting to everyone.*

Volodymyr Karikash, Ukraine: *Will there be a transcript or recording of the speeches? I ask for my Ukrainian colleague who is very sad for not being able to participate and sends greeting to everyone.*

Silvia Franke: *Is this meant provocative? Our colleagues are not our enemies.*

Anne Colgan: *Looking forward to hearing you, Emmy.*

Emmy van Deurzen: *Thank you!*

EAP Support Team: *Welcome to our EAP Conference noon sessions* 🙂

EAP Support Team: *Share your thoughts to this talk in the Chat* 🙂

Mariia Tyshchenko: *Thank you from Ukraine (Kyiv), dear Emmy!*

Danila Bezmenov: *Thank you so much, Emmy.* ❤️

Andreas Kuermayr: *Thank you for citing Maya Angelou!!!*

Nadežda Feketeová: *Thank for presentation and inspiration … My experience is that most clients – even young people – prefer "live" therapy. They also come from a distance of 250 and more km. I also work online …*

Katarina Levatić: *So inspiring…* ❤️❤️

Konstantinos Mouzakitis – Maria Chatzianastasiou: *Moving and inspiring as always.* 🌹

Liudmyla Ostapchuk Ukraine: *Thank you Emmy* 💙💛

Gustavo Torres: *Together we win, divided we fall*

Dariia Zinchenko (12:57). *Dear colleagues, I can't describe how grateful I am for all your support, kind words* 🙏 *and even for mourning that we, Ukrainians, cannot afford [to do] yet … When I was a kid, I read a poem saying that "the Goodness must have fists". I didn't believe it then, now I'm learning it hard way, while I go to bed under bombings every night. I stay near Kyiv now. These long days of war taught me that it doesn't matter who you are, plumber or psychotherapist, it all comes to personal choice when darkness is trying to take over humanity. You either keep silence and stay passive, or you rise your voice and fight for light. I also would like to say thank you to Mrs. Patricia Hunt for the beautiful poem, full of hope and promise* ❤️. *As well as I want to share poem of William Ernest Henley, which has been my personal support these days.*

Dariia Zinchenko: *"Out of the night that covers me; Black as the pit from pole to pole; I thank Whatever gods may be – For my unconquerable soul.*

In the fell clutch of circumstance; I have not winced nor cried aloud.

1. **Editor's Note**: None of these comments have been edited, except for removing the time (recorded in brackets) and a very few minor edits for obvious spelling / typing mistakes. All the emojis have been kept.

Under the bludgeonings of chance;
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears;
Looms but the horror of the shade,

And yet the menace of the years;
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how straight the gate;
How charged with punishments the scroll,

I am the master of my fate;
I am the captain of my soul."

Barbara Fitzgerald: *Dear Dariia,*

Dr Alena Večeřová Procházková: *Dear Dariia, thanks for sharing. We are with you, trying to find the best and effective ways how we can help to Ukraine people here in Czechia.*

Barbara Fitzgerald: *Thank you for sharing such profound words and for sharing your experience, A very poignant poem by William Ernst Henley*

Aline de Marcillac: *Dear Dariia, thank you for sharing, we are with you. Aline, from France*

Celia Avila-Rauch: *Brilliant, and thank you for to bring us to the reality*

Marlies Lenglachner: *Many thanks for your rich ideas from your experiences for times like now we need it more and stay connected to continue our offers for our all future we don't know*

Alena Večeřová Procházková: *I am deeply touched with your courage and I wish all the people in Ukraine and to you stay safe and alive and win. I understand why EU governments are afraid to escalate the conflict with RU, but I feel you need another kind of support than words and I feel also ashamed we (EU) don't help you more.*

Gustavo Torres: *Dear Dariia, no bomb will silence your voices!!!*

Irena Hysenaj: *It's so inspiring. Thank you Dr. Deurzen*

Alena Večeřová Procházková: *Dear Emmy, thank you very much for deep insight and for deep passion and understanding beyond your words!*

Marleen Van Leemput: *Beautiful and such an inspiring speech. There's so much hope for humanity and the world. So much people are struggling right now, but we are so deeply connected*

Liudmyla Ostapchuk, Ukraine: *Thanks Emmy* ❤️*, this is the first time I've cried for the last few days* 💙💛

Anne Colgan: *Thank you, Emmy. Inspirational.*

Mirjam Tiel van Buul: *WOW!*

Silvia Franke: *Great presentation!*

Ruth L. Formosa Ventura: *This is so moving. I was speechless in view of everything that is happening and now I am even more so but from a position of hope not fear.*

Liudmyla Moskalenko: *Thank you, Emmy!* ❤️💛💙

Mirela Eskinja: *Emmy, thank you very much for a very inspiring speech and encouraging words!*

Charalampos Efstathiou: *What a great message ... Be you, Be yourself, Be Human ... Feel your feelings, live your feelings, express your feelings...*

Marlies Lenglachner: *Thank you, dear Emmy for sharing your messages out of several levels we might use the seeds you offered.*

Demetris Shouer: *Your Presentation is most inspirational. The way your voice and energy initiate and motivate sound waves as well as psychic velvet embracement, is a miracle. God Bless You. Thank you for you being here with all of us and for sharing such a golden and motivating presentation.*

Carmen Joanne Ablack, EABP: *Dear Emmy, Thank you for punching a hole in the happiness agenda, in a sense you speak to a deeper sensing of beingness*

Peter Schulthess: *What an excellent presentation. Thank You for this.*

Barbara Fitzgerald: *Thank you, Emmy, A moving evocation to what fundamentally matters*

Erzsebet Amalia Lukacs: *Thank You so much. . .*

Traudl Szyszkowitz: *Thank you, Emmy, for your wonderful words, your spirit and your belief in Life*

Els Boumans: *I am deeply impressed, Emmy! Thank you!*

Gustavo Torres: *Wonderful and inspiring presentation! Thank you so much, Emmy!!!*

Dermod Moore: *Brava! Stirring and impassioned and inspiring.*

Marija Stojkoska Vasilevska: *Thank you, Emmy for reminding me again that humbleness of human is powerful aspect full with hope essential for survival and living*

Charalampos Efstathiou: *Thank you !!!*

Ann Ruth: *Thank you so much; wonderful.*

Konstantinos Mouzakitis – Maria Chatzianastasiou: 🌹

Desiree Gonzalo CZ: *Simply sublime* :)

Ivana Mošić Pražetina: *Thank You so much ... I am deeply touched...*

Paul Van Gorp: *Very touching and inspiring in many ways! Thank you!*

Edita Siskiene: *Thank u so much* 🙂

Ingrid Grech Lanfranco: *Lovely*

Mariia Tyshchenko: *Dear Emmy, Thank you VERY MUCH from all my heart!!!*

Aline de Marcillac: *I am so moved and it's so clever, thank you,*

Ruth L. Formosa Ventura: *Very inspiring thoughts, very moving words and experiences. Many, many thanks*

Rosette Rozenberg: *Thank you so much for your very moving and inspiring talk.*

Abdelfattah Arissa: *Wonderful Emmy! thanks*

Lenka Dvornakova: *Thank you. It was very inspiring...*

Liudmyla Ostapchuk, Ukraine: 👏👏👏❤️❤️❤️💙💛

Fotios Lekkas: *Thank you ever so much!*

Marialexia Margariti: 👏👏👏
A very big thank you Emmy

Veronika Kloucek: *Beautiful, thank you every so much!*

Amalia Deli: *Thank you, Emmy! inspirational, moving.*

Irena Hysenaj: *Thank you* 😍

Ljiljana Bastaic: *So moving, so beautiful*

Simona Ligia Tutunaru: *Thank you* 💐

Susan Ricketts: *Moving, inspirational and helps incredibly to conceive of what is happening.*

Alona Keles: *Thank you so much* 💙💛 *Emmy*

Ivona Maričić Kukuljan: *Thank you, beautiful presentation...*

Ljiljana Bastaic: *Thank you*

Matilda Belalla: *Wonderful speech! Deeply touched. Thank you!*

Pavol Janoško: *Thank you a lot for so touched presentation*

Nino Kobakhidze: *Dear Emmy, thank you for wonderful, deeply moving, inspiring presentation!* 💙💛

Tomaž Flajs: *Thank you from the heart.*

Therese Gaynor: *Wonderful Emmy, thanks, steady feet…*

Josephine Power-Anastasiou: *Thank you so much, truly humbling and inspirational*

EAP Support Team: *Please post any Questions to Emmy*

Tom Warnecke: *Dear Emmy, thank you so much for your inspiring and heartening contribution today.*

Dr Coleen Jones: *Bless you for this most inspirational presentation to connect with all of us and our cosmos-centric world. Thank you!*

Joëlle Boyesen: *I am so moved by your presentation Emmy, thank you* 🌸

Simona Pretzová: *Thank you for your touching speech* 💐

Gabriele Waldherr: *Dear Emmy, very touching presentation. Thank you for that!* 💛

Alžběta Protivanská: *Dear Emmy, thank you for such a deep and loving words. Especially thank you for anchoring our role as psychotherapists – guardian of art of living* 🙏

Ruth L. Formosa Ventura: *What was one of the main challenges for you as a woman working with existential issues across boarders? How do you as a person and professional look after yourself?*

Aleksandra Kušić: *I am very grateful to be able to hear this presentation. It was very inspiring, thank you Emmy!*

Ruth L. Formosa Ventura: *Thank you*

Silvia Franke: *What can be done about the big gap between Ukrainian and Russian psychotherapists? How can we be of help from outside?*

Carmen Joanne Ablack, EABP: *Dear Emmy*

Enver Cesko: *This is a most beautiful presentation I had seen for 20 years about the crises and atrocities. Thank you, Prof. Emmy.*

Enver Cesko: *How we as psychotherapist can be closed and work with politicians and political leaders*

Carmen Joanne Ablack, EABP: *So good hear from you again. I was aware that what you stated about EU citizens and refugees applies also to those in UK and in Europe are from brown and black cultures; what it means to be also of the place and of difference.*

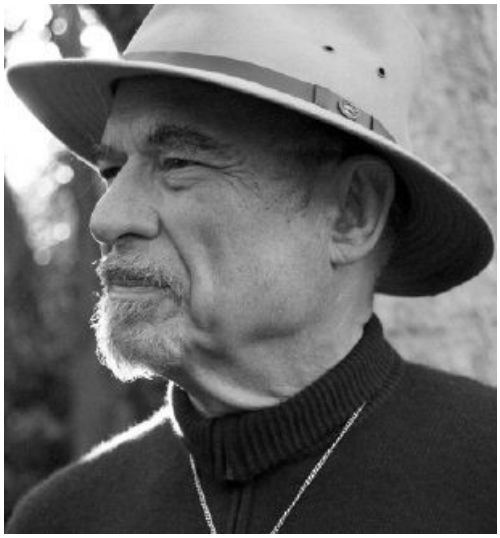
Leonore Langner: *My heart resonates with your words, Emmy, thank you.* 🌷

Robert Waldl: *Thank you*

Keynote Speaker: Professor Irvin Yalom

"Matters of Death and Life"

DR. IRVIN YALOM



I was born in Washington, D.C., June 13, 1931, of parents who immigrated from Russia (from a small village named Celtz near the Polish border) shortly after the first world war. Home was the inner city of Washington – a small apartment atop my parents' grocery store on First and Seaton Street. During my childhood, Washington was a segregated city, and I lived in the midst of a poor, black neighborhood. Life on the streets was often perilous. Indoor reading was my refuge and, twice a week, I made the hazardous bicycle trek to the central library at Seventh and K streets to stock up on supplies. I entered upon my medical training already having decided to go into psychiatry. Psychiatry proved (and proves to this day) endlessly intriguing, and I have approached all of my patients with a sense of wonderment at the story that will unfold. I believe that a different therapy must be constructed for each patient because each has a unique story. As the years pass, this attitude moves me farther and farther from the center of professional psychiatry, which is now so fiercely driven by economic forces in precisely opposite directions – namely accurate de-individualizing (symptom-based) diagnosis and uniform, protocol-driven, brief therapy for all. My first writings were scientific contributions to professional journals. My first book, *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy* has been widely used (seven hundred thousand copies) as a text for training therapists. Other texts followed: – *Existential Psychotherapy* (a textbook for a course that did not exist at the time); *Inpatient Group Psychotherapy* (a guide to leading groups in the inpatient psychiatric ward); *Encounter Groups: First Facts*, a research monograph that is out of print. Then, in an effort to teach aspects of Existential Therapy, I turned to a literary conveyance and, in

International Journal of Psychotherapy
Summer 2022, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 53-68: ISSN 1356-9082 (Print); ISSN 1469-8498 (Online)

Submitted: March 2020; formatted: June/July 2022. DOI: 10.36075/IJP.2022.26.2.5/Yalom

the past several years, have written a book of therapy tales (*Love's Executioner, Momma and the Meaning of Life* – a collection of true and fictionalized tales of therapy) and three teaching novels (*When Nietzsche Wept, Lying on the Couch*, and *The Schopenhauer Cure*). My wife, Marilyn, received a Ph. D. in comparative literature (French and German) from Johns Hopkins and has had a highly successful career as a university professor and writer. Her many works include: *Blood Sisters*, *A History of the Breast*, *History of the Wife*, *The Birth of The Chess Queen* and (together with my son Reid Yalom) *The American Resting Place*. My four children, all living in the San Francisco Bay area, have chosen a variety of careers – medicine, photography, creative writing, theatre directing, clinical psychology: eight grandchildren and counting.

In interview with Eugenijus Laurinaitis

EL: Dear Friends, dear Colleagues.

It is time for an interview with Irvin Yalom, and I'm sure that almost all of you have read something about him, or something by him. And, of course, one of the most popular professional books is: *Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy*, which is probably read by all group therapists, but he also is an author of many novels, and some of them are in between the professional and poetic forms, and one of the best books for professionals and patients, also is *The Gift of Therapy*, a small but central book to understand what the process of therapy gives and what it takes. However, this interview was based on the last book published by Irvin Yalom, about his journey with the death of his wife, called *Matters of Death and Life*. And I indeed felt very honoured that I was chosen to make this interview, so, I have to say that it was a deep existential experience. Let us look and listen to the interview.

[YouTube Interview]

EL: Dr Irvin David Yalom was born on June 13th 1931, so he is [now] slowly but surely approaching his 91st birthday. And, indeed, he is an Existential Psychiatrist and Psychotherapist, and Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry at Stanford University. And he is the author of many books, both fiction and non-fiction. For psychotherapists, the first important input into group psychotherapy was *Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy*, published in its first edition in 1970 and, since then, re published five times, as far as I remember.

And then there were plenty of other professional books, often on existential psychotherapy, in-patient group psychotherapy, and one very important, despite that it is quite small but very important book is *The Gift of Therapy*, an open letter to a new generation of therapists and their patients. And, indeed, is very widely used as a handbook for patients: how and what they can take from psychotherapy. So, I think it is a very practical and almost [an] eternal book, because it's very universal across the [different] approaches and schools.

And there are plenty of books of [a] fictional character, starting with *Everyday Gets a Little Closer*, which is more or less a psychotherapeutic kind of work, with more and more fictional content, and a very important book, which you write yourself. It was for you in this morning's process, *The Schopenhauer Cure* and when each event. And this is important for everybody. I must tell that for me as Lithuanian is very important that almost all your books are translated into Lithuanian. I must show you your last book: *A Matter*

of Death and Life, which is translated into Lithuanian as well. And it's a little bit bigger than the English edition in a way, it's thicker.

So, I must say that, indeed, as an author, as a teacher, and as a therapist, you are unique person, absolutely unique person in our practice because you are working more than 70 years. Indeed, starting by step-studies and, later on, doing more and more sophisticated work in psychotherapy, but we are about to talk about your last published book, *Matters of Death and Life*, what you have written together with your deceased wife Marilyn. And, first of all, I would like to ask you a question which was not only in my mind: why it is named in that way, *A Matter of Death and Life*, because, for everyday logic, Life is before Death, but, in your book's title, it is Death before Life.

IY: Yeah. Well, it's because the book is really about my wife's death, and then my life afterwards. So, the book is [about] her death and my life, following that. The life that I'm living right now, which will be short. It's hard to imagine my living too long without her. I've been so tied to my wife, my entire life, ever since I first met her when we were 14. I have [had] a life before Marilyn: and then, now this life after, after Marilyn. It's hard to, it's hard for me to live without her.

My books that I wrote offer me comfort. Lately, I've been getting some comfort from re-reading my own books. It's very strange. At night, I read a few pages, a few chapters of the books I wrote, that offers me a great deal of company.

So, [now] I'm writing about my life after her death, which is, of course, a life of grief, and how one deals with grief ... how I'm dealing with grief.

I've learned a great deal about grief. I'm working with very good therapist over the last year, year and a half. So, I am thinking about grief, and how I'm gradually getting through this, but I knew from the very beginning that I wasn't really going to get over this. Very few people have a life, where their whole life was lived with this, with this one person, so I knew [that] this was not going to be easy, but I have a lot of things helping me, including four very wonderful children, and lots of lots of colleagues. I'm living in a lovely part of the world. And I'm surrounded by Stanford University and surrounded by lots and lots and lots of students that I've trained, and they come and see me and help me live my life more easily. So, that's where I am right now. And, I've been writing. And I'm just finishing a book that I'll talk about that, perhaps later in the program. [But] I don't think my prognosis is very good when I'm not writing, because I've been writing all my life practically, even before I met my wife at 14.

We lived in a very dangerous neighbourhood in Washington DC., and I spent a lot of time in the library. My parents were happy when I was the library because they knew I'd be safe there. So, I spent a lot of time in the library reading, and writing, and writing poetry, and writing stories.

And, when I met Marilyn that was the binding force. And because she had never met a young boy, who was writing like I did because she loved literature herself and she became a ... she got her Doctorate, became a PhD in literature, in German literature, and then French literature. So, I was a very unusual person, and our first dates, you know, was reading my poetry to her, and my stories.

And before Marilyn, I would bicycle, on my bicycle, and I'd be reciting poetry to myself, but finally, I had someone that I can recite it to, someone else.

EL: I see. Professor, we were talking that you were really writing all your life. And I understand that, in a way, this was a kind of canalization of the feelings and the tensions that you feel inside. If we think therapeutically, does the writing of that last book, help you, in a way, to relieve your pain and suffering, or not so much.

IY: Oh absolutely, absolutely! I even now, even at the age of 90, this is what I look forward to, every day. I have my, I have my writing, and that's the main thing. I have a lot of emails every day. And I take care of that first hour or two, and then I can turn and write, writing, finishing this book, now I'm editing it. It's not as much fun as making up new things and starting new stories. I have a couple in my mind, and right now, I feel a little discouraged at the idea of not writing and I hope I have a new book that starts, start to emerge I have an idea of a shorter, shorter piece.

There was a story. Well, I'll talk about that later, the story. There was a story in the book that I'm writing; it was too long for ... for the bucket, it didn't quite fit-in somewhere, like that with, with the German lady, who I was writing with. This was ... will make a separate book, maybe a long story in a magazine, something like that, it's not quite long enough for a book. So, that'll be my next project.

