

Crises of and with young people and group dynamics in residential care homes



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PSYCHOLOGICAL CRISIS

The loss of the mental balance a person feels when being confronted with overwhelming **events and circumstances.**

By nature and extent, **skills and proven tools** acquired through past life experiences **prove to be insufficient to deal with the current situation**

(Sonneck 2000)

FORMS OF CRISES

- Acute crises
 - Traumatic crises (Cullberg)
 - Change crises (Caplan)
- Chronified crises

- Burnout syndrome as a development towards crisis
- Post-traumatic stress disorder

(Sonneck 2000)

RELEVANT ASPECTS OF CRISES

- Crises **cause**: Change, traumatic experience, ...
- Crises **reaction**: Panic, depression, somatic consequences, flashbacks, ...
- Crises **course**: Shock, reaction, processing, re-orientation/-adaptation/coping vs. withdrawal, resignation, chronicity, ...
- Subjective **importance** - subjective experiencing of crisis/vulnerability
- Behaviour/**coping** strategies
- **Dangers** of crises: Fixation, neuroticising, chronicity

(Sonneck 2000)

EDUCATIONAL OR PSYCHIATRIC CRISIS?

- **Educational crisis:**
 - Continuity of relationship not fully disconnected, in spite of rule-breaking, aggressive, dissocial ...
 - Behaviour, basically, comprehensible, controlled and controllable
- **Psychiatric crisis:**
 - Behaviour or mental state de-controlled, no longer situational and comprehensible
 - aspects of danger to self or others

(Cf. Burchard 2004)

For **details**, see: M0-a6

- What is a care crisis?

AND

- When and how do care persons deal with crises?

GROUP DYNAMICS

... refers to the areas of tension and the dynamics between individual and group

- **Roles:**
Tasks, maintenance and creation, dysfunctional, leadership, outsider
- **Positions:**
Alpha, beta, gamma, omega
- **Norms:**
Relationship, communication, feelings, sanctions
- **Dealing with conflict:**
prevent, eliminate, agree, untie, make compromise, integrate
- **Taking decisions:**
alone, exerting pressure, consensus, majority vote

(Cf. Metzinger 2016)

GROUP ROLES

- **Job role:**
stands for compliance with defined targets and execution of tasks
- **Maintaining role and creating role:**
refer to behaviours such as evaluating, diagnosing, transferring
- **Dysfunctional role:**
behaviours such as aggression, blocking, rivalry, clowning, or passivity
- **Leader:**
positive >; prosocial behaviour, special skills
negative >; demonstrating own power
- **Outsider:**
often, not participating in group action or not following group norms

(Cf. Metzinger 2016, quoted in: Brocher 1999)

GROUP POSITIONS

- **Alpha:**
fittest/most popular >; keeps eye on group goals
- **Beta:**
expert/specialist >; takes on factual-advisory role in the group
- **Gamma:**
all those who have joined Alpha; support without raising any leadership >; usually, this position is the majority of the group
- **Omega:**
Counterpoint to Alpha >; critically questions objectives, speaks out difficulties >; address opposite positions that Gamma do not dare to address, but secretly think of

