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Open dialogue as a contribution to a healthy society: Threat or chance?

Open Dialogue is a post modern approach to severe crises in mental illness and has been developed in Finland, since the early 80's of the last century. Y. Alanen from the University of Turku together with his team created the need adapted treatment approach, which later has been further developed mainly by Jaakko Seikkula and the team of the Keropoudas Hospital in Tornio in Western Lapland. It promotes an early intervention by involving the family and the network of a patient at once, uses best practices of systemic therapies, integrates other professions and peers, uses low dose medication and shared decision making within the network. It is a very comprehensive change in organizational aspects of the treatment system going along with it. It needs a different way of financing and reduces inpatient treatment in the long run. And that is where the risks are: Medication is not at the core interest any more, we prefer a low dose, intervall treatment as short as possible. We also know, that the relation to the psychiatrist has an influence on the dose needed. Outpatient treatment is vastly in favor, hospitals would have to close beds; doctors, psychologists and nurses are no longer the all knowing persons, everybody is an expert of his own life. People interested in this approach gathered in the annual meeting of "The International Network For The Treatment of Psychosis", founded in 1996. Participants came mainly from Scandinavian countries and Finland, Germany, Poland, Lithuania and nowadays from the UK and the USA.

Biography

Werner Schuetze has completed law school at the University of Freiburg in Germany before he became a Doctor of Medicine in 1981. He is a children and youth Psychiatrist as well as for adults, he studied family therapy and was educated in psychodynamic therapy as well as treatment of severe psychic traumas. As a Head of a Psychiatric Department in Nauen/ Brandenburg/ Germany he implemented the finnish Open Dialogue Approach in his hospital. After retirement he is working as a trainer and supervisor in the education of Open Dialogue and connected projects in Germany, Poland, Italy and USA.

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