I'm not, I would not be very happy if I didn't have a writing project ahead of me: very strange in that way. I just depend on that ... pretty much: writing all this life of me.

EL: But this shows, dear professor, that you are still looking in the future. You are still searching for some meaning of your life, which is not ending, despite that you told yourself that it's not long in front of you, but still you are planning and planning. Is it, in your way, a kind of natural and actually a helpful way to deal with approaching death?

IY: Absolutely! It's absolutely essential for me to think of how I will write about that. It just becomes so much a way of life [that] I don't even question it. But I'm happiest when I'm writing. I love to write. I just love it! There's so much pleasure: [to get] the words and putting them together. You know, I've never taken a course on writing; this is nothing that I've ever learned; it just, it just feels so natural to me.

EL: I see. But you did this writing, during the process of the death of Marilyn, you actually interchanged with your [wife], parts [of it], when she was still alive. But it doesn't look, especially in the first part of your book, that it helps you very much. You were constantly in pain, and after Marilyn's death, you found a (kind of) soul 'thing', experiencing your own book, *The Schopenhauer Cure*. And, can you give any advice to those who are now [going] through a similar process, or are now widows, or widowers, and can you somehow recommend something as a way of relieving the pain inside.

IY: That's a difficult question. You're asking me; a question of ... I find this soothing to me, but what about people who aren't particularly engaged in writing, and love to write, and have that as a resource. What, what can they do? That's a hard question for me to answer. I don't know what I'd be doing if it weren't ... if it weren't always for that. The other thing,

after writing, I guess what gives me comfort is friendship. I have a lot of very, very dear friends, upon whom I depend, and I meet with, and we exchange things, and nothing is held back. So, that's, that's always very important to me. However, I'm in a time of life right now where all my, really, dear friends: people who go back with me forever. They're all dead; every one of them. I'm the last one alive, and that is a very lonely state of mind. So, I have to – kind of – get used to that. And it's, it's very hard to ... there's a ...

My family: this is my next writing project, you asked me. My family used to meet; they came from Russia. They came from a little shtetl called Celtz. I don't really know if it's still alive, if it's still there. My mother came from a shtetl, a few kilometres away, called Depreshina. And it was there in Russia, I didn't know much about the geography – I've never visited there. It was, it was near the Polish border. My father used to say that he was a great joker; he would say, "If we didn't want another long Russian winter, we would call it Poland."

You know: so, it was near the border. And they got ... the family came from these two shtetles, and they met in Washington DC, where they all seem to have emigrated. Most of them have stores, grocery stores, and a couple of them have liquor stores like my father.

And, every Sunday, the family would get together and they would have dinner at one of their houses, or so. Then, they would talk the whole evening, and the men would play Pinochle, and the women would play Canasta, and, if there weren't enough people in the Canasta game, they'd make the men, give up the Pinochle again, and play Canasta with them. And they talked and talked, and they would sing songs, but there was a rule. The rule was they never, never would talk about the Holocaust in front of the children. We never knew what happened: it was forbidden. Only once in a while, we would get a little clue of what happened over there.

So, that was all my life; that I went to these things, until the time I met Marilyn. Only, really then, perhaps I stopped going there and start being with Marilyn. So, the Sunday night things were deeply implanted in my mind. And now they're coming back to me in this stage of [my] life. Especially because I met a woman, who was the co-writer of one of my stories in the new book. Her name was Zekina, a German lady, and together we wrote. I met with her: she was in great despair too, because her father was a Nazi, working in the concentration camps and he killed Jews; a great many Jews in Minsk, and in Russia; and her father was ruthless and cruel and sexually abusive to her. And he was born right after the war; her father was awful; and when she was older, he forced her to sleep with him. And when she was about 16, she got a good scholarship to a school in Germany, and she never came back home. She never returned home to their parents, and then she became a therapist. She was a remarkable woman, and then she decided ... she met a Israeli man, a teacher, named Dan Bar-On. I don't know his work, but he is a very well-known teacher and she worked with him.

And then she devoted the rest of her life; she's devoted still. She devotes four months a year teaching psychotherapy, for no cost, in Israel. And so, and then she called me for help with her problems. And she was one of my consultations. Then, she wanted to meet again, and [then] maybe a third time and we did. Then I

wrote a story about her: one of my 35 stories. But then, it was very surprising to me, [that] about a month after we met, I sent her my story. But, in the return mail, she sent me her story – about her meeting with me ... [and] that was the first: nobody else ever did that. So, then we met again. I don't meet with many people for a second time; out of those who had single sessions. Not that I think we should meet with patients only once; it's all because my memory's so poor at 90, that I felt that I couldn't do on-going therapy.

So, I wrote to her, I saw her again. Then, I wrote a second story about her, about our second visit. Sure enough, two weeks later, she sends me her story about our second visit. So, together, we decided we'll publish a story. Both of us – written about both of us. But now, as I'm looking at my book now, the story is four times as long as any other story – so, it doesn't fit in the book. I'm going to find a way to publish it somewhere else, or the two of us were writing together. She's a remarkable woman. So, that's the one story that I've written. It's not going to be in this book, but, oh well, the reason I'm telling you all this is because of meeting her.

Lots of stuff from those Sunday night dinners, and my family, and Prushina itself coming back to me things I never even knew. It's not new; it is less than the literature about the transmission of trauma from generation to generation, that's even unconscious, and I'm beginning to experience stuff from the ..., from the holocaust: ... [stuff that] you know that I never knew that I knew, so that's ... that's been a new experience for me: ... and that's what I'll write with her.

EL: I understand but, Professor Yalom, let's look a little bit into your, almost all your life interest in death matters, because your books, like *'The Schopenhauer Cure'*, *'The Matter of Death & Life'*, *'Staring at the Sun'* are more or less all about death, about the process of dying, and I am wondering how do you think that – may be – this secret kept in your Sunday dinners, not to talk about Holocaust, which was transmitted to you unconsciously, was producing your interest in death: what is it? what it means? and how to deal with that?

IY: I think, I think you're absolutely right. It wasn't conscious to me. At that time, it wasn't conscious to me, but it's starting to come up. I've been having a lot of bad dreams. Trying various drugs they give me for depression and various things, and I get a lot of nightmares. One nightmare that I had, not so much of a nightmare, but it was after I met Zukina, the German woman, and the nightmare came, and we had the title of the story, which was what the Israeli student said to her: "We've Been Waiting For You".

He came to her after her first song: you know, we've been waiting for you; we've been waiting for a Nazi to atone for what his parents had done to the Jews. It's a wonderful story; a wonderful title to the story, I thought: "We've Been Waiting For You". Then, I had this dream, and the dream was: "There was a dream-maker that was visiting me and was saying to me, 'No, I've got a better title for that story'. And I'm saying in my dream, 'What! I've got a good title already'. 'No: we want you to give that story a different title and the [title of the] story is: 'Psychotherapy Duo' or 'Psychotherapy Duet'. It was one of the two; they were offered me one of these two stories. That was very strange, but the more I began thinking about it, there was something to be said for it, because she was coming to me for psychotherapy, but

I was getting it from her. You know, she was stirring up all these things about my past that I, I didn't know, I didn't think I knew. And so, it was, not only me giving her something, but she was stirring up all this past, [from] all the Sunday nights; all these holocaust ideas that were coming [up] from the past. So, so that's when I was aware that my past and, in terms of the German Holocaust, was beginning to be stirred up in me.

A dream [that] I had not very long ago. Now, I will write about it now in a story. My father had a younger brother: there were about four of them. The older brother, [who] came earlier, and started a little grocery store in Washington and was able to send my father about $200. So, he [could] get my father over from Russia to the United States; and my father brought his sister over and another brother. So, there were four of them. But, my father's younger brother, his name was Abe. He came over, but not in time enough to get his wife and children over, they were all killed by the Nazis.

And then I suddenly had a dream, although it was a memory as well as the dream, and the dream was, when I was 12 years old. And this is not a dream, it really happened, but I had forgotten it. When I was 12 years old, they took me to my uncle. [He], my uncle Abe, they gave him a little tiny grocery store in Washington DC, by the Naval Yard, which was in a very bad part of town, and on Sundays on Saturdays, [he] used to cash checks for everyone who got paid working at the Naval Yard. And he would make them little sandwiches, and that was how he made his money. But, on Saturday, they sent me to the bank. I was about 11 or 12 years old: I think they sent me in a taxi cab. And I went into the bank, and the manager was waiting for me, and he took me into his office, and he put a band [belt] around my waist and stuffed it full of money. I don't know how much – a couple of thousand dollars, probably.

EL: Quite a lot of money at that time.

IY: A money belt. It's a lot of money at that time.

EL: It's a lot of money.

IY: In a money belt. So, I put my shirt back on. And then they sent me to my uncle's store. In the dream ... in the dream, I had to walk the 10 blocks to my uncle's store; but now I know, I remember later, that wasn't the case, they wouldn't do that, in that neighbourhood. They put me in a taxi cab to my uncle's store. As soon as I got there, my uncle grabbed me, took me in the back room, took out the money from my waist, and used that money to cash the checks. And then, after that, I went to my aunt's little store, two or three blocks away. And she let me play the pinball machine for the whole of the rest of the afternoon. That was my reward for it. Later on, I began thinking, *"This is crazy. How could they put me in such danger?"*.

But it was true, that what happened was a memory. So, these sort of memories [seem] to be coming back to me in my dreams. Early memories that I totally forgotten about, so I'll write a story about that. That's what my next project is.

So, I'm wandering here. But anyway, I began having strange, strange nightmares. That were telling me things about what my family had gone through in Russia, that they would not tell me about themselves.

EL: But you know, in a way, it's not only a nightmare, but also, in a way, a kind of, an inspection: What was your life constructed of? What was it composed of – in the

meaning of your relationships, your topics, [what] you have been allowed to hear. And, in a way, your family was creating some kind of personality, which should be, let's say happier and healthier than they were. And I am wondering that it didn't work in that way, exactly.

IY: Yeah, I like the way you're putting it. I hadn't quite thought of it that way, but I think you're very accurate about that. Yes, that's wonderful. I didn't know I was going to get therapy today in this session, but you're doing it very well. *(Laughter)*

EL: You know we can't quit our profession, unfortunately.

IY: Yes.

EL: But I must to tell one thing which surprised me in your book very much. Because all chapters, but for the last one, were written very openly, very ... I would say, objectively ... describing the facts, describing the history, describing the feelings and emotions of both of you. But it was a little bit – kind of – documentary story. It was a little bit more – scientific – in a way, to help every reader to understand what is going on. And one of the very strong statements that you use through all this text was that death is final, and – after that – nothing will happen, and therefore, one has to say goodbye forever, and don't, in a way, think about that anymore.

But, in the last chapter, your text becomes [like] poetry; your text is [how you] talk to Marilyn, in the first stance, and you indeed are talking about your feelings, [your] pain, and Joy to live with all your life. And this changed all the atmosphere of the book, essentially. Can you tell [us] a little bit, how this switch happened?

IY: When I was with Marilyn, you mean? Yes. How helping her ... It changed my life tremendously. You know, as you're talking, I know the thoughts coming up into my mind ... You know, this was such an important part of my life, and it never came to me, when I was younger, it never came back. I started – now, I started therapy – I've started therapy a number of times, and people with the kinds of childhood and youth that I had, need to be in therapy many times. We know that the trauma of early life – It doesn't go away. And when I come when I, when I talk to people and I see they've had trauma in very early life, I know immediately that these are people who are not going to get over this childhood trauma, they're going to need therapy over and over again.

As you know, there's a major test in our field called the ACE-Test, which stands for adversive childhood experience, and they give a score to this, and I know people who have had a high ACE score are going to be needing therapy on many occasions: that certainly would be true for me. So – and yet I started therapy. When I was in psychiatry, I was at Johns Hopkins, and it was considered that we all should be in therapy, of course. The most important part of becoming a therapist has [that one has] to be in therapy yourself up; they always taught that.

But I started therapy with a traditional psychoanalyst, an elderly woman, not Jewish, who knew nothing about Judaism, nothing about that childhood, nothing about ... And it never, ever came up in my 600 hours of therapy with her: four times a week for three years. That was my first therapy, 600 hours; it was worthless, you know.

EL: It was a waste of time and money.

IY: A waste of time and money. It would have been so precious for me to have gotten

into therapy. I'm feeling that … I am with a therapist, I think I am doing a lot of work with what was a terrible experience that was. I never even saw her; you know she's sitting behind the couch like analysts do. I could crane my neck to see her. Never – did we talk about our relationship with one another. Oh, I'm so sorry. I didn't know enough to get out of that – to get into another kind of therapy. I'm with a therapist now who's quite wonderful and helping me re-look at all those at all those things.

So, yeah, I don't think the therapy I had earlier in life was really useful. I had some therapy. I've written about this. I don't know where – I forgotten what, where – but I remember that when I was starting in my field in my work, I came to Stanford. I was offered a position there. I was very lucky. It was a brand-new medical school. Stanford used to be in San Francisco, [then] they started one on the Stanford campus, 30 miles away. And we brought in new people; all of us about the same age: six [or] seven young Turks and we all started a new department, and I was given, by a chairman named Dave Hamburg, who somehow saw something in me that he felt, *'He's going to let me do whatever I was'*. He didn't give me a job, didn't tell me how to do this; he just let me be – and I began to do all sorts of interesting things for me.

One woman that I saw in therapy for five or six times had cancer of the breast: it was metastatic cancer that had spread to other parts of her body. And it was fatal. There was no treatment for that. And, after seeing her a few times, she said to me (she knew I did some group therapy – I had learned how to do that with Johns Hopkins), *"Why don't you start a therapy group for women like me? I have several friends who have the same disease that I have: would you start a group with my friends? All of us have metastatic breast cancer."*

I agreed to do that. No such group have ever been done, ever. And I started to meet with these women. I met with them for years, and years, and years: everyone died after a year or two, and new people came into the group. It was an unforgettable experience, but it also began to have its effect on me. I began to experience a lot of anxiety about death was preoccupied with death, my death I began thinking at my parent's death. And then I decided to get myself into therapy again. And [there was] a book that had an enormous influence on me when I was a student psychiatry was taught by Rollo May, who's a very well-known figure in the US.

It was a book called *'Existence'*. And, after reading that book, I decided I had no experience. I had [taken] no courses in philosophy, because I was so busy taking science courses to get into medical school, that I decided I better learn something about philosophy.

Then I decided I had better learn something about philosophy. So, I started taking courses, night courses in philosophy at Johns Hopkins and, for a whole year, every single day, I went to learn about philosophy, so I respected this man Rollo May very much.

He'd just moved to California just at this time. So, I asked him whether I could start therapy with him and he was very willing to do that. I drove to his home; it was about an hour, 20 minutes away from my home in California and I saw him for about a year and a half.

He was very helpful, but it was very helpful to talk about … to be able to talk about,

about death. Death things – I was someone who knew something about it. So, I'm very indebted to Rollo May. Years later, I became very close friends with him. In fact, I was with him when he died; his wife called me, and he said he wanted to see me. So, I was with him in the moment that he died. And so, he was, he was highly, highly influential in my work. So, that was the course of therapy that was extremely, extremely useful to me and helped me to deal with a lot of identity anxiety.

Now, in my work, in my own grief, it's remarkable to me how little death anxiety I have right now. I think about Marilyn … and then the thought comes to me: it's a strange thought: it's totally out of line with what I really believe, but I'm saying to myself, *"When I die, I'll be joining Marilyn"*. And I feel comforted by that. But when I look at this through my scientific mind, I think this is totally absurd. This is crazy. I'm not going to be joining Marilyn: Marilyn doesn't exist: there is no afterlife and I've been a confirmed atheist since I was 13 years old when I was studying for my bar mitzvah. I asked my father, *"Dad, do you believe in God"*. And my father, who is a good kosher Jew, who went to the synagogue when he could, even on Saturdays when his store was open. But he considered himself a Jew. He said to me; he looked at me and said, *"How can you believe in God after the holocaust?"*

So, I see that … as if it happened yesterday. No, I've never believed God; I've never believed, any other religious dogma.

And yet, here I am happy joining Marilyn and a wave of comfort comes over me. I see these two parts of my mind just unrelated to one another. So, I realized the comfort that religious beliefs can offer to people, even though it may be [that] a scientific part of their mind doesn't believe it at all. So that's what's happened to me. I don't have any fear of death, and a large part of that is due to the fact that I have no real regrets about my life. It's the opposite. I cannot believe how well [that] I feel I've done with my life, given the start that I had to my life. So, I have no regrets. I've lived well; I am proud of all the books I've written; I've been so pleased to have been with Marilyn all my life. So, there is a formula that I've felt; it is not original; I'm certain that – the formula is that the fewer regrets you have about your life, the fewer … the less anxiety you're going to have about dying. And that's been very true for me and it's true right now. I have no regrets about the way I've lived my life, and I have very little death anxiety.

EL: But can it be that there is kind of recipe or rule, how to deal with death anxiety: you must live a decent life. You must have as little regret as possible about your Venus.

IY: Yeah. And so, let's look at the regrets that you have right now in your life – what regrets are you are building up? How can you begin to change those?

That's where I asked for [when] I go in therapy, people come to me with [their] death anxiety. I had right towards there. I begin to take a look. What are you doing now that you are going to feel [that] you [will] regret [later]? But aren't you doing that? Where does all that come from? Let's see what you can change in your life right now. So, I focus very hard on that, in my work with, with patients.

EL: So, we know, [what] kind of universal rule that you must think about your death every day, in a way that don't produce the actions you will regret later.

IY: That's right. That I [think] you're exactly [right in] stating where I'm feeling very strongly. I don't want to regret anything; I want to be kind to people. That's what I love about the work I do, even these single consultations. I see one patient a day, right now: that's all I can do – [that's] all my mind is capable of doing. But I look forward to that. And when I see that patient, I want to do everything I can to help that patient.

You know, I have a patient who has had this terrible, terrible early life: it's been awful. Their parents were unkind to them, and they have never experienced a closeness to anyone. I ask every patient I see the same question. I say, *"Who's the closest person in your life right now?"* And there are certain people who say to me, they shake their heads; they don't know how to answer that; there's no one they're really close to. And I could; I could talk with them about ...; I could talk with them about that; and why it wasn't that; and that's all interesting and good, but I feel in these single sessions is where I'm like [going to] give them the experience of closeness.I try to give it to them, not just talk about it jn the past. So, I've been doing very bizarre things in my single sessions. That's what I'm writing about, now. Therapists don't do this and a lot of therapists can be very annoyed with me. But I will say to them, to the patient, *"You know, I'm asking you a lot of questions. Let's switch roles. You ask me questions. And I promise you, I will answer any question you ask. And the deeper, the better: the more personal, the better. You ask me questions."* They look at me bewildered; they never heard of therapists [doing] anything like that. I say, *"I'm serious. Ask me a question"*. And they don't know how to do it. Eventually, they start asking questions, and a patient says, *"What well, you know, you ... you've been ... How did you meet Marilyn, you know? How do you make friends? What did she and you talk about? How did you make other friends?"* ... and they ask me a whole lot of questions like that.