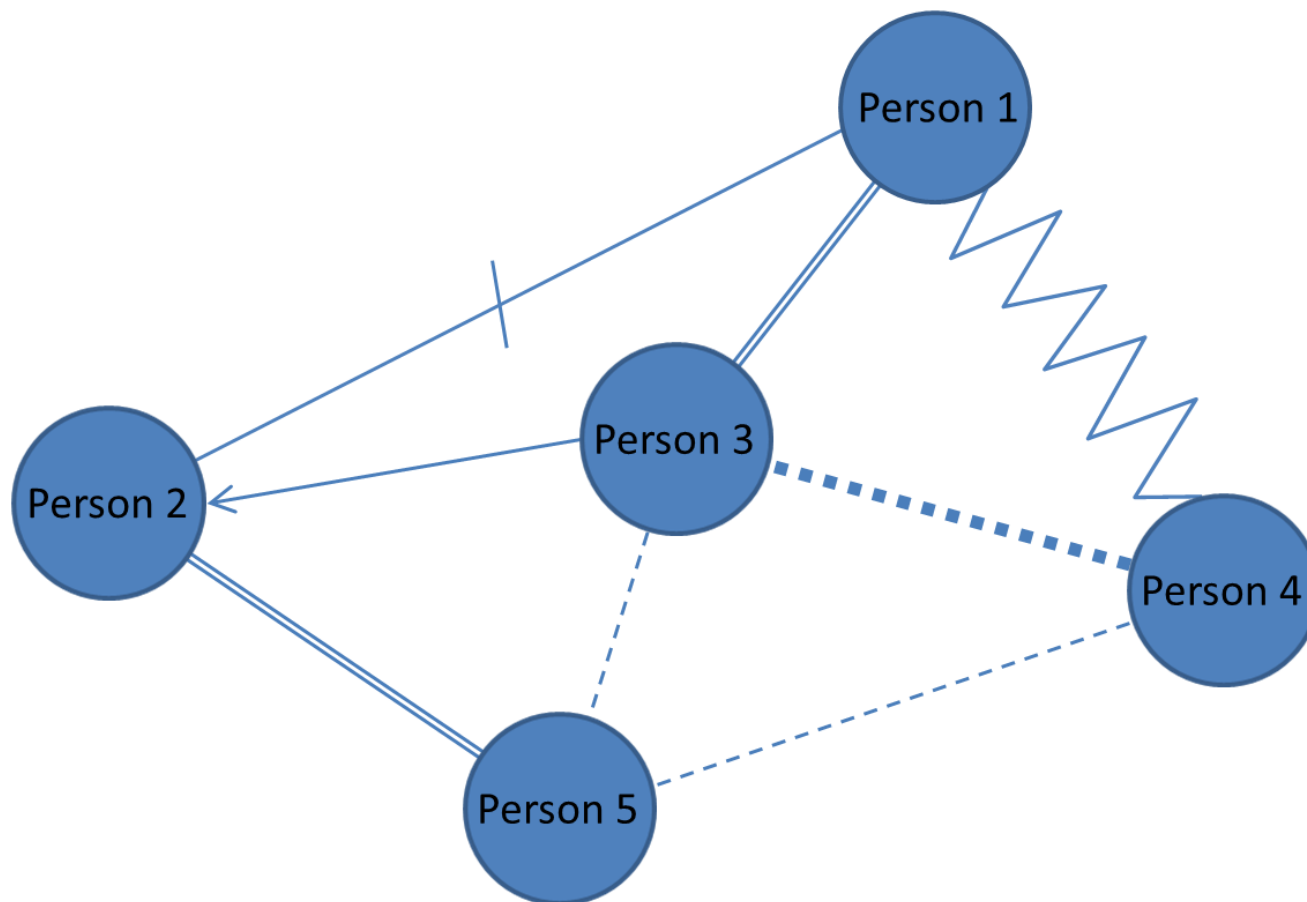
(Cf. Metzinger 2016)

CONFLICT BEHAVIOUR

- **Avoiding:**
denying, belittling or concealing problems; ignoring the counterparty
- **Eliminating:**
exclude members who disagree
- **Suppressing:**
trying to gain other opinions by influencing
- **Consenting:**
majority decides, minority agrees
- **Uniting:**
both opponents unite in a strategic alliance, the conflict is not resolved and remains, is put on ice for some time
- **Compromising:**
everyone makes concessions; arrangements are made
- **Integrating:**
different opinions are heard; the conflict is discussed; the entire group develops a solution which is acceptable to all

(Cf. Metzinger 2016)

SOCIOGRAM - EXAMPLE

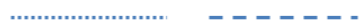


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SOCIOGRAM - EXPLANATION



A **dotted line** indicates a weak relationship (as the dots get weaker, the relationship is weaker).



A **pointed line** means, the relationship is almost non-existent.



A **single line** shows good bond, **two lines** a closer bond and **three lines** a relationship which is even more important but also conflicting.



A **line with a slash** means a difficult relationship, a line with two slashes a rupture.



A **zig-zag line** represents a conflict.



An **arrow** indicates a unilateral relationship (the indicated person or group reject them).