

Trauma & Identity an Introduction

IDENTITY-ORIENTED PSYCHOTRAUMA THERAPY (IOPT)
THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSOR FRANZ RUPPERT
MUNICH UNIVERSITY

© V Broughton 2019

IDENTITY-ORIENTED PSYCHOTRAUMA THERAPY

© V Broughton 2019

IOPT

© V Broughton 2019

Professor Dr Franz Ruppert

Munich University of Applied Sciences

- Is a psychologist and psychotherapist
- Spent the last twenty-five years studying and researching psychological and emotional trauma, and bonding and attachment issues
- Developed a body of theory he calls Identity-oriented Psychotrauma Therapy
- Developed a method of working with unresolved trauma – The Intention Method
- Is the author of eight books in German
- Seven of these have been translated into English and published by Green Balloon Publishing
- Continues to lecture at university
- Runs his own Seminar practice in Munich where he lives
- Travels extensively throughout the world teaching and presenting his IOPT work



© V Broughton 2019

What is trauma?

Trauma is an experience that we do not have the emotional, psychological or physical resources to manage and resolve.

We are completely helpless in the face of unstoppable forces, and the only option is to dissociate, freeze and fragment. We call this last item 'splitting'.

Psychologically and emotionally we split and render the unbearable experience unconscious.

© V Broughton 2019

Trauma definition

- A situation that the individual is unable to manage with his current psychological and physical capacities and resources
- Experience is literally unbearable; of being overwhelmed, utterly helpless and in mortal danger
- Stress reactions (fight/flight) are insufficient and fail
- Survival requires the psyche ('I') to split and relegate the experience to the unconscious
- This process is beyond our control; we have no choice.

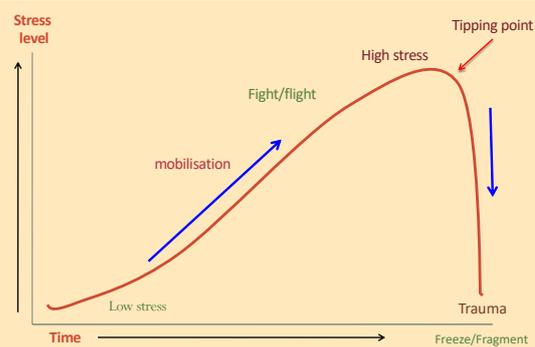
© V Broughton 2019

High Stress & Trauma

- The high stress situation forces a hyper-mobilised state in order to facilitate the stress response of 'fight/flight'
- This hyper-mobilised state cannot be sustained for long, it puts too much stress on the body and on the mind
- If the 'fight/flight' reflex cannot resolve the situation we go into the trauma state (dissociate, freeze, fragment)
- This is a reaction from the primitive (reptilian) brain and is beyond our control
- The principle trauma survival strategy is dissociation & splitting
- When we split our psyche we lose our identity, our sense of self, our integrity.

© V Broughton 2019

DISTINCTION BETWEEN HIGH STRESS & TRAUMA



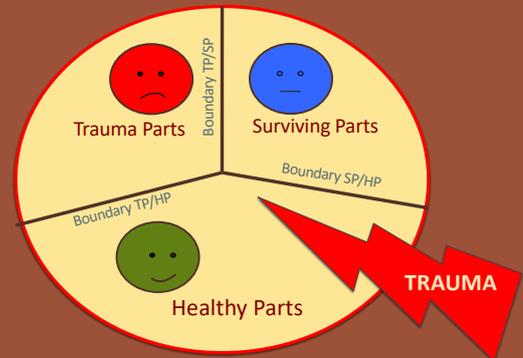
© V Broughton 2019

High Stress & Trauma

- High stress leads to a **hyper-mobilised** state.
- The trauma leads to a **hypo-mobilised** state.
- We can regain our equilibrium from high stress
- We cannot regain our equilibrium from trauma.
- Trauma cannot be reversed. Once psychological splitting has occurred it remains in place.

© V Broughton 2019

Basic Model of Psychological Splits caused by trauma



© V Broughton 2019

Types of Trauma

NATURAL TRAUMAS – earthquakes etc.

RELATIONAL TRAUMA –

All relational trauma involves a **PERPETRATOR** and a **VICTIM**.

PERPETRATOR – someone who causes harm to another

VICTIM – someone who is harmed by another to the point of being traumatised

© V Broughton 2019

The Split parts



- The **Healthy 'I'** is still available... when we feel safe.
- The **Trauma parts** are always the age of the trauma and hold the unbearable frozen-in-time experiences and emotions
- The **Survival part's** only function is to maintain the split, to protect the Healthy 'I' from being overwhelmed by the trauma experiences and emotions.

© V Broughton 2019

The Split parts

- A **Healthy aspiration** is to heal ourselves.
- The **Trauma parts** want to be allowed to exist and express what has been frozen
- The **Survival part's** job is to keep the Healthy and Trauma parts away from each other, to maintain the split
- So there is always an inner conflict, and...
- The **Survival part** keeps a moderating influence on the possibility of healing in any moment.