And I answer very openly and honestly as I can. And, by the end of the session, they are in tears. They will say, *"This is the closest I've been to anyone"*. It makes me have tears, if I even think about that. So, I try to offer them – in the session – an experience of closeness; not a discussion of closeness. So, I'm doing various things like that. With a lot of disclosure; a lot of being open with them; a strong focus on what we call – doing group therapy – work in the here-and-now; we're not working on the past, but working on what's happening right now – between you and me – and I do that extensively in these consultations and, without fail, without fail, it makes the meeting more important and more meaningful to them, and, over and over again, I have patients who write [to] me. I ask everyone to write me [with]in four weeks, [to] let me know what this has been like for them; I'm trying to improve my therapy – even at the age of 90. *"Tell me what happened in this session that you remember?"* And every single one writes me back, saying, *"I'll never forget this session"*.

So, so I am trying new things, even at my age, to try and move into the here-and-now with a great deal of power and force. So, that's what this new book is about.

EL: But, dear professor, you are actually creating the existential meeting moments. And this existential meeting means that people are living through experience, which probably they never had in their life. So, therefore, it can be very deep and very moving.

IY: Exactly. That's exactly what I am trying to do, create the experience that they never had before their lives. Yeah, it's more useful I think for people who've had a very, very deprived early life. I think for those people, this is especially important for them.

EL: But I imagine that this has also the other side of the process. You also feel something new because these biographies of your patients are really very bizarre, very painful, very strange. And you also are living in that existential moment too.

IY: Yes, yes, yes. And if I say to people, *"Who, who are you closest to?"* and they shake their heads and they look bewildered and they can't answer me, I know exactly where I need to go.

I need to offer them closeness, even if it's just for this one hour, and answer any questions they want to, any questions they want to ask me. It never has backfired.

EL: But, in a way, we told at the beginning of our conversation that you are feeling now quite lonely because all your friends ... you were living through all your life ... [they] have passed away and you are now the last one. So, isn't this your loneliness also a kind of existential fact in your today's life

IY: You're asking quite a wonderful question. Really, you're asking a question that no-one else has really asked, which is a therapy for me as well. I'm having this kind of closeness, even for this one hour with this person, every day with someone else. And it's very, very healing for me as well, with all the close people that I know, that I had this closeness, of course, with my four children. But even with children, there's some things you don't say; you don't feel. So yes, I have that experience of closeness, even though I'm lonely; even though I spend my evenings alone. I ... I miss this closeness very much. It's very hard for me to be without my wife.

EL: So, doesn't it mean that you are actually waiting for the next patient tomorrow? Because again, it will be something completely unexpected and actually quite deep for you as well.

IY: Yes, you are absolutely right. Yes, I look forward to the patients I'm going to see. I'm going to see one this afternoon at four o'clock. The patients I have, the consultations. I ... if they're in the United States, I see them around four or five o'clock. If they're in Europe, most of them are in Europe, but I see most [of the] patients from overseas ... most of them, from overseas, about 11 in the morning. So, every day I will see a patient. I look forward to it. And it's, it's, it's definitely – Yes – I'm giving something to those patients, but the idea that I'm seeing them gives something to me too. So, every day I see these people and I'm feeling ... I'm going to give everything I can to this person and I'm back in my role as a giver, as a therapist, and it makes me feel good to be able to offer this to people.

EL: So, can we summarize – in a way – that authenticity is a key for our success, if you want to work as helpfully for our patients as possible?

IY: I believe that very, very strongly. You're saying it just perfectly. And it's the opposite of the kind of therapy approach, that is the strict Freudian approach, where you keep your distance from people and you're not really close to relating to them. And I know that a lot of therapists are uncomfortable with my [approach]. And you [are] saying these kinds of things, because we're told, you know, to keep our distance; don't reveal yourself – so, I set a lot

of therapists' teeth on edge, I know, when I reveal a good bit of myself, but, in all cases, it always, always helps; I've never really been terribly … there was one woman. It was a woman that I was treating; a young girl, she, I mean she was about 22 or 23. She had a very, very awful up-bringing. And she was living in a monastery, even though she was married. It was very strange, she only saw her husband once or twice a month … and … and I asked her to ask me any question she wanted: and her question was to me, *"What is your sex life like?"* I've never had a patient ask me a question like that before. *(Laughter)*

EL: It was quite honest, by the way: quite honest.

IY: It was quite honest. Yeah, but she also had a life experience, you know, with no relationships with other people. So, I tried to be honest. I said, *"Well you know, it's an embarrassing question. But, tell me, how did you think that question would make me feel?"* And so, I you know I took that tack. That would be balancing. That as ninety year old people, I don't have much of a sex life and so I didn't think I have much trouble answering, answering that question, especially ninety year old people who are alone in the world, you know. *"But, tell me, how do you think that question would made me feel, because it made me feel a little embarrassed."* So, I went on that tack. So, I, I still did therapy with her because she doesn't know how to get close to people and doesn't know how to behave to people. So, I didn't scold her for asking that question, but I want to inform her that – when you talk to people you've got to think about how these questions and make people feel something that she had never got a lesson in. I tried to make something therapeutic for her, and she was very grateful to me and wrote me about that later on.

EL: I see, dear professor, can you help our audience to do a little bit of the thinking, what they have, as a prospect for their elderly life. What a therapist can do, and how he or she can live, getting elder and elder. Do you have … ?

IY: I'm missing a couple of words there, the sounds are not good.

EL: I am asking, if you can have an advice for therapists, both women and men, who are getting older and older, and is any kind of help with these diminishing biological capacities by their age.

IY: Well, you're educating people about what lies ahead. Because it lies ahead for all of us, as we get elderly. I tell them what is meaningful for me. I tell them the feelings I have about regrets. And [having] no regrets in life, how I feel that's so important to me. I urge them to take a look at what regrets they have for what their life is like right now. And how can they change that. And how I'm living now, with very sure regrets. And what the regrets I have about the past, you know, and to enquire more about that, you know, I have regrets … I have regrets, I should not having been loving enough to my mother, and full of, full of annoyance towards my mother but now … now I feel very differently towards her … and I wish had been kinder to her.

That uncle, that I mentioned to you, who I [carried] the bills about for him, I … I had a major change in my life after, after this dream that I had about him. Because I … I considered him kind of like an animal. He had no manners. He, he was not kind to anyone. But as I start to have this dream and to rethink about his life and having his wife and children all killed and … and what I remembered was … I played pinochle with him and one of my good friends from medical school: he was the most honest

man you've ever seen. I love this man; this friend is my lifelong friend. His name was Herb Cutts. We played pinochle with my uncle one time, and my uncle accused him and me of cheating him – for money. I was so ashamed of my uncle. He was like an animal, I thought. I would never have had anything to do with him again, never have my friend with him. And now, after the dream, I think I'm just full of empathy for this man. I never realized, really, what he went through to have his wife and children killed by the Nazis. You know, so I ... I just have a more of a loving feeling for this man now as I think about it. So that's, so that's feels ... that's, that's changed for me.

EL: I understand. This means the dream had given you a much deeper understanding of the nature of his aggression, that it was indeed the pain, which was surfacing in this way.

IY: Exactly. Yeah. I would love to be in therapy with you. You put things in a way which is very helpful. In another life, yes, I would love for you to be my therapist.

EL: Maybe I should ask you for a fee. To come to the essence of our interview, professor Yalom, I would like also to ask one question about the therapy, as a phenomenon in the world, because we are living in quite dangerous times, indeed we are in the height of the pandemics that tens of hundreds of thousands of people are dying from that virus. We are in big danger of possible war and Ukraine crisis is not a joke. So, we have plenty of existential situations, which are making all the world anxious. Is [there] any room for psychotherapy and psychotherapists in that world, which is shaken by crisis.

IY: Yeah, yeah. The crisis is so severe now and so dangerous. It is so hard to answer that question but, at least, what we can do in this hour, or two, or hours that we're meeting people, there we can offer some comfort, and some sense of intimacy and some sense of caring. So, we remind people that we're capable of doing this. I mean that's what I feel. I think the last thing that people need right now is a distant therapist, who doesn't want to relate to them. And when I'm looking for therapists to refer patients to I keep saying, *"Who do I know that will be close to this patien;, who's willing to offer himself and herself to her"*. So, I do that very often. And, and I try to find good groups for people where they can, because [they need] other people. I am ... I'm still a firm believer in group therapy.

EL: Me too, I am a group therapist all my professional life.

IY: Yes. Yes, I know, I know. There are more and more, now there are groups for therapists, which are completely composed of therapists, and there's a book out by man named Weinberg, and I send a lot of patients to him because he knows of therapy groups for therapists in various cities around the world. So, I'm very much in favour of that.

When I came to Stanford, there were these seven, eight young Turks, we were all together. We decided we'd form a group. And, but no leader, it was a leaderless group. And so we met, I think we met once every other week for an hour and a half. But the group met. You won't believe this, but the group met for 40 years. We met every, every other week, for 40 years of the same people in this group. And it was wonderful therapy for us all this time. I stayed in this group until my wife died two years ago. And, at that point, I just, I just wasn't up to continuing. But that's how

long I stayed in this group. It was tremendously useful to me. So, I think being in a group of therapists is … would be a wonderful idea. Being in a group of patients, some of whom might know other patient: it's awkward for therapists. But being in a group completely composed of other therapists, I think is very useful for us, for psychotherapists. I urge you to seek out such groups.

EL: OK: So, professor, thank you very much. Our time unfortunately is approaching to an end. It is more than an hour we have been talking.

IY: Oh, I've just got so engrossed in my talk with you I didn't notice that the time has passed.

EL: Yes, I'm sorry. I'm sorry it's over, it's been a great pleasure speaking to you. I haven't had an interview who I've gotten so engrossed with. Thank you for this experience.

EL: But I am very grateful for you about sharing your own life experience with these very vivid memories about existential moments and meeting patients and most difficult, most painful parts of their life and feelings. So, maybe you can tell a few words to all of us how we can survive this need for being in deep existential contact with our patients. How we can manage it.

IY: It … takes … it just takes experience. I know I shake up a lot of therapists by urging them to be more real. But, but, but … I see, it's just the idea that I'm going to offer them closeness. That I've had patients who write me back.

I had an interview with an organization called the "Evolution of Psychotherapy in the United States". It is a big interview every, every year. And they had me interview this, this woman. I told them, I told them about a session I'd had with this woman who had the worst background I've ever seen. And I had this interview with her, and it was, it was very moving. And I talked to her about who she had been closest to, and she couldn't think of anyone, and then I talked about being close to her, and what that was like for her. And, and … and she was so moved and at the end of the session, she said to me, *"This is the closest I've ever been to anyone"*. And she was weeping. And I couldn't stop my own tears. I was weeping too.

And then I told about this session to the person in the Evolution of Psychotherapy, I couldn't stop my own tears, when talking about her tears. And then, after the session was over, they were taping it – about two weeks later, I was so embarrassed about my tears that I called, I called the Evolution of Psychotherapy back, I said, you know, *"When are you going to show this?"* They said *"In a couple of weeks"*. I said, *"Well, I'm, I'm, uh, I'm feeling a little embarrassed by my own tears about this. I'd like you to cut that part of the session out of the program. It is embarrassing to me"*. and they said, *"Oh no"*, they said, *"That's the most, the most moving part of our entire program. To show that the therapist can also have tears, and be so moved by the contact they've had with that patient."*

It takes a little bit of, maybe courage, a lot of devotion, to really give yourself that much to a patient knowing that this is going to be helpful, but I urge you to try to do that.

EL: Yes: but in this way Professor Yalom, you were talking not only giving yourself to your patient. You are also opening yourself to yourself. In this deep way of feeling the patient's pain, you are really opening something inside.

IY: You open yourself to yourself. I love the way you put that. It's good. Yeah, I like that. Thank you.

EL: Thank you very much and I hope that this what we have talked about will be helpful for many of our professionals and patients and we will try to keep in touch with you, probably in the future, if you don't mind, and to have probably a little bit more conversations on these topics.

IY: As long as I'm around I'm open to you.

EL: Hi, I have the feeling that we will meet once again

IY: That would be wonderful. Okay.

EL: Thank you very much and keep strong and be as bright as always, and as you have been today. Thank you very much and keep healthy.

IY: Thank you. Bye. Bye-bye.

EL: So, I think that's all, because indeed I suppose that you got how still bright and insightful Professor Yalom was, and it teaches a lot. I think, everybody of us, no matter what modality, whatever [type of school], we are working in.

So, thank you, dear friends, there's been a lot of words today, so I think, not many words are needed now as we draw Day One of the congress to a close, but we thank Professor Yalom for being part of our congress. We feel enormously privileged that he gave us this gift.

Keynote Speaker:
Professor Kyriaki Polychroni

"There is a crack, a crack in everything … that's how the light gets in: Hope through Fostering Emotional Vulnerability in Therapy Today"

PROFESSOR KYRIAKI POLYCHRONI

Kyriaki Polychroni, MA, ECP, CGP, RMFT is a Systemic Group and Family Psychotherapist with specialization in Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy (EFT). She is a long-standing Clinician, Faculty and Advisory Scientific Council member at the Athenian Institute of Anthropos in Greece. Kyriaki is Past President of the European Family Therapy Association – EFTA – and a member of the Association since its early founding. She has played a major role in the networking and mutual learning of Family Therapy Trainers in Europe, and in 2016 was given an Award for her Outstanding Contribution to Family Therapists in Europe. She was appointed Honorary Chair of the EFTA Chamber of Training Institutes (EFTA-TIC). She was recently selected as a member of the Board of Directors of the International Centre for Excellence in Emotionally Focused Therapy (ICEEFT). Former Vice-President of the national branch of the European Association of Psychotherapists (EAP). Founding Member of the Hellenic Association of Systemic Therapy (ELESYTH). She is also a Founding Member of the American National Registry of Certified Group

International Journal of Psychotherapy
Summer 2022, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 69-82: ISSN 1356-9082 (Print); ISSN 1469-8498 (Online)

Submitted: March 2020; formatted: June/July 2022. DOI: 10.36075/IJP.2022.26.2.6/Polychroni

Psychotherapists (CGP) and a Clinical Member of the American Group Psychotherapy Association (AGPA). She is also on the Editorial Board of *"Human Systems: the Journal of Therapy, Culture and Attachments"*.

Introduced by Professor Nevena Calovska-Hertzog (NCH), from Serbia

NCH: Kyriaki Polychroni actually bridged the Atlantic many years ago, as she grew up in Canada. But, since her 20's, she joined the Athenian Institute of Systemic Psychotherapy and Training – the "Anthropos Institute" in Greece. This actually is the place where the first Family Therapy training was introduced in Europe. She is also the Director of the centre that, in essence, has been practicing and training in Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) over many years. Prof. Polychroni has been very engaged in developing psychotherapeutic community, not only in Greece, but also in Europe and, coming from the Balkans, I can tell you that she has introduced, joined, and really supported the building of psychotherapeutic networks in Bosnia, in Montenegro, in North Macedonia, in Serbia, and in Croatia. We really appreciate her and are very grateful.

In many of her professional identities, as I have said, she has managed to be present in a way which we find very healing and very stimulating. Prof. Kyriaki is also one of the founders of the European Family Therapy Association (EFTA) and she served as President of EFTA in a very critical time when she helped the organization to transform. And today, she's one of our honorary members chairing the chamber in charge of training. And I'm really very grateful that she has managed to come and to share her thoughts, and her experiences today with us. So, thank you very much, Kyriaki.

"There is a crack, a crack in everything … that is how the light gets in."

Leonard Cohen

KP: Thank you, Nevena. From all that you said, one of the most important and moving things for me is our friendship. And I think that's one of the things that is bringing hope – connection – our professional and personal connection, between us and between our countries. I want to thank you very much for this invitation. I'd also like to thank Patricia Hunt, EAP President and the EAP Board for inviting me to be with you today.

I feel so privileged that we are able to gather today together in moments like this with the help of technology. As Pat said before, it's amazing what technology can do: it doesn't only build bombs, but it can also bring us together. And this certainly *is* an opportunity especially at a time when so much of our world is plunged in darkness, fear and chaos. Speakers before me have referred to today's dangers: climate change – a threat, especially for our future generations. A couple of days ago, in Athens, for the *second* time this year it was snowing: this never happens in Greece. And here, in Vienna, it's so sunny and warm: a complete change in the reality of climate. And I fear where this is going to take us.

COVID – the unpredictable appearance of a pandemic threat. And it's entailed a long period now of fear, fear for ourselves, for our loved ones, with unknown

repercussions after these years of distancing from one another. All studies regarding what will happen with Covid-19 and how it affects us, conclude that we should focus our conversations and our studies on utilizing the COVID crisis to reflect on our responsibility for the world as it is today and for what it will become in the future.

So, last year, when I was asked to speak at this conference on our role as psychotherapists in our endangered world, I immediately appreciated that EAP is an active participant in this crucial dialogue.

Of course, we do not have all the answers, but the fact that we come together to discuss how psychotherapy can cultivate hope in our world is already an act aimed at fostering resilience and sustainability of 'Anthropos', the whole human being.

And then the war in Ukraine broke out, war in our European neighbourhood … and just as I say this a choking feeling comes up inside me. War again, after 20 years, last time it was in your beloved country, dear Nevena.

As I know from our work in the countries of former Yugoslavia, there are still repercussions on the mental health of the citizens today. So, my heart is with our Ukrainian brothers and sisters, but also with our Russian colleagues, who – I believe – will be trying to make meaning out of this tragedy.

And, while the war in Ukraine is continuing, the impact of other 'wars', such as those against migrants, refugees, ethnic minorities, and other groups, has led to substantial suffering, from long term, even transgenerational trauma which creates challenges to our role as psychotherapists.

So, now even more and heavier demands are placed on our shoulders. And when problems aren't fixable, as they often seem in these days, we, psychotherapists, are faced with the predicament of trying to solve the unsolvable. This weight lies at the very source of our stress, our distress as healers. Yet our job is not to fix the unfixable, but to empathically hold and accompany our clients, as they live through, and potentially grow through the unfixable aspects of their lives.

As my beloved Leonard Cohen's song says – the title of my presentation: *"There is a crack, a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in."* So, our job is to help our clients recognize and utilize their cracks, as a means to bring in light and hope for their lives. And this certainly entails us, the therapists, becoming aware of and having compassion for *our* personal cracks.

For psychotherapy is a co-evolutionary process of growth, for *both* the client and the therapist. Irving Yalom referred to this in his very moving interview yesterday with Eugenijus when he talked about the therapist *growing through his work*, even at the age of 90 and on. This is the co-evolutionary process of therapy as described also by Pema Chödrön – I don't know if you know her work – she is a Buddhist monk in the United States who says that compassion and empathy are not hard work. They take courage to know our darkness well enough so that we can sit in the dark with others.

At this point, I'd like us to do something together. Nevena knows how I work, I believe that's one of the reasons you invited me – I'd like to get you, the participants, more involved in this presentation. Although we are a very big group

here, I do want to get us engaged in a brief co-evolutionary process. So, I'm inviting you, the participants online and the participants that are here from EAP in the room, to do a small reflective exercise. That is, I'll guide you in reflecting individually on a question as you're sitting here in the room, or sitting at your desks, or in your home. And then, I'll ask you to go into small groups of three, where you will share your reflections and come up with a common phrase that expresses your group. Finally, you'll come back to this large group setting where each group will share its phrase.

So, I would like to invite you to sit comfortably in your chair. Leave your papers and pens on the floor, or next to you, and sit comfortably: take a couple of deep breaths, it always helps … Yes, we talk so much, but we often don't realize that we're not taking in enough air and letting it all out … So, let's take a couple of deep breaths, in and out … feel your feet on the ground … and slowly try to feel your presence as you are here in this process … try to focus on yourself … and, if you feel comfortable enough, especially if you're in the comfort of your own home, while you breathe … I invite you to slowly close your eyes … so that you can close the outer stimulus out. Take your time …

And now, slowly, try to scan your body … what do I mean by this? Just start at the top of your head and slowly move down … through your face … through your shoulders … just try to see what it's like at each place in your body … how is the feeling in your shoulders … in your arms, in your hands, and in your chest … down into your stomach; down into your belly … slowly down into your legs; your knees, and all the way down to your feet. What is that like? What is your body feeling? …

And, as you are in your bodily process, I'd like you to permit yourself to remember, to remember and experience a moment where you felt hope from psychotherapy … it could be from a specific moment in your work … it could be from your personal therapy … a moment that has stood out for you. Bring that experience to your mind, to your heart. Remember it; savour it. It's almost like you're living it again … with specific people, and a specific context in time and space…

I'll give you a couple of minutes just to stay in that experience, so that you are able to feel it fully and be able to describe it, and share it. This is such an important moment of hope that you personally have experienced. As soon as that experience has clearly emerged again within you, you can slowly open your eyes and come back to the here-and-now.

So, now you will join small groups of 3 members where you can share your experiences of hope, find the common elements and make a phrase that expresses your group.

(Congress participants, both those online and in-person, are guided into small 'break-out' groups to share their reflections. They then develop a common phrase which they bring back to the large group.)

Okay, so welcome back everyone. I know this was so short and I apologize, the time went by so quickly. I hope it gave you a little taste of what we can do through sharing our hopes from psychotherapy. What I'd like you to do now is to put your small group phrases in the 'chat' and Nevena will feed them back to us. And also, I will take three or four phrases from the online groups. Could you just raise your hand to indicate you want to share your group's phrase? Thank you,

and as Ronald (RD) sees a hand coming up, he will help us by saying your name, and you will turn on your microphone and share it with us.

KP: OK Katrin, go ahead, can you share your phrase from your small group?

KS: Yes, I can. The phrase we came up with was: *'Hope is in moments when clients are fully in their lives and met there, when they are fully in their lives and become in charge of their lives'.*

KP: Great – Thank you.

RD: Then, Paul.

PvB: Yes. We came to the next sentence: *'Even when the problems are not solved, we can be'.*

KP: *'We can be'.* Great, Okay, thank you, Paul and your group. Okay, next group?

NCP: Hello, everyone. We didn't have time with Daniela to make a common phrase. I hope she says her own. Mine was: *'From fear, to freedom and light'.*

KP: Great. And we'll have one from the in-person group here. I invite you to share whenever you're ready, along with the online participants. Thank you. Let's go on.

EL: Our group created this sentence. *'Despite how deep the despair you feel, there is always some hope you can feel, deep in yourself. Just look for it.'*

KP: Great. And then one from this group?

TS: *'If you reach out in darkness, hope can touch you.'*

KP: Okay. Can we have one last one from the online participants. Is there one other group that wants to share. Yes, go ahead.

SL: *'Humanity survives through hope.'*

KP: All right.

Okay, thank you. So, let's put these together in what we call the 'flow' of the group, and try to understand what's emerging – from online and here as well. *'We have found that hope emerges in moments where we, as therapists, meet our clients in their full experience so that they become in charge of their lives … And even when problems are not all solved, when we can accompany them in their fear, then light and freedom emerge. For we know from our experiences that, despite how deep the despair one feels, by looking deep inside … and reaching out in the darkness, hope will touch you … This hope is the way humanity survives'*

I love this because you shared from your experiences that hope involves both an inner personal search and a reaching out to connect with our important others in moments of darkness. One of the most important qualities that breeds hope in therapy – as your groups described – involves us, as psychotherapists, staying with our clients in their experiences of despair. That we co-create an attuned alliance with them where they feel safe to reach out, explore and express their most vulnerable emotions. And when our client is deep in their experience – although we may not be able to solve their difficulties – if we meet them in that moment of despair, validate them in their emotions, then hope arises.

What I'd like to do at this point is to share with you some particular moments where I experienced hope in psychotherapy – I wouldn't want only you to have risked sharing. I'll share some specific instants when I felt I grew and contributed to the growth of others. And, through this process of sharing, I will refer to

specific principles that I have found crucial in our work as psychotherapists if we are to foster hope to our clients today.

I was born in Greece. As Nevena told you before, my family immigrated to Canada in the late 1950s, for a better life for their only child. Growing up in such a different context, a different *cultural* context, created a lot of inner confusion in me, particularly during adolescence and early adulthood. We all know that this is a period when personal identity is explored and developed. So, inside my home, I was part of a traditional Greek family, a Cretan family based on traditional family relations, with values of what we call in Greece, Philotimo (φιλότιμο) – the love of honour. When one is raised with this value, you learn to offer yourself – you sacrifice yourself – to take care of others. And you are raised to openly express vulnerable emotions to your significant others, so that you co-create interdependent relationships. But then, as soon as I would open the door of my home, I was confronted with modern Western culture and its focus on the strong all-inclusive individual and the supreme value of independence. Within this context, I found myself very lost and experiencing a pervasive sense of shame, that made me feel unworthy, many times, of human connection.

I'm here reminded of the work of Brené Brown. I invite you to look into her work, it's quite amazing. She's a research professor in the United States who has done some brilliant work on shame and vulnerability. She found that in the 'perfectionistic' culture, as she calls it, of the Western World, particularly in America, most people believe that they are not good enough. They're not thin enough; they're not rich enough; they're not smart enough; and, so, they're not worthy of love. Consequently, she says, we can't afford to let our guard down. We can't afford to become vulnerable, because letting others see us as we really are would mean that we would probably get rejected. Better to avoid emotional risk, avoid vulnerability and numb ourselves to the pain that we feel that we can't escape from.

But growing up, I certainly didn't know about Brené Brown and I didn't have this knowledge, so I fell into the confusing trap of shame. Fortunately, my experience of hope emerged when I returned to my native homeland of Greece, for university, in the late 70s.

I met, and went into therapy with George and Vasso Vassiliou, a husband and wife psychotherapist team. They were group and family therapists, who founded, as Nevena mentioned before, the Athenian Institute of Anthropos in 1963. Their therapeutic approach was based on well-grounded research conducted, in collaboration with social psychologist Harry Triandis of the United States, on the similarities and differences of the traditional family – the traditional *Greek* family – with the American family, with respect to their perceptions of self, family roles and relations, what they came to call one's "subjective culture".

And through systemic group therapy with them – through my therapists' cultural knowledge and their understanding of my bi-cultural confusion, through their fundamental acceptance and belief in me as a human being and in the growth potential of human cracks that bring in light – I gained an awareness and compassion for my bi-culturally defined difficulties and went on

to develop a sense of inner worthiness and belongingness. Hope was fostered by their encouragement to develop and honour my intra-personal emotional awareness and my inter-personal emotional expression, something that, as Brené Brown says, is very difficult today. Hope emerged through the process of developing what they called *"autonomy through and for interdependence"* – hope through taking hold of my courage and responsibility to accept and go through my pain and vulnerability and to reach out and connect with my important others.

One of the first main principles, then, that I have found to be very relevant to hope arising from psychotherapy, particularly in our globalized planet today is that, as therapists, we need to be aware of and respect our clients' culture and their diversity. To be open to learn from them and appreciate their difference in perceptions, values and manners of relating while always holding the belief in the panhuman need for growth and connection.

Another underlying principle here is the importance of fostering emotional awareness and expression in the here-and-now process of therapy – how we guide our clients to recognize, linger and work on their emotions in the present moment in therapy is crucial. This is something that you brought up as well in your small groups before.

And, as Emmy yesterday so eloquently said, we need to be human: experiencing and expressing feelings is an antidote to existential crisis, which is so common in today's world.

This brings me to another resource of hope from psychotherapy that I have experienced, and would like to share with you, a resource that I became aware of in my life later. I had been a systemic group and family therapist and trainer for several years and I taught my trainees the importance of working within the different stages of the family life cycle. The brilliant work of Monica McGoldrick and Betty Carter, who frame individual and family problems within the course of the family as a system as it moves through time, had been very valuable. And I knew that, in order to avoid dysfunction, the most difficult changes that families need to accordingly adapt to – especially in more traditional child-oriented cultures like ours in Greece and in the other Balkan countries – arise during the stage of launching children, the stage when children leave home to create their own lives. So, I knew all this; I was teaching all this; and I was a good teacher; I was happy in what I was doing.

But then when it happened to me, I experienced what we describe in Greek as "a psychological fogginess". My daughters are leaving! What's happening here? What meaning is there left? And what I found myself doing was blaming my husband. I felt he didn't understand me; he didn't see my needs, he was indifferent; he wasn't present enough. And, although I felt love and safety throughout our years together and always said that I would marry my husband again, at that time I thought he was just not there for me. So, again, I felt lost and confused. And what I had known and practised till then was now not enough for me. It is here that I started to really search for what I could learn more about couple relations. Through my search I rediscovered attachment theory, and I got greatly

involved with its application to adult relations.

In my rediscovery, I connected with the model of Emotionally Focused Therapy of Sue Johnson (EFT). As you may know, EFT is a very well researched psychotherapy model that conceptualizes the negative, rigid interaction patterns and absorbing negative affect that typify distress in couple relationships in terms of emotional disconnection and insecure attachment. It draws on humanistic and systemic principles to help create a more secure attachment bond, integrating the intrapsychic perspective afforded by experiential approaches with an interpersonal systemic perspective to help distressed partners shape emotional accessibility, responsiveness, and engagement – the key elements of attachment security. It comprises a clear conceptualization of what distress is all about and it provides a map to restructuring safe, secure bonds. Change in EFT occurs, not from insight, catharsis, or improved skills *per se*, but from the formulation and expression of new emotional experience that transforms the nature of the interactional drama, particularly as it pertains to attachment needs and emotions.

This really made a lot of sense to me and opened up new horizons for my relationship. Once more, an experience of hope arose through a process of co-evolution: working on my despair with this new understanding and experience, renewed hope in the bond with my husband and this, in turn, fostered my bringing new hope to my clients.

Another consequent hope that grew out of this experience came from my work in conducting and teaching couple therapy with this new EFT model in more traditional cultures, and those that have experienced deep crisis which has led to trauma. My work in countries such as Iran, Turkey, Bulgaria and the countries of former Yugoslavia, have reinforced the significance of the attachment paradigm. Attachment needs are universal. Neuroscience research today has shown us that we, as human beings, are wired to connect and has proven that early attachment experiences greatly influence later life. So, promoting engagement in therapy with disowned attachment emotions, needs and fears and integrating these into new relationships, new interactions, brings hope across *cultures* – brings hope for human relations in a world that is now fragmented of connections.

But, although these needs are universal their expression – the way we ask for and the way we give support – is culturally defined. Here again our understanding and respect for diversity and culture is the fundamental basis for creating hope in psychotherapy

As an illustration of the principles I've referred to, I'll now show you a six-minute excerpt from a couple therapy session with S. and I. that I did a few years ago in Bosnia-Herzegovina. S. is Bosnian and I. is from the UK.

(video played) [1]

I believe this excerpt exemplifies how important it is for us to be aware of the

1. **Editor's Note**: The excerpt from the therapy session with the couple was cut from the congress video recording for reasons of privacy and confidentiality.

cultural context within which our clients live and experience their lives, to respect and appreciate their diversity, their difference in how they care for themselves and their important others and how they perceive emotional expression.

(Referring to the video) When others, including her husband (who comes from a very different culture than hers) tell S. to move away from painful emotions, characterizing her as "too emotional" she says, she wants "to pop". She's exhausted and feels that something is wrong with her. And so, she's starting to shut down and withdraw from her spouse. I am reminded of a Bosnian psychotherapist who shared with me at that time, "The first trauma we experienced in Bosnia came in from the war. The second trauma came in from the psychologists who arrived (from the US) to help us deal with the [first] trauma by becoming strong emotionally contained individuals. They didn't understand and appreciate that *we grieve and mourn, and heal collectively*."

If we are to understand, finely attune emotionally with our client's reality and facilitate hopeful change we need to be open and curious to learn before intervening. Yesterday, Irvin Yalom, in his conversation with Eugenius shared, *"My first psychotherapy was worth nothing because she did not touch on the culture of being Jewish"*.

My most recent experience of hope from psychotherapy has come out of the period of mourning for my husband – my husband, my partner, my soul-mate of 45 years, passed away last November. I again felt lost, full of grief and without meaning. Hope is slowly emerging for me from my current personal therapy. I was moved and happy to hear Yalom say yesterday, *"Go into therapy guys, whenever you need it, in all your life stages"*. I think this is really helpful for us, as psychotherapists. I am now once more in therapy – this time with an inspiring Dutch therapist. It is very difficult for me to be with a therapist in Greece now since most know either me or my husband. And through utilizing the means of technology – another hope for connection – I work with her online. I feel she is accompanying me with compassion. She's there, in my grief, with my pain, and I feel safe and seen.

Lastly, my hope is also emerging from the network with colleagues, not only in Greece, but also in Europe. *"I connect; therefore, I am!"*, as my mentor, Vasso Vassiliou would say. Networks – in these times when fragmentation of self and relations is imminent in our endangered world – are means to gaining a sense of wholeness, meaning and community. And I see that networking is what EAP is all about – a wider network. We need personal and wider networks to keep up our hope; connection with colleagues that fosters resilience and sustainability. For hope in both our personal and therapeutic life – at *all* stages – we need to care for us. We need to care for us.

In closing, I'd like to dedicate this keynote, to the memory of my husband, Petros Polychronis, child psychiatrist, systemic group and family therapist, the past Director of the Athenian Institute of Anthropos.

I keep my hope of psychotherapy in our endangered world largely because of him and our relationship. Thank you very much.

NC: Thank you so much, Kyriaki. I'm moved beyond words to even try to gather in what just happened. And I'm not even going to try. Again, through the power of personal sharing and communication, somehow this has been possible. It might be even wider than this but I think our Congress participants are on the West, to Ireland, right across to Kosovo, in the east (I'm sorry if I've missed someone out). [And] from Malta, in the south, to Russia in the north, and – through the power of technology and the expert use of it – we've just connected with each other in the most profound way, and so, thank you Kyriaki for leading us into that.

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CONTRIBUTIONS in the "Chat" [2]

A. *Participants' Feedback:*

Ljiljana Bastaic: *Working with couples I see a lot of the same male female diversity in the same culture*

Dorotea Bratusa Juraj: *Dear Ljiljana, Yes indeed*

Charalampos Efstathiou: *Thank you ...!!*

Maia Begashvili: *Thank you*

Paul Van Gorp: *Thank you: what an eye opener for us all! Very inspiring! Thank you!*

Borislava Yakova: *So precious gift! Thank you!*

Arianna: *So moving, thank u.*

Rosette Rozenberg: *Thank you so much for a very moving and inspiring and compassionate talk.*

Marlies Lenglachner: *Deep attached by your sharing in Hope. Many thanks, Marlies*

Adam Wojtovic: *Thank you very much for this wonderful, enriching and so inspiring presentation!*

Celia Avila-Rauch: *thank you*

Marlies Lenglachner: *many thanks*

Josephine Power-Anastasiou: *Thank you very much. Very moving and so truthful.*

Aline de Marcillac: *Thank you for sharing with us the path to hope!*

Esmina Avdibegović: *Thank you so much!!! It is so helpful*

Hana Scibranyova: *Thank You for Your wisdom*

Amalia Deli: *Thank you Kyriaki! Thank you.*

Daina Matusēviča: ❤️

Jolanta Dojić: *Thank you, Kyriaki!!!*

Adrijana Bjelajac: *I was so deeply moved by all you have said today. It was so important for me, made me feel hopeful and connected. Thank you Kyriaki Polychroni*

Mirela Badurina: *Thank you*

Bojana Vukovic: *Dear professor Kyriaki, thank you!*

Ljiljana Bastaic: *Very moving, personal and wise presentation. Thank You*

Lenka Dvornakova: *Thank you, Kyriaki* 👏

Dorotea Bratusa Juraj: 👏 *Thank you so much to share with us your life, emotions and your knowledge! It always privilege to listen you and your work!*

Jirka Drahota: *Zdravím všechny kolegy z Čech. Prima, že jste tady.*

Liudmyla Moskalenko: *Thank you Professor Kyriaki Polychroni!*

Marija: *Thank you dear Kyriaki, veliki pozdrav dragoj Neveni*

Erzsebet Amalia Lukacs: *Thank You, so much*

Eleni Hadjichristodoulou: *Had the honor to have Dr. Petros Polychronis as a professor during my systemic psychotherapy training and I must say he was a wonderful and inspiring person! Thank you Dr. Kyriaki for everything you shared today and for all the inspiration!!!!*

2. **Editor's Note**: None of these comments have been edited, except for removing the time (recorded in brackets) and a very few minor edits for obvious spelling / typing mistakes. All the emojis have been kept.