© V Broughton 2019

Characteristics of Healthy 'I'



- › Is open to reality
- › Is capable of expressing and regulating feelings
- › Has a capacity for genuine empathy
- › Is able to make safe bonds
- › Is able to resolve destructive bonds
- › Sexual desire and behaviour is appropriate
- › Has a good memory of personal past
- › Is capable of self-reflection
- › Is capable of being self-responsible
- › Seeks clarity and truth
- › Has basic confidence
- › Makes good contact
- › Feelings of guilt are appropriate

© V Broughton 2019

Characteristics of The Traumatized Parts



- stores the memory of the trauma
- stores the emotions and experiences of the trauma
- Is always the same age as when the trauma occurred
- Is continually engaged with the traumatic experience
- can unpredictably and suddenly be triggered

© V Broughton 2019

Characteristics of The Survival Part



- Constructs and guards the split
- Denies and suppresses the trauma experience
- Develops avoidant behaviour
- Develops controlling behaviour
- Develops compensating behaviour – drugs, alcohol, eating disorders
- Fosters illusions, lies and misinformation
- Produces new splits if necessary to maintain suppression of trauma

© V Broughton 2019

Primary Types of Trauma

- **Existential trauma:** accidents, assaults, torture, operations etc.
- **Trauma of Identity:** the inability to hold onto one's identity; **being unwanted**
- **Trauma of Love:** the inability to establish a loving connection with the mother; **being unloved**
- **Trauma of Sexuality:** being exposed to confused sensual/sexual contact; **being unprotected**
- **Trauma of becoming a Perpetrator:** **becoming a perpetrator** as a survival strategy

© V Broughton 2019

These early traumas define our life.

It is important to understand that all later traumas always re-trigger these primary life-defining events.

To try to heal/resolve the later trauma without addressing the earlier cannot ultimately be effective.

© V Broughton 2019

Primary Strategies of Trauma Survival

How we manage early trauma experiences

- **All traumas:** Dissociation, splitting, numbing, denial etc
- **Trauma of Identity:** **Identification** with mother's wants and attributions
- **Trauma of Love:** development of **delusional ideas of love:** "one day my mother will love me"; "money can buy love".
- **Trauma of Sexuality:** **delusions about sex;** sexuality used as substitute for love, objectification, perpetration
- **Trauma of becoming a Perpetrator:** **"I am the victim...";** increased perpetration and entanglement in p-v dynamics

© V Broughton 2019

TRAUMABIOGRAPHY



© V Broughton 2019

TRAUMA HEALING

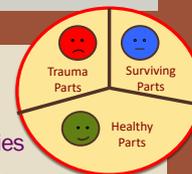
GENERALLY speaking current trauma work falls into two categories:

- Managing the results of trauma: helping people manage and avoid their frightening feelings – strengthening Survival Strategies
- Finding ways of coming into direct contact with the frozen, split off experiences and allowing the emotional expression. This requires safety and a sensitive process where the client is in charge of how far they go in any one session, and the therapist really understands the subtle dynamics of trauma and perpetrator-victim dynamics.

© V Broughton 2019

Trauma Healing means...

- Taking my trauma seriously
- Requires will and commitment
- Recognising my survival strategies
- Strengthening my healthy nature
- Coming into better contact with myself
- Coming into contact with my traumatised parts
- Feeling the split off emotions

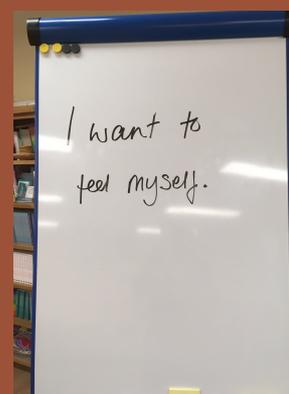


© V Broughton 2019

The Intention Method

- Is a method of exploration
- The client maintains control of what happens and how far the exploration goes
- The client decides what is true and real, and what is not
- Work is with the psyche and the body together
- Provides access to unconscious, pre-memory, pre-verbal (intra-uterine) information
- Is a method that starts with an **'intention'** devised by the client

© V Broughton 2019



An example intention

© V Broughton 2019

LITERATURE

FRANZ RUPPERT

- Trauma, Bonding & Family Constellations (2008)
- Splits in the Soul (2011)
- Symbiosis & Autonomy (2012)
- Trauma, Fear & Love (2014)
- Early Trauma (2016)
- My Body, My Trauma, My I (2018)
- Who am I in a Traumatized and Traumatizing Society? (2019)

VIVIAN BROUGHTON

- In the Presence of Many (2010)
- The Heart of Things (2013)
- Becoming Your True Self – Revised Version (2017)

All Published by Green Balloon Publishing www.greenballoonbooks.co.uk

© V Broughton 2019

Trauma & Identity an Introduction

VIVIAN BROUGHTON

WWW.VIVIANBROUGHTON.COM

INFO@VIVIANBROUGHTON.COM

© V Broughton 2019