Enver Çesko, Kosovo: *Dear all, I would like to share with you an information about the International Conference on Transcultural Psychotherapy which is going to organize in Pristina – Kosovo from 10-12 June 2022. for more details please see in Facebook link: https://www.facebook.com/ConferencePsychotherapy-Kosovo2022-109635478291921*

Anne Colgan: *Beautifully emotional, thank you*

Ivona Maričić Kukuljan: *Thank you, dear Kyriaki, you always bring light through your insights and sharing*

B. *Beginning Contributions and during the Exercise:*

Anne Colgan: *Nevena, beautiful introduction*

Dorota Dyjakon: *Hallo everybody, I feel strengthened by yesterday's meeting*

Katarzyna Pieńko-Jamuła: *Why do you use the word "crisis" not "war" in Ukraine?*

Nelli Constantinou Papadopoulou: *Please correct. Northern Macedonia*

Veliki pozdrav za Profesoricu Nevenu Čalovsku: *It is my great honor to listen to my dear professor Nevena Čalovska! Love from Serbia* ❤️*. Greetings from Zagreb to our dear profesor, teacher and supervizor Nevena Čalovska! Veliki pozdrav od tima i kolega iz Zagreba!*

Vesna Petrovic: *Dobro jutro draga Neno! Bas si lep uvod dala jutros za sve nas!* 🌞

Els Boumans: *Hope is me!*

Zorka Vukovic: *Where there's a will, there's a way*

Helena Mc Elligott: *Softness*

Desiree Gonzalo: *Deep connection can make miracles happen in a human*

Nelli Constantinou Papadopoulou: *From fear to freedom and light*

Heward Wilkinson: *Hope despite hope*

Kathrin Stauffer: *Hope is being fully in your life*

Biljana Slavkovic: *Thanks for opportunity for personal sharing*

Deirdre O'Shea: *Gratitude for new and different perspectives*

Soteris Michael: *Connection! Connection! Connection!*

Livia Serban: *Maybe hope is about how love feels in our bodies.*

Sanda Lepoiev: *Humanity survives through hope.*

Paul Van Gorp: *Hope comes from difficult moments: it seems to be so important to accept these and to talk about them so that difficult moments don't become ghosts...*

Rosie Hunt: *Hope is sitting with uncertainty and distress, whilst the client finds the light in themselves.*

Neli Tsvetkova: *When you accept that you are human, you can connect with higher powers*

Amélie Revel (FF2P) Paris: *Hope shows up despite all expectations*

Barbara Fitzgerald: *Trust in the relationship, in all its complexities is what really matters*

Mirjam Tiel van Buul: *Hope brings trust and safety*

Katarina Levatić: *Connecting with ourselves, our clients and each other as therapists we bring hope to the world.*

Ozana Nițulescu: *Hope is based on trust in life and in the ability for change, and on being connected with someone and with nature*

Cornelia Munteanu: *Journey, change, knowledge.... The journey of knowledge to bring change*

Višnja Janjić: *When alone in the group... loss of hope*

Irina Cretu: *Delicate soul hug – courage to move forward*

Joëlle Boyesen: *The difference between enjoyment of the pulsion and pleasure experiencing in meeting the other in love.*

Jirka Drahota: *Hope needs our presence and openness to enter*

Marija Pantelic: *Hope is presence*

Ivana Mošić Pražetina: *Hope is in personal contact*

Lenka Dvornakova: *Deep connection, validation to client ...*

Nino Kobakhidze: *Hope is when you realize you are alienated with your inner values and this connection exists between generations as well!*

Kathrin Eberdorfer: *Every End can be a Beginning.*

Rosette Rozenberg: *Hope is the potential for change or transformation.*

Josephine Power-Anastasiou: *Resilience comes through connection and hope*

Georgiana Radoi, Romania: *Hope is our own authenticity and work as therapists.*

Joëlle Boyesen: *Hope is love for life and love*

Marija Stojkoska Vasilevska: *Openness, personal*

Paul van Beuzekom: *Even when the problems are not solved, we even can be.*

Aušra Mockuvienė: *Hope is in love, deep connection and self-acceptance.*

Pavol Janoško: *Hope comes from within us when we connect with our resources – it is the light of our inside*

Ingrid Grech Lanfranco: *Hope throught the ability to adapt to thrive, reaching out for support and being open to receiving it.*

Sanja: *Connecting being real and companionate.*

Natasa Stanojevic: *From my group, there is no hope because there was no one who I could talk with.* 😂 *But, I think that the hope is me, my strength to face with everything that happens.*

Aringas Vagonis: *"Capacity and being in connection with safe relationship."*

Zeljka Radosevic: *Hope is the glow in your eyes*

Bojana Vukovic: *In our group (Georgeta, Danijela and me), the main word was 'Connection'*

Courtenay Young: *I am reminded of the story of Pandora's Box: All the evils of the world came out when she opened the box, but there was one thing left in the Box – HOPE!*

Joëlle Boyesen: *When change is real*

Elisabeth Lindner: *Hope comes when someone believes in you and reconnects you with life*

Maia Begashvili: *Hope is everywhere you just have to open your eyes.*

Ljiljana Bastaic: *Hope is in the listening heart being listen to*

Ljubica Tasic: *I was alone as well..... had a great auto-chat for a solid minute* 🙂

Kateřina Vávrová: *Hope: from profound experience; experience to be – and not to do anything.*

Soteris Michael: *Hope comes from connection, connection, connection*

Carmen Gosa: *Hope finds resource from within*

Pavla Uzlová: *In our small group with Dominika: Hope in freedom of spirit* 🙌

Adrijana Bjelajac: *Hope is making sense, trusting, looking forward (Fotis, Cosmina, Adrijana)*

Margaret McElvaney-Smith: *Acceptance and real connection; support that helps preserve what really matters*

Liudmyla Ostapchuk, Ukraine: *Hope and warmth in contact*

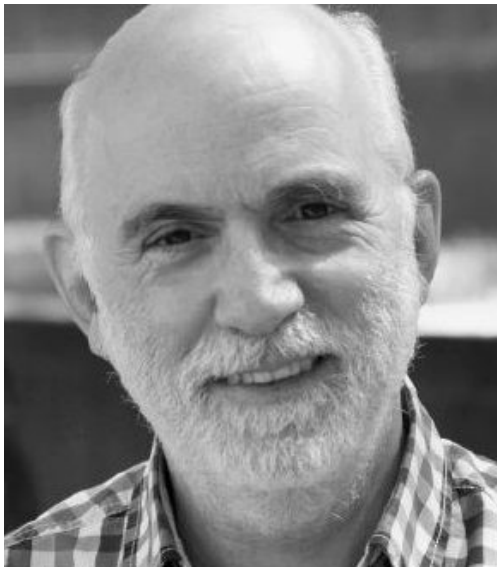
Dorotea Bratusa Juraj: *Collective, togetherness and understanding*

Markus Strasser: *Being and felt connected to people to all over the world … let us feel hope.*

Keynote Speaker:
Professor Renos Papadopoulos

"Therapeutic Applications in Humanitarian Contexts"

PROFESSOR RENOS PAPADOPOULOS



Renos K. Papadopoulos, Ph.D. is Professor of Analytical Psychology in the Department of Psychosocial and Psychoanalytic Studies, Director of the 'Centre for Trauma, Asylum and Refugees' and of the postgraduate programmes in 'Refugee Care', a member of the 'Human Rights Centre', of the 'Transitional Justice Network' and of the 'Armed Conflict and Crisis Hub' all at the University of Essex, as well as Honorary Clinical Psychologist and Systemic Family Psychotherapist at the Tavistock Clinic. He is a practising Clinical Psychologist, Family Therapist and Jungian Psychoanalyst who spent most of his professional life training and supervising specialists in these three spheres. As consultant to numerous organisations, he has been working with refugees, tortured persons, trafficked people, and other survivors of political violence and disasters in many countries. His writings have appeared in sixteen languages. Recently, he has been given Awards by the European Family Therapy Association for Lifetime 'Outstanding contribution to the field of Family Therapy and Systemic Practice', by the University of Essex for the best 'International Research Impact', by two Mexican Foundations for his 'exceptional work with vulnerable children and families in Mexico' and by the International Association for Jungian Studies for his Lifetime contribution to the Jungian field. His last book, on 'Involuntary Dislocation' is hailed as inaugurating a new paradigm in conceptualising and addressing phenomena of uprootedness.

International Journal of Psychotherapy
Summer 2022, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 83-96: ISSN 1356-9082 (Print); ISSN 1469-8498 (Online)

Submitted: March 2020; formatted: June/July 2022. DOI: 10.36075/IJP.2022.26.2.7/Papadopoulos

Introduction by Professor Nevena Calovska

And now we're delighted to welcome Renos Papadopoulos to give his keynote presentation. Good evening. I'm sure that all of you know who Renos Papadopoulos is, and I'm very honoured and very privileged to have been able to meet him many, many, years ago and to work in projects that he coordinated in Yugoslavia. Well, Renos has several professional identities. He is a Jungian psychoanalyst; he is also a systemic family therapist and a clinical psychologist. He is Professor in the Centre for Psychosocial and Psychoanalytic Studies at the University of Essex in the UK, Director of the 'Centre for Trauma, Asylum and Refugees' as well as in charge of postgraduate studies in Refugee Care (as he calls it), all at the same university. He has been working all over the world and he has also worked in many different contexts and settings. He developed his unique 'psychosocial' approach, over the years, which is based on creating a human therapeutic encounter without pathologizing human suffering. And this is so relevant especially in times of emotionally charged moments as we are experiencing today.

So, Renos, I know that this is only a little segment of what you have done, but, as a therapist and personally I'm grateful for all your work; for the books that you have written; and I want to draw attention to his last book, which was published several months ago, called *'Involuntary Dislocation'*, [1] in which he speaks about what I think he's ready to share with us today.

Renos Papadopoulos:

Thank you so much! I want to start by saying what a great privilege it is for me to have been invited to this remarkable event and have the opportunity to share with you some of my thinking and experiences in this field.

From what you have seen on the programme, I am here to talk about 'Therapeutic applications in humanitarian contexts', relating them to hope, which is the central theme of our conference.

My concern is that, if we are not clear about what we do and how we judiciously conceptualize what we are thinking and what we are doing, this hope can be 'for the wrong thing', as they say.

So, I am starting with Aristotle, who reminds us that hope is not just an abstraction. Instead, he claims that genuine hope is generated when one experiences real fear of a possibly negative outcome. Then, you hope; otherwise, hope is just idle thinking. Moreover, genuine hope (for him) refers to when one has the courage to act in pursuit of the hoped-for positive outcome, despite the real fear and dangers that may be involved. If these two conditions are not present, according to Aristotle, hope amounts to abstract youthful fantasies.

The other point that I want to raise as a starting point, are the thoughts of T.S. Eliot (who received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1948). He says, *"I said to my soul, be still, and wait without hope. For hope would be for the wrong thing"*. [2]

1. Papadopoulos, R. K. (2021). *Involuntary Dislocation. Home, Trauma, Resilience and Adversity-Activated Development*. London and New York: Routledge.
2. T. S. Eliot (1939). *East Coker: Four Quartets*.

So, he reminds us that stillness is quite important. This is what we would call 'therapeutic reflection', not rushing to do something because there is a perceived need. But, instead, to pause, to reflect, to be still, to understand clearly what is happening, and our action to follow proper conceptualisation of the situation. Otherwise, hope can be 'for the wrong thing'. Better not to hope at all than hope 'for the wrong thing'.

In this context, I want us to be reminded of what our sister discipline, psychology, has done. (I don't know whether you consider psychology to be sister or step-sister or whatever other relationship to psychotherapy). I am reminded of George Miller's, APA Presidential Address, in 1969, when he introduced his famous dictum, *"Giving Psychology Away"*. [3] That was a vision, that conveyed the hope for psychology, at the time, when he 'could imagine nothing that would be more relevant to human welfare, and nothing that could pose a greater challenge to the next generation of psychologists, than to discover how to best 'give psychology away''. In other words, to make it more accessible and popular, to give it to the people. And, for him, this would have created a new and different public conception of what is humanly possible and humanly desirable.

But, of course, he was fully aware that 'giving psychology away' would 'not be a simple task'. So, against this background, we need to also consider the development of psychotherapy: have we also given psychotherapy away? And should we or, could we? And what is the hope connected with this?

In order to ponder over these matters, we need to be reminded that psychotherapy has changed radically over the last 50 years, due to the interactions between the internal theoretical developments in psychotherapy itself, the organizational necessities, as well as the external realities in the world around us. And it is imperative to examine the consequences of these interactions in order to better appreciate the dilemmas that we are facing today. More specifically, what has been the impact the external realities in the world around us have been exerting on psychotherapy? The announcement in the conference earlier today, just before my presentation, reminds us of the effects of the external realities and their complexities on our work and conceptualisation of our position in our societies today.

Psychotherapy as a profession, as a body of theories, as a cluster of practices, and, above all, its position in society has changed radically over the last 50 years. Even earlier, psychotherapy had moved away from its initial roots, which, were the medical connections, focusing on pathology, but also the links with philosophical traditions, as well as spiritual practices.

Before we go further, let us delineate, at least three forms of understanding the therapeutic enterprises. The first and the easiest one (that used to be the traditional one for many years), is in terms of schools, approaches and ideologies. As we all know, the main ones are the psychodynamic, the behavioural, the humanistic, and the systemic: all of these terms refer to what we call 'modalities'. Each one of these is based on a reasonably coherent theoretical system, which dictates the correspond-

3. George A. Miller (1920–2012). In his 1969, APA Presidential Address, he could imagine nothing '*that would be more relevant to human welfare, and nothing that could pose a greater challenge to the next generation of psychologists, than to discover how to best* ***give psychology away****.'* This would create a '*new and different conception of what is humanly possible and humanly desirable'. 'I am keenly aware that* ***giving psychology away*** *will be no simple task.'*

ing trainings and shapes the institutions that manage the promotion of these approaches.

Nevertheless, we should not forget that, within the last 50 years, and even much less than that, we have witnessed a wide proliferation of, what I would call, 'freestanding' techniques. These are specific sets of applied procedures, toolkits, etc. They include, The Tree of Life, Narrative Exposure Therapy, EMDR, Schema Therapy, etc. These do not necessarily connect with large theoretical frameworks (or at least they were not connected when they first emerged) and their trainings and their institutions are different from those of the traditional 'schools of psychotherapy'. Some of these started as simply one or two week-end 'trainings' and gradually developed into more substantial 'approaches'.

Finally, the third form is what I would identify as a 'Therapeutic Framework'. This is neither a big school or a set of techniques but a cluster of basic therapeutic principles that can be applied creatively in each given setting. This is what I will try to present now. I have developed this specific framework over many years as a result of the interaction between my professional trainings and practice (in clinical psychology, systemic family therapy and Jungian psychoanalysis), my academic teaching and research and, above all, as all these are grounded in the realities of my work in many countries, responding to a wide variety of needs in different settings, in situations of severe forms of collective adversity. The basic principles of this 'Framework' are formed by an acute sense of epistemological scrutiny of how the key relevant phenomena and processes are conceptualised: what contributes to such formulation of our presuppositions and how these affect our practices and the identities of those whom we are called upon to help. What I need to emphasise is that this framework, not being either a 'school of psychotherapy' or a 'freestanding' technique, can be used by anyone and in conjunction with any other therapeutic system or technique. This means that it can serve as an added guiding perspective to enhance any existing therapeutic approach.

Returning to the seismic changes in the psychotherapy field over the last half century or so, it is important to appreciate that psychotherapy needed to adapt itself to the various external adverse situations that required its assistance, e.g. earthquakes, tsunamis, pandemics, wars, and now the war in Ukraine.

An honest observation would reveal, very clearly, that the old and established schools of psychotherapy, in their traditional form, have proven to be unable to adequately respond to these humanitarian emergencies in terms of their theory, practice and organization. For example, you cannot take practitioners of a pure psychodynamic theory, and put them in those situations and expect them to improvise how to adapt their theories to the completely different sets of circumstances that such severe forms of collective adversity present. Hence, all schools and pure theories needed to be adapted to fit into these new situations, outside the consulting room and away from the mental health clinics and services where they originated from.

Therefore, there is a need for conceptualising new forms of psychological health and distress, and for the development of novel therapeutic practices to effectively address the consequences of these adversities. The predominant terms today in these contexts are 'trauma', 'well-being', both as part of a new realm that is termed 'psychosocial'. Consequently, a truly enormous 'industry' has emerged addressing 'trauma' in 'psychosocial interventions.' I do call it an 'industry', because it is one of the biggest existing actual industries in the world today, in terms of financial power, number of people engaged in

it, and its overall impact in society. Let us not underestimate the importance of the 'psychosocial industry.'

The term 'Psychosocial Interventions' emerged, mainly, since the Armenian earthquake in 1988. It gained a great deal of impetus with the Palestinian uprisings, and then it gathered additional momentum from the efforts to address the consequences of the military conflicts during the break-up of Yugoslavia. The explicit attempt has been to address, not only the material and medical, but also the psychological and social aspects of people in distress: in short, to grasp the totality of human beings.

It needs to be clarified that the 'psychosocial' does not refer to any single, unified or clearly identified school or technique. Instead, there is a wide collection of approaches, each one of them with a distinct and different emphasis. There are 'psychosocial' interventions with a predominantly medical emphasis, others with a predominant human rights emphasis, others with a psychological, or social, or arts, or community, or whatever other emphasis.

So, the question that we need to ask is whether psychotherapy has been 'given away' by psychotherapists, or *snatched* away, or whether it *leaked* away. 'Psychosocial interventions', in effect, are a hybrid and an unplanned enterprise that emerged out of necessity. There is nothing wrong about this. The task for us, as psychotherapists, is to contribute to making such improvised constructions and practices best suited to the intended purpose, using our existing psychotherapeutic expertise. We need to collaborate with them and improve them in the best possible way.

George Miller was fervently advocating for the 'de-professionalization' of psychology. That was his key slogan that remained as a motto for psychologists for many years. *"We need to go out and teach other disciplines the basic principles of psychology!" "Psychologists should stop treating patients and clients and, instead, become consultants, helping others, non-psychologists, work with them."* My argument is that although no comparable war-cry existed in psychotherapy, what in fact happened was not dissimilar to psychology. My claim is that, in the context of psychotherapy, it was the necessities derived from the humanitarian catastrophes that brought about the 'de-professionalisation' of psychotherapy.

In the social media (in the '*Influencer Garbage*') I found a characteristic observation: *"The elite language of therapy used to be closely guarded, as it began as a niche set of terms and definitions in academic circles. However, in recent years, therapy speech, therapy-speak, has bled out into the mainstream discourse."*

So, these people are saying that psychotherapy hasn't been 'snatched' or 'leaked-out', but it has 'bled out'. Is this a good or a bad thing? Is this a development that brings hope or not?

To begin with, let us examine the current landscape. What is the situation that we are dealing with? When we are considering the humanitarian emergencies in this context, we are referring to a unique phenomenon and we need to appreciate its specific nature and effects. The best word to describe it is that it is 'overwhelming', both in terms of its nature as well as its impact.

The nature of such events (i.e. the severe forms of collective adversity) and their impact affect everybody; not only the people we try to care for, but also, they affect us, our theories, the way we conceptualize things, our societies in their entirety. They even affect the way we assume that certain phenomena are 'facts' or 'factoids' (to use Normal Mailer's term of 'facts which have no existence before appearing' in a relevant publication). Is the 'slogan-ish' claim that whole societies are 'traumatised' a 'fact' or a 'factoid'?

These phenomena move us into unexpected positions developing unpredicted perceptions and experiences, beyond the familiar and predictable. The suffering, losses, destructiveness, disorientation, unfamiliarity, complexity, all have an overwhelming effect on all of us. When we are overwhelmed by all these emotionally charged experiences, plus all the pressing needs, it is as if a big dark cloud descends on us, clouding our perceptions at all levels. Yet, as human beings, we have an unrelenting need to understand.

Then, inevitably, the way we develop our understanding, under such conditions, becomes 'defective'; the way we construct formulations and comprehend these phenomena tends to become oversimplified and polarized. This means that, in these circumstances, we are made to abandon complexity. Then, in turn, the lack of complexity creates additional problems in all spheres and for all of us. These simplified polarizations fray our discourses, degenerating them and flooding them with simplistic and polarised slogans: 'Refugees Welcome', 'Refugees Out'; 'Bad Refugees', 'Good Migrants'; 'Resilient refugees', 'Traumatized refugees'; 'Vulnerable refugees', 'Dangerous refugees'; 'Refugees as Survivors', 'Refugees as Victims'; etc. The very field is highly polarised: One group of practitioners focus exclusively on 'trauma' ('Trauma-informed approaches'), and another exclusively on 'resilience' ('Strengths-based approaches').

The entire discourse in these situations is polarised through and through. Ultimately, our own perception of our own abilities and effectiveness also tends to become polarised making us believe that we are either omnipotent ('We can do Everything') or impotent ('We can do Nothing').

Whenever we are overwhelmed, the resulting effect is that our very *processing function* becomes hindered. Regardless of our personal history, psychological make up, life attachments, regardless of our beliefs, our styles of being, everyone's processing capacity is very likely to be diminished, as a result of being exposed to these overwhelming events and experiences.

By processing, here, I am not referring only to cognitive or emotional processing, but also to what could be termed 'existential processing'. In other words, when our capacity to process these phenomena deteriorates, it affects not only our perceptions but also our values, our beliefs, our very identity, our entire being. Our epistemological clarity and position in relation to all these phenomena become defective, so to speak. Epistemology does not only refer to cognition, it refers to the entire way we conceptualise ourselves as human beings, in relation to the events and experiences that confront us.

Therefore, when we are exposed to these types of adverse situations, we need to remember the actual fact that we do become overwhelmed and our processing capacity is negatively affected; we need to keep this in mind as a corrective factor. We need to calculate our 'margin of error' in the way we process such phenomena. Whereas ordinarily we consider and process, consciously or unconsciously, all aspects and shades, positive and negative effects, when we are overwhelmed and our processing becomes diminished, we are made to oversimplify and polarise at all levels, and we lose complexity: 'We have no space to think', as we say in psychotherapy. Accordingly, we tend to develop what 'impulsive conceptualization': compulsively, we try to think of something that appears reasonable. Invariably, we fall into what I call 'epistemological acting-out'. In other words, feeling overwhelmed puts pressure on us to formulate any plausible 'understanding' (regardless of how accurate or appropriate it may be), so that we

alleviate our own unbearable uneasiness at being unable to grasp and process the complexity of the adverse phenomena that confront us.

Other types of consequences that defective processing has on us include 'partial understanding' and 'mis-associations'. The Latin expression *'pars pro toto'* refers to the logical fallacy that was identified by ancient philosophers, denoting the mistaken understanding that takes one part of a phenomenon as if it grasps the entirety of the phenomenon.

Mis-associations refer to the mistaken associations that are characteristic of 'conspiracy theories': one takes a little bit of a half-truth here, a little bit of a half-truth there, puts them together and then claims that the resulting concoction is true and valid, whereas its veracity is questionable, to say the least. However, such mis-associations provide people with the confidence that they possess a solid understanding of a complex situation. This, ill-conceived, confidence provides an effective antidote to the unbearable discomfort that the feeling of being overwhelmed creates.

All consequences of defective processing, in effect, distort reality, and when we distort reality, it is impossible to plan and act effectively.

Here are two examples. Although there are clear diagnostic criteria for PTSD, we all witness the tendency to take one or two of the PTSD symptoms (e.g. flashbacks, alterations in arousal and reactivity) and claim that the person suffers from PTSD. This is an obvious example of *pars pro toto*, taking one part and considering it as if it is the whole. This is the effect of 'defective processing' due to being overwhelmed by the severe forms of collective adversity and one of us is immune from this epistemological trap.

Another example, again about PTSD, relates to the dimension of time. The DSM-5 specifically stipulates that the identified symptoms need to persist 'for more than one month'. This means that we cannot diagnose PTSD until we confirm that the relevant symptoms persist for over a month. Moreover, the DSM-5 also demands that we should not forget that there are 'delayed expressions' and, consequently, *'Full diagnosis is not met until at least six months after the trauma(s), although onset of symptoms may occur immediately'*. In effect, this means that PTSD cannot be properly diagnosed before these one month and six months periods of waiting are respected by the clinician. Yet, what we witness is that we all rush to diagnose PTSD as quickly as possible, even after one day. After any severe form of collective adversity, e.g. a terrorist attack, everyone claims that those affected by the attack "suffer from PTSD". Undeniably, the affected people are experiencing an enormous amount of suffering and distress. But do we need to call their distress PTSD in order to give it validity?

Another epistemological trap that comes from being overwhelmed is the deceptive 'clarity' of 'causal thinking'. According to this simplistic formula, adversity 'causes' trauma. Undoubtedly, this sounds reasonable. After all, we are surrounded by the lived realities of such causal thinking, which systemic thinkers term it 'linear epistemology'. If you stop holding an item in your hand, it will drop on the ground. If people do not eat, they will get hungry, and if this persists, they may die. These two examples convey the clear cause-effect reality, which is definitely very valid. However, what appears logical and inevitable with regard to physical and biological realities, is not always logical and inevitable with regard to human experiences and, in general, in social sciences.

Let us pause and reflect and process things properly. We are human beings and not just physical bodies reacting passively to physical forces that are subjected to, according to the laws of physics. As human beings, we make use

of the various Meaning Attribution Processes that are part of our lives. We make meaning of these situations, and different meanings produce different effects from the same situations; also, the time dimension matters and, overall, there is more complexity than the physical laws of cause and effect. It should be remembered that resorting to simplified perceptions is the result of 'impulsive conceptualization' and 'epistemological acting out'.

Let us be reminded of what these 'Meaning Attribution Processes' (MAPs) are [4]. They are very well known; they encompass all the factors that affect the way we experience events: starting from one's personal history, relational supporting systems, gender, age, etc. There are so many studies of how our experiences of events are mediated by all of these factors. Yet, we all tend to forget them and when we see a person being exposed to some adversity, immediately we claim that that person will be traumatized, regardless of any other considerations.

Other MAPs include the factor of power positions: again, voluminous research demonstrates how power positions in human relationships affect the way one experiences adversity. Others include the 'set meaning systems, used to account for the events and for the experiences of these events'. For example, a lot of people that I work with, in different parts of the world, say to me, *"It was Allah's will that these [adverse events] happened to me"*. Very clearly these people have an existing 'set system of meaning' that contributes decisively to the way they perceive events and experiences, and this happens automatically. They do not sit down and ask themselves, *"How am I going to interpret this?"* This *is* the way they perceive events from the very beginning. How do we position ourselves, as psychotherapists, in relation to these phenomena? We cannot ignore the meaning people give to their experiences and impose our own therapeutic ideology over them. We need to respect their set systems of meaning and find creative ways of interacting with them.

Other MAPs include 'Hope and lack of hope'. Hope matters a great deal, as our conference testifies. We should not only focus on the past but also on the present and the future, on the circumstances under which people live now and the aspirations they have for the future. In addition, a host of other socio-political, cultural, economic, legal and many other factors contribute decisively to the way one experiences the events they are exposed to. Despite this, we persist with our over-simplified formula of causal thinking and say, *"Oh, you have been exposed to this severely adverse situation, therefore you are now traumatised"*.

In short, all the MAPs contribute substantially to the way we experience, not only events, but even our own experiences of these events. Our experience of events is not based on objective laws or predictably logical deductions, which are decipherable only by trained psychotherapists.

In order to rectify the tendency to oversimply our perceptions and experiences, when we are overwhelmed by severe forms of adversity, I introduced the 'Adversity Grid' (see below). I developed it over the years, and it is now used widely in many parts of the world and by many NGOs and International Organisations, including the United Nations, in many settings. The

4. Factors affecting the experience of events: Meaning Attribution Processes (MAPs): Personal; Relational; Power Positions; Circumstances of actual devastating event; Set meaning systems used to account for events and the experience of these events; Hope and lack of hope; Current conditions, circumstances and relationships; Future prospects; PLUS host of socio-political, cultural, economic, legal factors (Social Discourse on Trauma), etc.

Adversity Grid Range of consequences of exposure to adversity						
Levels	***Negative***			***Unchanged***		***Positive***
	Psychiatric Disorders (e.g. PTSD)	Distressful Psycho-logical Reactions	Ordinary Human Suffering	Negative	Positive (Resil-ience)	Adversity-Activated Develop-ment
Individual						
Family						
Community						
Society/culture						

'Adversity Grid' is a framework (not a school of psychotherapy or a technique) that reminds us of the wide spectrum of consequences when we are exposed to adversity, thus helping us restore appropriate complexity and avoid polarisation. Specifically, it identifies three main groups of such consequences: the negative ones, the positive ones and the unchanged. It also enables us to identify these three consequences at different relevant levels, i.e. the individual, family, community, wider society, etc. Ordinarily, we tend to focus exclusively on the negative consequences, which are real and important. We certainly need to identify these if we are going to provide any help in such situations. However, we should not forget that these are not the only consequences. Focusing only on these and ignoring the other two groups of consequences amounts to an oversimplification and polarisation of our perception and discourses.

Even within the category of 'Negative consequences', it is important to make finer differentiations and introduce further complexity. Not all negative consequences are of the same severity and not all of them affect people in the same negative way. For example, a psychiatric disorder implies severe forms of dysfunctionality, and it is vastly different from when one experiences some milder form of distress and suffering. There is an enormous difference between distress and disorder (i.e. psychiatric disorder), and it is imperative to make these finer distinctions with regard to the severity of the negative consequences of being exposed to adversity. The 'Adversity Grid' identifies at least three: the most severe (e.g. psychiatric disorders), moderately severe (debilitating psychological symptoms that do not amount to an identifiable psychiatric disorder), and least severe (all forms of 'ordinary' human suffering and discomfort).

At the same time, we need to remind ourselves, that there are a lot of unchanged qualities in every person who is exposed to adversity: positive and negative qualities. It is these positive unchanged qualities that I characterise as 'resilient'. 'Resilience' is a term that is used widely, understood according to an endless array of definitions. I have a very clear and operational definition of resilience: referring to those positive strengths (qualities, characteristics, relationships, etc.) that existed before the exposure to adversity, and were retained, despite the exposure to adversity, i.e. they proved to be resilient to the impact of adversity. These are the unchanged 'parts' of a person, of a family, of a community, etc. that

have been retained, despite the exposure to adversity.

Hence, when we begin to assist people in these contexts, instead of focusing only on their 'trauma', we should not forget that they also retain some of their existing strengths, and it is imperative for us to also identify, acknowledge and validate these 'parts' of them. Moreover, my argument is that everybody does not only retain existing strengths that they had before their exposure to adversity, but also develops some new strengths, which were specifically activated by the exposure to adversity. These new strengths I call 'Adversity Activated Development'. These also exist and we should also endeavour to identify and work with. According to the saying that exists in most languages and cultures: *"Whatever does not kill you, strengthens you"*. This conveys a reality that is experienced by all, in all contexts and at all times, and our theories and practices need to find ways of incorporating it.

To sum up, we need to be reminded that people retain some resilient parts, i.e. existing positive qualities, characteristics, behaviours, functioning, relationships that were retained from before the exposure to adversity; this means that these survived the exposure to adversity, whereas the 'Adversity-Activated Development' (AAD) refers to the new positive qualities, characteristics, behaviours, functioning, relationships, etc., that did not exist before the exposure of adversity, but were acquired and activated specifically by the very exposure to adversity.

There are so many examples of AAD, not only from my own therapeutic experience and clinical work, but also from my work in the field, in refugee camps and transitional spaces in so many countries. Moreover, often we hear of such remarkable AAD stories. I am reminded of Martine Wright, an English woman who was injured during a terrorist attack in the London underground in 2005, and she wrote the book *'Unbroken'*[5]. She was trapped for over an hour underground having lost 80% of her blood as well as both legs above the knees and spent a painful year of rehabilitation including learning how to walk again on prosthetics. Yet, she not only was able to resume her life, but her adversity gave her a completely new impetus and meaning. She writes that,

> *"In some ways it was the best thing that ever happened to me. No, I can't say 'best' thing. That's not quite right. It was the most life-changing thing that has had such profound and positive effects. It may sound absolutely mad to say that … But … I truly, truly believe that good can come out of bad. … But my life now is so amazing. I've had the opportunity to do so much, meet so many people. I don't think I would turn that clock back if I had the chance."*

From an ordinary and logical perspective, it does sound 'absolutely mad' to consider that she is pleased that she experienced such a severely life-threatening calamity. Yet we need to appreciate that she is referring to different realities and dimensions. In relation to experiencing losses and damages and symptoms, Martine has been overwhelmed by the most horrendous injuries and negative changes. Yet, that very adversity brought her to appreciate life in a completely new context; her very adversity opened up for her new perspectives of meaning, which she experiences so powerfully positive and life transforming (in a growth-ful sense) that, for her, they outweigh all the negative consequences that her adversity brought about in her.

5. Martine Wright (2017). *Unbroken: My story of survival from 7/7 Bombings to Paralympic success*. Simon & Schuster.

Martine is not unique in experiencing such positive life transformation following exposure to catastrophic adversity, i.e. AAD. Based on my experiences in this field, my strong claim is that every human being, when exposed to adversity, also experiences such positive transformations. However, not everyone has the possibility of actualising such forms of 'Adversity-Activated Development' because of several factors: firstly, the people who are appointed to care for them tend to focus exclusively only on their injuries (physical and psychological), ignoring all other consequences that the 'Adversity Grid' enables us to appreciate. Then, the wider discourses in this field tend also to overlook anything that is not 'traumatic', and they are not sensitive to the wide spectrum of consequences of being exposed to adversity that also include positive ones: retained strengths (i.e. resilient resources) and new strengths (Adversity-Activated Development). Inevitably, tragically and paradoxically, the survivors themselves tend to ignore anything that does not fall into the category of negative consequences, for many reasons. These include the secondary benefits that they enjoy by focusing exclusively on their losses and suffering, and the organisational structure of our services that attend to their needs.

This leads us to examine another type of complexity, with regard to who is a 'victim'. It is essential to make another crucial differentiation between perceiving people as being 'victims' of the specific set of circumstances that victimised them, as opposed to people acquiring a 'victim identity'. It is an undeniable fact that Martine is a 'victim' of the terrorist attack. People can be 'victims' of war, earthquakes, political oppression, etc. This is a legitimate way of defining who is a 'victim'. However, imperceptibly, and as a consequence of the epistemological confusion and inappropriate processing that are created by becoming overwhelmed, we tend to slip into perceiving them in their totality as victims (i.e. *pars pro toto*), thus, unintentionally, installing in them a 'victim identity'. Therefore, we should have the epistemological acumen and agility to see Martine as a 'victim' of those specific events, but not as a 'victim' in her totality, but as a 'survivor' of that adversity, and even more, as a transformed person *because* of that adversity.

This differentiation requires appropriate processing and is not possible when we are overwhelmed and impulsively resort to 'epistemological acting out', polarising our perceptions, seeing people either as 'victims' or 'survivors'. As we know very well, people with a 'victim identity' tend to become passive, overdependent on their helpers, lacking responsibility, they are disempowered and, overall, they experience all the ill effects of 'learned helplessness'. Tragically, it is us, their helpers, that inadvertently 'help' them to 'learn' this helplessness by imperceptibly adhering to the dominant oversimplified discourses that do not allow us to discern the wide range of consequences of being exposed to adversity but, instead, focus exclusively on their 'damaged-ness'.

We need to restore appropriate complexity in our discourses and, therefore, we need to make as many correct and fine differentiations as possible. Another crucial differentiation, that has already been mentioned, is between distress and disorder. It is undisputed that when experiencing adversity, inevitably, people experience various forms of distress. This is a normal response to abnormal circumstances, and it is different from when people exhibit psychiatric disorders, which refer to inappropriate responses to abnormal circumstances: inappropriate, in terms of the symptoms persisting over certain periods of times and affecting wider aspects of their functioning.

We should be acutely aware of the dangers inherent in the fact that our therapeutic care systems tend to 'reward vulnerability'; the more vulnerable one is, the more assistance and benefits and attention they receive. This often leads to the paradox that, in order to assist people, first we need to 'victimise' them by focusing exclusively on their deficits and ignoring their complexity, uniqueness and totality.

Again, by using the 'Adversity Grid' as a guiding framework, we can appreciate their vulnerabilities and we can attend to them, without ignoring their retained strengths (i.e. resilience) and their new strengths (Adversity-Activated Development). This is what constitutes a properly *holistic* approach: seeing people in their totality and not focusing on only one part of them, distorting our perception of them and installing a victim identity in them. By falling prey to conceptualisations that lack complexity, inadvertently, we risk harming further those we want to assist.

It is instructive to familiarise ourselves with perspectives in social sciences that warn us against blindly following 'Politics of Pity' or practices of 'Spectatorship of Suffering'. We need to admit that often, we 'parade' people's suffering in order to solicit assistance for them: *"Please help these poor people, pity them because they are traumatised and vulnerable ..."*. No, our stance should be clear that we want people to be helped because they deserve it; it is an integral part of their human rights to receive such assistance, with dignity and not by peddling their 'traumatisation'.

Another related danger is the tendency to, inadvertently, promote what I call 'positive dehumanization'. We are clearly aware of the nature of dehumanisation, i.e. when people are dehumanised by acts of cruelty and various forms of oppression and abuse. However, we should also be aware that by focusing exclusively on the survivors' damaged-ness and by using it as a 'facilitative' means to help them, in effect, we engage in another form of dehumanisation, which is the result of an ill-conceived 'positive' attempt to help them.

A particularly difficult and very delicate differentiation that also needs to be made, is about the demonisation of perpetrators as opposed to holding them accountable for their unacceptable actions. Unequivocally, we should condemn out-rightly all those who commit any forms of abuse and oppression, and they violate other people's human rights. However, we should be fully aware of the difference between demonisation and condemnation. The theme of our conference is Hope. The very profession of psychotherapy is based on the axiomatic belief that human beings can change, and they can transform positively. This means that every human being, even those who committed the worst atrocities, potentially can develop insight and change. The entire literature on forgiveness is full of dramatic examples of such unbelievably positive transformations. 'Demonisation' means that we fix an indelible monster identity on the perpetrators, comparable to the way we, inadvertently, fix a 'victim identity' onto those we want to help. Such fixation of negative identities, as we know, perpetuates the problem, and prevents people from moving forward.

I happen to be a trustee of a charity that works with prisoners. Undoubtedly, these are people who committed illegal acts, a lot of them serious and abhorrent crimes. Yet, they are human beings, and it depends on us how we treat them, and whether we see the hope of transformation in them, and so, we create the conditions for them to move forward and change. The examples I have witnessed of such positive transformations are most incredible and most moving.

Adversity survivors need to be treated with utter respect and from a position of humility, and not just as damaged people that we have been called upon to repair them, to fix them. I often say that they are like philosophers, because they ponder over the most fundamental human questions. If we create the appropriate space in our work with them, and we do not only focus exclusively on their 'trauma', every single adversity survivor will engage, however clumsily, in wondering about key questions of the human condition: *"Why did this happen to me?"*; *"Why people can be so cruel to one another?"*; *"Now, that I have come so close to death and I lost so much, I wonder what is the meaning of my life; from now on, what shall I be doing that can be meaningful and not waste my life?"*; etc. They are troubled by real existential questions about the nature of life and death, about the meaning of life, about the value of human relationships, about the purpose of daily pursuits, etc. Their profound experiences from being exposed to severe forms of adversity disrupt their ordinary worries and their routine of everydayness, and position them at a vantage point from where they view life afresh. These situations lead people to 'find God or lose God': they are so radically transformative. In other words, these situations make them question their very existence and they are ready for a reshuffling of their priorities and values; they are primed for a genuine 'reset', to use the currently trendy term.

If this uniquely transformative opportunity is grasped, at least by us, then they have real hope for radical changes in their lives. It is essential that we understand our responsibility in relation to this task and appreciate that the transformative possibility begins with our own very conceptualisation of all these phenomena: if we see them just as damaged people, and our role as simply to mend them, then they will miss out on this irreplaceable opportunity.

All this leads us to appreciate that as psychotherapists, we need to be well conversant in at least two 'languages', two paradigms: the language of 'damage and repair'; and the language of 'painful incomprehension'. The first is clearly understood by all. It is this language that our trainings use to help us learn and practice our profession, to make us become experts and assist people in their hour of need, and help them improve their quality of life. In effect, to repair their various forms of 'impairment' and facilitate a smoother functioning. This language parallels the traditional medical discourse of an expert attending to a patient's bodily malfunction. We need to respect this language, we need to learn it properly, and to practice it to the best of our abilities. However, if we limit our interactions with the adversity survivors only to this type of language, then, we are depriving them of the other dimension that can introduce substantial life transformations.

However, working with the language of 'painful incomprehension' requires a completely different mindset: to begin with, we need to adjust our own position as 'experts'. We cannot possibly be experts about another human being's existential position and values. Our role, here, is to create space and enable them to articulate these inarticulate and unanswerable questions that they are hardly even aware of. In relation to this task, our role is to validate the importance that they are troubled by such questions concerning the human condition, interacting with them with humility, using ordinary language without jargon or flowery hyperboles. Our role here is not to answer these existential questions, but create the space and conditions for them to emerge, in the first place, and then for us to validate them.

Returning to George Miller and his vision to 'give psychology away', can we say that he realised it? His intention was to develop people's capacity to 'predict and control behaviour'.

Obviously, we can easily ascertain that we are far from any substantial progress in relation to these aspirations. In the realm of our own profession, psychotherapy, have we allowed it to be 'bled away' or was it 'snatched away'? The fusion of psychotherapeutic insights and language into the 'psychosocial' interventions in humanitarian emergencies seems to have been the result of a two-way process: psychotherapists stretching their professional theories and practices to become increasingly more relevant to such adverse situations, but also non-psychotherapists borrowing liberally from psychotherapy to enrich their own efforts.

Valuable knowledge and sensitivities cannot be controlled and should be generously shared. At the same time, we do have responsibility to minimise (as much as possible) the damage inflicted by the irresponsible proliferation of psychotherapeutic jargon: of 'therapy speak', of 'psycho-babble'. In addition, we need to grasp and maximise the opportunities that are emerging from the loosening of the boundaries between 'proper psychotherapy' and these widely used therapeutic interventions in humanitarian emergencies. We can achieve this by increasing the level of complexity and limit the oversimplification and polarisation in this field. Moreover, we need to eschew pretensions of superiority and engage on, more equal terms, in genuine dialogue, with all relevant related fields, such as philosophical traditions and spiritual practices and develop more coherent and collaborative ventures.

Ultimately, hope needs to be grounded onto our awareness of our own limitations, of the enormity of the task, of the destructive realities not only around us, but also inside us, and between us. Hope needs to be the product of our courage and epistemological acumen and flexibility to grapple with complexity, avoiding simplification and polarisation, avoiding victimisation of sufferers and demonisation of perpetrators.

It is then that hope, according to Aristotle, will be real and not just abstract youthful fantasies, and according to T.S Eliot, hope will not be 'for the wrong thing'.

Keynote Speaker:
Jessica Benjamin

'Only One Can Live': Transforming the Reactivity of Survivalism

JESSICA BENJAMIN

Jessica Benjamin is a psychoanalyst known for her contributions to psychoanalysis and social thought. She is currently a practicing psychoanalyst in New York City where she is on the faculty of the New York University Postdoctoral Psychology Program in Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy, and the Stephen Mitchell Center for Relational Studies. She is one of the original contributors to the fields of relational psychoanalysis, theories of intersubjectivity, and gender studies and feminism as it relates to psychoanalysis and society. She is known for her ideas about recognition in both human development and the socio-political arena.

International Journal of Psychotherapy
Summer 2022, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 97-109: ISSN 1356-9082 (Print); ISSN 1469-8498 (Online)

Submitted: March 2020; formatted: June/July 2022. DOI: 10.36075/IJP.2022.26.2.8/Benjamin

Introduction by Tom Warnecke:

It's Sunday afternoon. It's been so rich; which is wonderful, but also quite energy draining. So just before we listen to our final keynote presenter, I want to lead us in a short abdominal breathing exercise.

So, I invite you to sit back in your chair. Feel the back of your chair against your back. Close your eyes. Place your left hand on your chest and your right hand on your stomach. And let's see if we can all breathe together.

So, breathe in and breathe out: breathe in deep, into your lungs, and then breathe out. Breathe deeply in, so that you feel your right hand pushing out towards and breathe out, and your right hand comes in again. Breathe in and your right hand goes out and breathe out, and your right hand comes in again. Breathe in – and breathe out. Now, just hold it for a moment.

Let your breathing return to normal.

And now, we welcome Jessica Benjamin joining us from New York. It is my great pleasure to introduce Jessica Benjamin today. We have done some work [together] before, which I greatly enjoyed. So, this is personal, as well as professional:

Jessica Benjamin is a practicing psychoanalyst in New York City and is on the faculty of New York University. She is one of the original contributors to the fields of relational psychoanalysis: a series of inter-subjectivity gender studies and feminism, as it relates to psychoanalysis.

And social psychotherapy doesn't stand still. This is a continuously evolving field, and to my mind. Jessica is one of the foremost psychotherapy pioneers of our time. She is best known for ideas about connection and mutual recognition in both human development and a social political arena. I would very much recommend reading her contributions … Some of you may recall, Irving Yalom yesterday, telling us about 'embracing his own vulnerability in a therapeutic space' as a therapist, and this theme has been present throughout this Congress. Jessica has been grappling with surface vulnerabilities for quite some time. So, please welcome, Jessica today.

Thank you,

'Only One Can Live': Transforming the Reactivity of Survivalism

So, the title of this paper now is: "Implicated subjects and acknowledgement beyond survival." The paper considers how subjects implicated in structures of domination are caught in the fear of knowing and facing the damage done.

The dissociative stance of reflexive self-protection that psychological self-protection is itself connected to a widespread social imaginary [that] I call, *"Only one can live"*. It's part of the mentality of "doer" and "done to" that informs competition for whose rights and needs will be recognized. Being recognized is equated with survival.

As I've discussed previously, the failure to receive recognition of needs, or acknowledgement of trauma, constitutes a severe psychological threat, and is reflected in the nervous system by intensified arousal. We observed this process that I'm describing in relational psychoanalysis. When we see the movement from enactment of the 'Failed Witness' position by the analyst, to the analyst's acknowledgement of traumatic experience and relational ruptures based on these observations, we might better understand how the phenomenon of the 'Failed Witness' affects our social lives.

Indeed, the lack of acknowledgement is consequential for collective trauma and social injustice acknowledgement of social injury functions to uphold a 'Third' of solidarity and universal need fulfilment, as well as the function of truth-telling and demystifying the denial of the others humanity is put forward by Michael Rothberg in his book, "Implicated Subjects" are therefore part of the system of domination or harming, though neither perpetrator nor victim, oppressor or oppressed. Rather, they inhabit a variety of positions, at times, themselves disadvantaged, but often aligning their interest with the perpetrators of those systems, benefiting, aligning or obeying results in the refusal of responsibility for ameliorating or posing injustice and harming reparation or generally repair of trauma requires witnessing knowing about and taking responsibility for terrible things.

Lacking a 'witness' turns out to be as crucial in the configuration of traumatic experience as the injury itself. The implicated subject is often a bystander, who does not take responsibility for 'witnessing' and opposing what is just.

I've called this position, the 'Failed Witness': the failure to give the adequate response to the need every person or group has for validation of their injury. Without such recognition, the mind cannot recover; coherence agency is impaired.

The Failed Witness position is a crucial component of traumatic experience and contributes significantly to its clinical we production, as well as its social manifestations. Now, we could look more deeply into the psychic meaning of denial and abdication of witnessing, tracing it to the reflexive self-protection and anxiety on the bystanders or potential witnesses part.

Accompanying alienation from one's own agency as a political sub-denial being the result of a complex process conceptualized as dissociation, the mind's defence against anguish, that it cannot assimilate alter or suits and attempt to escape overwhelming pain and fear when there is no escape dissociation links the door and done to it afflicts the victims as well as the observers, the accuser, as well

as the accused, even while taking different forms. At the physiological level, dissociation is therefore a reaction to being overwhelmed.

(Editor's note: The on-line Conference video recording starts here.)

So, how might we link this understanding of the self-denial and dissociation in the failed witness position with the idea of being socially implicated, even though they are not exactly the same? How do we link therapy to treatment with individuals or work with groups (who have suffered in the past) to those present injuries occurring in real time, that speak to our unconscious guilt, our complicity in our failure to take full responsibility for the society we belong to.

We are not only politically responsible as citizens to repair historical damage and oppose the president harm. That's an idea that Rothberg proposes in reflecting on it. We are also implicated insofar as our tacit acceptance of the psychic culture, and the social benefits of harming our acquiescence and states of denial (as Stanley Cohen called it) provides a vital indeed indispensable part of the orderly procedures that support systems of domination.

Now let me back up and say a few words about my version of recognition theory, which, as I said, you can find in my new book or in the article I mentioned. In light of clinical experience, it seemed useful to me to elaborate the idea of the inner subjective third as a position beyond 'doer' and 'done to'. This would mean holding intention the binaries that have been split.

Instead of mere reversal, the third is what we call a dialectical move out of cycles of victims becoming perpetrator. The third represents corresponding internal, and relational positions in which we are, or see ourselves, as like subjects. Not a reactive position, but active in recognition of the impact of the other.

This deconstructive view of complimentary relations and polarities aims to go beyond the reversal in which the other is exalted and gains power over the previously dominant ones, while maintaining the binary opposition of domination.

Accordingly, we can distinguish forms of seeking justice, or redress of collective trauma, that preserve the binary opposition between 'door' and 'done to' – such forms often including serious violence and destruction – from those that occur in the context of a mutually recognizing third. I've also proposed a further iteration of the third, which I call the 'Moral Third'. It builds on the idea of reciprocal recognition by adding this specific acknowledgement of relational and social violations.

The affirmation of violations of expectancy, and the wrong things that need to be put right, can become the basis for the experience that we could call 'the lawful world', and experience that I believe begins already in infancy, when violations of expectation are redressed. A representation of the lawful world evolves, therefore, within the early dyadic communicative matrix. It psychologically undergirds our practices of justice and witness. Even when individuals' or collective loss and injury lie in the past and cannot be undone, the acknowledgement of those injuries can establish the Moral Third. This allows the injured one to reconstitute their sense of dignity and take action to repair damage through their own agency. So, to be a witness, and – more importantly – an embodied witness is to break through the dis-identification that says this injured person is different, less human.

This is one of the ways we can repair our own sense of helplessness in the face of catastrophe. Something many of us are feeling right now, seeing ourselves as having the ability to recognize the others' humanity countering the tendency to dissociate our own vul-

nerability from that of the other can become the basis for acknowledging and psychically repairing injustice, injury or wrong-doing. This, of course, does require the psychological toleration of vulnerability, which was just mentioned. And this tolerance of vulnerability is actually a condition of giving recognition, even as the fact that we've received such recognition is a condition of such tolerance.

Our bodies and our nervous systems require this recognition to sustain our connectedness to other humans as a fundamental basis of safety and attachment. Only when we experience that third can we begin to subjectively encompass the meaning of taking responsibility for implication, and for the fate of the other who is dependent upon us. Which is to say, to acknowledge to repair and to restore the social bonds of connection, based on mutual respect, will create a very different kind of safety and sense of self than the one that submits to, or aligns with, power.

Now, let me talk a little bit about implication in terms of what the study of clinical enactment has revealed and how we relational analysts see this. As relational psycho-analysts, we've introduced a process of reflection on the clinical version of being implicated; one in which we are drawn into re-enacting trauma and seeking relational repair, together with the patient. In that context, we came to realize that the frequently-seen reaction of psychoanalysts in the past, their initial denial or defensiveness regarding their own behaviour, indeed – not just initial, but often remaining stuck in that – might be attributed to entering what Bromberg called the 'dissociative cocoon' (ref). That was his description of the envelope of counter-transference. This means that we could trace ruptures in impasses and psychoanalytic therapies to a confluence of our patients and of our own dissociative processes and histories.

Relational analysis revived – and took seriously – Ferenzci's realization that, inevitably, we repeat a version of earlier traumatic injuries, even though we have engaged as analysts and are sincerely devoted to healing. The analysts may even become implicated by adopting a neutral professional stance, Ferenzci said, creating distance and reactivating the patient's sense of abandonment. So often, the dedicated effort to avoid repetition, for instance, by being neutral is exactly the thing that drives the enactment, or we might say drives the patient crazy. I have called this tendency to create the very thing we tried to prevent, "*Our appointment in Thebes*". The analyst's failure to provide embodied witnessing is then registered as part of the original injury, and thus failure to witness is allied with causing injury. This, in turn, intensifies the analyst's guilt and can lead to impasse. We have found that therapeutic healing lies in surrendering to the inevitability of such occurrences as a process of rupture and repair.

This process, whereby the patient can experience the restoration, or affirmation of a lawful world in which wrongs are put right, maybe compared to Winnicott's idea of surviving destruction. That is there's an inherent link between Tronick's concept of corruption and repair and Winnicott's idea of surviving destruction.

Insofar as the analyst is there to receive the communication, as Winnicott put it, to survive the knowledge of their own part in the enactment, the patient can receive recognition that their challenge, even when aggressive or disruptive at times, is an action that changes us. Changing in response to the other's impact, without being overwhelmed by it, is an essential aspect of recognition that the patient, and – in fact – we ourselves seek. We also hope that the patient, not being overwhelmed, means that they too survive the rupture. And finally, the third itself survives.

I see, in the tension between an acting failure, and changing and response to it, a possible parallel process for implicated subjects, to give acknowledgement and change in response to the other requires a form of vulnerability, a surrender of self-protection, while these orientations are usually held in different self-states that are dissociated from one another, rather than experience, as conflict. It is possible to survive the confrontation with vulnerability by accepting that our self-protection has become a problem. Indeed, it's a problem common to us all.

So, what is it that allows us to know both states: surrender and self-protection, as 'Me'? Bromberg's idea of standing in the spaces, was that we recognize all parts of self as 'Me'. What allows us to admit that we are implicated in hurting, or guilty of denying the others reality of suffering, while still maintaining our sense of self. As psychoanalysts, we've asked: "What would allow us to destabilize our self-protective barrier and tolerate the self-exposure and vulnerability of shame and guilt?"

What we have found is that this cannot be done without eliciting some form of cooperation from the other who sits in the room with us. Together, we become able to build a third that holds the self-exposure, the guilt and shame of both persons, even though they are not equal and do not play a symmetrical role in creating those conditions.

Interrogating what this cycle exposure entails for the analyst, we've recognized that, when our goodness is in question, we are liable to become disregulated, or would it be more precise to say our claim to being recognized as good.

Now, rather than viewing this loss of imaginary goodness in the terms that we used in the past, where we believed our freedom from scrutiny – that is to say, our professional power was being challenged, or jeopardized, in an unacceptable way. We had to develop instead an appreciation for the kind of power and connection that come from something different, from sharing our mutual vulnerability and discovering things we did not know about each other. This was a revolution in the attitude of the analysts.

In other words, at some point, the position of imaginary goodness and invulnerability will inevitably be revealed as false. It will be seen to have led to a state of insecurity and disconnection from the other. In the social realm, of course, the self-protective aim of offloading shame onto the other and claiming dignity for oneself, legitimates control over vital resources of status, wealth, even police protection.

The more pernicious forms of invulnerability appear, even more aggressive in this historic moment. In America, in particular, we see how masculine strength or paternal authority that bases itself on the illusion of independence from the very relationship on which one depends, has triggered a fight for control of the female body.

I will simply note that implicated subjects, who comply with and find affirmation, in the culture of power should be distinguished from those whose unease with the unlawful world may it spurred them to seek an alternative.

In considering what militates against implicated subjects of the second type taking action on behalf of the human community, to which they belong, we return to the problem of dissociation. Why do we look away? Why do we accept what is? Engaging with this question, Rothberg introduced the notion of obedience: one well-known to those who study critical social theory.

Indeed, the problem of obedience to authority, if not, to say an embrace of submission to the order of things, is central. If we posit that implicated subjects, who serve the originators of domination are enmeshed, not only through

material benefits, but by identification with the powerful ones – identification being such an important part of understanding mass psychology since Freud.

Then we might say that such subjects are doubly implicated. The subjects' actions, of course, contribute to the sum total that produce harm, but they are also shaped psychologically and distorted, as they mould to the structural demands of that social totality. And, in this moulding, they affirm their own helplessness, whether or not they consciously suffer from. What is taken for granted in the unthinking comfort in submission to the social order is not only the privilege of belonging, but also the allegiance, perhaps unconscious and conflicted, to its principles, the identification with ideals of impermeability, self-aggrandizement, and winning, not being a loser, which in the United States coincides with the imaginary of whiteness as wholeness and invulnerability. Those identifications inform the pervasive dissociation about the denigration and harm of the other.

It follows that a full confrontation with that imaginary construct would show how it shapes a dissociated, unthinking, submission to the order of domination. As members of a society that has engaged in the harming and collective trauma of racial and colonial domination, we could see ourselves as implicated in those consequences, but also as formed by our compliance with the conditions that produce it. We could realize how enmeshed we are in the psychic matrix of whiteness. Those consequences we cannot help but dissociate. If participation occurs with no realization of the way one inhabits and props up structures of violence, this refers us to what Bion saw as a refusal to know. When our psychic life is unavoidably lived within identities formed in this way, thinking about, or acting in opposition to, the dominant order generates anxiety. Opposition demands that at least some ability to tolerate that anxiety, along with awareness of suffering. Most likely, opposition also involves critical self-reflection on how these identities have deformed us psychically.

We might consider such reflection as the beginning of a liberatory practice that we, as clinicians, can embrace. This is because there, where we deny participating, we are most likely to submit to purposes and structures we imagine ourselves free of. In fact, we could say that passivity, obedience and consent to authority deriving from the Christian tradition has functioned to create in acquiescence, as Forty argued, which forms the core of what is known as 'democratic virtue' and the transmission belt of political evil. Such analysis of implication parallels what I said previously about how we understand our effort to maintain our sense of goodness at all costs.

In quotidian life, under regimes of soft domination, this masking of evil does indeed owe much to the lie of goodness. Baldwin was famous for calling out this lie: the masquerade of virtuous obedience to civility. Elsewhere, obviously, the choices and consequences are far starker.

We've had to bear the knowledge so clearly displayed, for instance, in Rwanda, that a person will take a machete to a neighbour's child when the genocides dare to threaten to kill his own child.

But while such a person can be seen as being implicated while being a victim, I would not claim that such a person is choosing anything. Whereas, in purportedly peaceful Democratic societies like our own, where some of us may call out the contradictions posed by murder, incarceration and deprivation of the 'Other', the principle of my life, versus your life, operates quietly – sanitized of overt violence, as if it were an acceptable and accepted choice, as the dominant principle that enforces all obedience, all regimes of domination.

This may appear to us as so abstract, that we are led to overlook the key element of what is actually being dissociated, namely fear. It seems necessary to contextualize into subjectively how fear operates in such regimes of self-domination. It enlists the Other to bear it. As in torture, the Other must always bear the pain and terror, in order that one can oneself be free of it. In psychoanalytic work, with imaginary bodies, we use the concept of projective identification to grasp such forcing of pain and fear into the Other. By this we mean, nothing less than a psychic operation, that makes it possible to feel as if the Other will be the one to die, to absorb pain and death, and to bear the precarious life of fear.

Now, where the perpetrator acts this out, the implicated subject merely imagines it. But violence itself also is masked; it wears the mask of the law. When many Americans, in the wake of George Floyd's murder, finally revolted in horror against the construct of white impunity, to make the other suffer, violence was unmasked. Even more so, as protesters were confronted with the retaliatory violence of the political system, exposing our actual lack of agency to modify it, let alone dismantle it. Of course, all systems of domination rely on some mask, even as they depend on the perverse use of the desire for survival which intensifies the choice between your life and mine; that choice is the oxygen in the poisoned bloodstream of corruption.

Some who comply are rewarded. Some, who are deemed unworthy, are punished. And thus this choice is perpetuated. It is the aim of perpetrators to ensure that individuals undo their own humanity as the Moral Third itself is destroyed, to make sure there is no other choice than to kill or be killed. This is what we see in overt violence systems of domination.

Thus, under Pinochet [in Chile], the security police tortured activists to force them to choose between perishing, or saving themselves through betrayal of close relatives and comrades. As if to demonstrate that choosing one's own survival over the tie to others is the only choice.

When we protect ourselves by denying that the real life of such choice is actually held, then we become unwilling party to crime.

So, it is the acceptance of implicated subjects, who are not directly involved in this violence, that aids the inscription of this choice of my life over your life. And we have been primed to be helpless in the face of such choices. We have been primed to accept that force and coercion rule, to bear life in a world of 'doer' and 'done to', all the while producing our own alienation from the sense of lawfulness and agency we believe in.

The one, on which our claim to democracy is based. What generates submission is sometimes mere self-satisfaction. But often, it is fear linked to the reality of a powerlessness that is masked by compliance, and its rewards for the privilege concealed by 'Other'-ing those who are subjected to its punishments. Each of these form part of a larger lie about who was worthy of life or grief, and who may be left to perish.

Sometimes, this is not visible in your civilized society. It is only visible if you follow the money, into the post-colonial lands, where your banks and your institutions cause immense suffering, in order to mine necessary minerals, for instance.

The metaphor of my life for your life is one way to analyse the fear that prevents acknowledgement of suffering and responsibility for social injuries. And the metaphor I've used to capture this mentality is: "*Only One Can Live*".

This metaphor unconsciously organizes the struggle for recognition, as well as for material survival. And – in its ideological form – is

viewed concretely as fact; reality: not an idea, or belief. As Europe has been facing the flood of immigrants from the global south, who were disrupted by the very actions of the north, used to produce their own wealth, this conflict becomes far more obvious. And, suddenly, the idea that *'Only One Can Live'* becomes overt and obvious.

Even though, in the modern era, the liberal world-view is supposedly defined by rebellion against authoritarian assumptions. We still see how this underbelly of fear can arise in the moment that the other appears on the horizon. The ideals of equality will then be contradicted by acceptance of a necessary exploitation, in which some accumulate and control an overwhelming share of the social wealth produced in the world.

Given the reality of ruthless capitalist extraction, that has enforced this process, and undermines our social solidarity with human beings who are exploited, *'Only One Can Live'* is not simply an abstraction. It is something that is now materially embodied in political and social relationships. As psychoanalysts, we need to recognize how the contradictions that are denied by implicated subjects are actually produced by material social relations. Otherwise, we cannot help anyone to become reflective about it.

Now, obedience, as goodness, as in the days before we had welfare capitalism, was reaffirmed as a virtue for the struggling class, while the elite and the elect were allowed to break the rules: to cheat, indeed to be greedy. And this revival of greed in the last 30 or 40 years has been astounding – and it's not merely among the named oligarchs.

The exaltation of power and the denigration of neediness was particularly enforced by ideologies of austerity and these were applied mercilessly to those deemed 'Others'. But, what this led to was a struggle for scarce resources in the middle of the wealthiest and most resourceful countries of the world.

The ideology of discarding the undeserving, initially found its negation in a political opposition that upheld the right of the legitimate victim to accuse others of harming and thus establish the moral power to deserve and condemn.

However, in the United States for instance, the moral claims of the victim inevitably had to be recast in terms of 'doer' and 'done to'. Black Lives Matter was deliberately misread as a reversal signifying a claim to aggress against whites, to take and replace the same ideology, tne same fear of replacement, now shows itself as a universal characteristic of the Right-Wing movements throughout the world.

Under these conditions, recognition of suffering is perverted into another terrain for competitive struggle, rather than a basis for the Moral Third of 'More Than One Can Live' on this terrain of 'doer' and 'done to', we can observe the reversal of splitting, that takes the form of the fantasy of being replaced.

And now, is cast into the idea, that some do not deserve to live. It would appear that to admit responsibility for harming, or even that harm has been done, might invite the danger of being cast out with the 'Mark of Cain'. We see this among certain white populations in the United States.

My colleague, Ayad al-Siraj, the Gazan psychiatrist, with whom I organized a project for acknowledgement in the Middle East, argued that the Israelis' guilt at having harmed, in order to survive, further intensified their already massive fear of being abandoned by the world.

If one has lived at the expense of injuring the Other, one has forfeited the legitimacy of one's right to live, at least in that thinking. So, in order to evade that consequence, it became necessary to argue that one's own people had

already suffered more, had already been so justified through suffering, that one now could not be accused of doing harm. We see this use of grievance to justify aggression, again, in so many movements today.

In this way, a collective psychic economy is invented in which the moral capital of suffering rules. Whoever suffers most, deserves to live and may even do harm to do so.

We can certainly understand then how dys-identification with the Other's suffering can arise, through such manic defences, against perceived loss of safety, against danger of being denied recognition, but also a reflective shutdown in the face of pain and fear.

Now, this reflective aspect of self-protection cannot be erased by moralizing judgment. That does not help. We must concede that it occurs in all of us, all people, some of the time. However, what clinical experience with manic and grandiose states suggests is that individuals may rationalize their fear of being humiliated, or left to suffer by their own families, their own community, should they display shameful weakness. And this rationalization takes the form of projecting that the Other will become the instrument of that humiliation. This drives the politics of resentment and authoritarianism, going further, we might interrogate the condition of competition for social recognition in which justice claims risk playing into the dualism, in which one group's legitimacy or need can be acknowledged only and precisely by cancelling that of the other group.

Such deliberate manipulation of fear still plays a great role in how people become implicated in their own and others' domination. This has been a terrible experience for us in the United States and the last years. This manipulation of the idea of the dreaded Other as the projected container of aggression, while the violent chaotic behaviour of the authoritarian leader, who is consciously embraced as protective, actually intensifies anxieties of fragmentation and fear of attack, much as the authoritarian father might do. It intensifies the belief in 'kill, or be killed', even if the subject imagines, as many do here, that they will be protected by willingness to use guns. Recognition becomes a social product that is made valuable by scarcity. It is not enough to deserve life and dignity: someone else must be the undeserving and discarded one.

So, in the grip of the fantasy that '*Only One Can Live*', white supremacists have imagined that they could ensure their own triumph by dismantling the very social safety net that they need, only because it might benefit the other as well.

All of this points to the necessity of imagining a different politics, that deconstructs the logic of competition for recognition between victims. How do we break the deadlock of subjects who are in this mindset of 'doer' and 'done to': a struggle between the dignified and the discarded. Concrete experience suggests that affirming the Third, of provision for all to live, is a way to appeal to the need for safety and mutual respect, and thus to dampen the escalation of such struggles and the attendant dysregulation.

However, as we seen in the United States, when this move is deliberately blocked, as a strategy to maintain power; when the Third fails to be upheld by social political institutions meant to enforce fairness; the resulting breakdown heightens anxiety about safety. Demagogic appeals to safety and protection from the Other have taken the place of social support, in my country. And this is, of course, a great danger to us and to the world.

Now, in the interest of time, I'm not going to finish these remarks as I had planned, because it seems important for us to have a little bit of time with each other.

So, in closing, I want to say that the Self, that does not discard or split off weakness and vulnerability, and instead poses a demand for acknowledgement of humanity, can dignify suffering. And my experience suggests that this reversal, whereby the visage of dignity can disrupt the conventions of power and strength, can have a surprising – even electrifying – effect. The reclamation of suffering, by the social demand for dignity and respect, is a dialectical move in the historic evolution of self-assertion by the oppressed, but also, in demanding recognition, victims have become agents and have transformed those of us who are willing to be so.

Those implicated subjects, who can then embrace their representative capacity, and be moved by insight into the difference between the competitive struggle for recognition and the Moral Third. Holding that Third position, means that we are tasked with disrupting the positive identification with the system of domination, even while we continue to be disrupted by others more oppressed than ourselves. To renounce hate, and recognize the humanity of the perpetrator, is to avoid the reversal of violence in which 'Only One Can Live'.

But we need not renounced the rage or outrage that fuels the demand for relationships in a society in which both Self and Other can deserve to live. This is what remains difficult for us. Finding a 'Third' position, that serves the indignation that protects the injured, without falling into the trap of defending our own righteousness; finding a way to embrace conflict, and even collision, within a larger containing Third: an inner subjective process governed by democratic principles, in which more than one can live. To overcome the either / or of mystification of 'Only One Can Live,' we must go through the fire of breakdown and collision.

The false goodness of paternalism, as we've seen in our own struggles in psychoanalysis, must give way to a more painfully one, where reciprocity of respect for what we can learn from the unprotected Other about destructiveness. To overthrow the old order, its underlying split between the deserving and the discarded, must be faced honestly: it is in painful challenges to that order that splits are enacted, and become visible.

At first., our task is to survive. That becoming visible, the political feat, is to survive collision, mis-recognitions, that painfully evoke specific traumas and non-recognition; to hold, even in its absence, the vision of a Third that contains conflicts, provides safety, and gives us a space to expand our mutual recognition and solidarity.

Thank you.

TW: Thank you so much, Jessica, for sharing your ideas with us. I haven't seen the chat yet: I hope somebody will bring me the tablet. But, in the meantime, you said something that really resonated with me when you linked, what you called to our claim to goodness as therapists, to regulation and dysregulation in the therapeutic role. But also, the cycle between 'doer' and 'done to'. I'm hoping you could say a little bit more: this claim to goodness, which of course we know, we all have, as therapists: we want to do good. And, what happens when we have to participate in the co-constructing of being, becoming the bad, the bad therapist, you know, in the enactment.

JB: Well, obviously, or I shouldn't say 'obviously', but kind of obviously, this is such an important question, Tom. This is where our vulnerability comes in. Because, the moment that we have to acknowledge that we aren't all good and that we're capable of doing something that is hurtful, it is very easy to become flooded with shame. And, you know, I think, for those of us who work psycho-analytically, it's clear that the field becomes intensely saturated with both people's psyches, and so, if, the patient in particular is very dysregulated, very agitated by their own traumatic experience, the degree to which we feel ashamed and guilty will be very much heightened, and sometimes in that situation it really becomes almost impossible to think. And this has been misunderstood, I think, as an attack on thinking, or linking. It's not meant – by the patient – as an attack on thinking. They are simply wildly dysregulated. And they want to be calmed down by knowing that we're good, but they also want to be calmed down by our making clear that we know that we've been bad. So, since they can't tolerate that, you know, disjunctive coincidence between good and bad, they're very frightened, because it means either they're bad, or we are. And, that's the impasse that we get into; that's the real 'doer' and 'done to' impasse. Right! So, in that moment only our ability to be vulnerable and to say, "I know that I've done something that made you feel I was bad, but I also sincerely want to repair this." I mean, we don't necessarily use that language but that's what we're conveying, means that we're holding the position of the Third, as best we can.

And so that idea of good and bad is, of course, an old one, but it has a new form here.

TW: We have one time just for one more quick question here from the chat. Correct me if I misunderstand: if we deny, do we suffer less. By denying I presume, dissociate, do we suffer less.

JB: Well, that depends. Some people seem to be able to deny and dissociate and not suffer. And it's easy to admire those who do so. Of course, bearing in mind that those people are dangerous. And those who dissociate the most often achieve positions of being admired. Because they are able to embrace domination.

So, when we say, 'Do we suffer less', I think it depends on where you position yourself, or where you are positioned socially, whether you suffer less from denial and dissociation. I would argue that the precariat, the struggling classes, the people without actual social power, continue to suffer even when they try to dissociate. Whereas, it seems that what characterizes people who really have succeeded in dominating, and originating systems of domination, is that they

are able to split off that suffering and project it into the Other, whom they then cause to suffer. And, of course, we see this in America and in the police.

TW: Thank you so much, Jessica. We have to come to an end. The chat is full of praise and thank yous.

(Editor's Note: The recording ends here.)

I just wanted to say this, but I do need to hand back to Pat now. Patricia is our Chair for the final part. So, please, thank you so much for coming today. And can we have another round of applause please.

JB: I'd love to have time to at least look at the chat. I am very grateful for you all being here and listening, and I'm sorry that we didn't have more time to discuss. But, if I had known, I would have given the translators my paper ahead of time so sorry.

Thank you so much for inviting me

PH: Thank you so much, Jessica. And thank you for your words which our translators have done a great job with. So, thank you so much for being part of our Congress. Please don't leave now. We have something to offer you to close the congress. I'm going to cut this session right down to five or six minutes, not the half hour, that is on your program, so just please stay with us for another six minutes.

I first would like to thank the people who have made this Congress possible. I'd like to thank the keynote presenters for their superb insightfulness: absolutely relevant to our theme, and our moment, presentations.

I'd like to thank the past presidents of EAP, and for the words that they gave us. I'd like to thank the organizing committee for everything that they have done, so creatively adaptively, throughout the year that we've been preparing this Congress. I'd like to thank the congress organizers for all the ways in which they have made this Congress possible, and also shaped it so richly.

INTRODUCTION TO THE 2022 EAP CONGRESS VIDEOS

Details of the Conference programme can be found here.[1] Details of the presenters can be found here.[2] Many of the 2022 EAP Congress presentations were recorded and the videos of these presentations have now been made openly available (see below).

EAP President: Patricia Hunt: "The Hope of Psychotherapy for our Endangered World"

https://youtu.be/1NocVu32mm8

Professor Alfred Pritz: "The Founding and History of EAP" – 30th Anniversary Congress

https://youtu.be/NCofvLWS5yE

Professor Emmy van Deurzen: "Rising from our Existential Crisis: Widening the Human Horizon."

https://youtu.be/8R3XiKWnZ5M

Irvin Yalom: "Matters of Death and Life: for ourselves and for the Planet" – interviewed by Eugenijus Laurinaitis.

https://youtu.be/j39RSiXD5Vg

Professor Kyriaki Polychroni: "There is a crack, a crack in everything ... that is how the light gets in."

https://youtu.be/R2cCcle8pHo

Professor Renos Papadopoulos: "Therapeutic Applications in Humanitarian Contexts."

https://youtu.be/VEopf7pb8w4

1. **Congress Programme**: eap-hope.at/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/EW_Congress_Programme_EAP_32022.pdf
2. **Congress Presenters**: eap-hope.at/

Jessica Benjamin: "Only One Can Live: Transforming The Reactivity of Survivalism."

https://youtu.be/4Rq_E2AZ9i4

Barbara Fitzgerald: "Time and a Place: Training Psychotherapists in a Changing World."

https://youtu.be/fYRXSFufGDo

Tom Warnecke: "Changing Times – What are the Implications for Psychotherapy Practice?"

https://youtu.be/CqR6WORdKhg

EAP Conference Closing Video

https://youtu.be/6yhJai7oqfA

NB: Please note that we encountered an unfortunate technical issue with the recording process which caused a delayed recording start for some of the presentations. We apologise for the inconvenience.

Working with Trauma - Christiane Sanderson

1: The Core Elements of Trauma and Its Impact
2: The Fundamental Principles of Trauma Informed Practice
3: Becoming a Trauma Wise Practitioner: Skills and Competencies
4: Experiential Exercises when Working with Trauma

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This e-learning course which is divided into four modules, is designed to provide mental health professionals with an overview of trauma and Trauma Informed Practice that will enable practitioners to become trauma wise practitioners.

It will explore the core elements of interpersonal trauma and its neurobiological impact alongside the long term psychological and relational effectsIn addition, it will introduce the fundamental principles of the Power Threat Meaning Framework and Trauma Informed Practice, and how to use a Phased Oriented Approach to Trauma and Recovery.

An Evolutionary Psychological Approach to Therapy - Ken Pierce

1: Keys to Using Evolutionary Psychology in Therapy
2: Keys to Using Evolutionary Psychology to Empower
3: Keys to Using Evolutionary Psychology for Grief or Trauma
4: Applications – Keys to Using Evolutionary Psychology to Build Perseverance in a Pandemic

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International Journal of
PSYCHOTHERAPY

Volume 26 | Number 2 | Summer 2022

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ISSN: 1356-9082 (Print) | ISSN: 1469-8498 (Online)