

The wonderful art of failure on the way to one's own self

A process-oriented view in retrospect and outlook
of my personal development process and working with clients

Thesis for the acquisition of the diploma in process-oriented psychology

on

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*«I know that all my past failures and frustrations
have laid the foundation for life, which I am enjoying today.»*
Anthony Robbins



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Summary

This diploma thesis shows possible ways and approaches how to find one's own self through supposedly failure. Thereby it pursues the questions: *Who am I? Who do I want to become? Why am I the way I am right now? Where does my path lead me? How can I experience this, what supports me?* These are all profound questions, which I have analyzed, experienced and lived through in depth by means of reflections on my own life so far and two striking situations of subjectively perceived failure. Further analyses and explanations based on my work as a therapist with two clients led me from another perspective to my core process as a therapist. I try to understand the structures and core processes of my clients and their life stories and the underlying processes, being amazed how much they have to do with mine and thus to experience myself newly and develop myself further.

At the beginning I approach the topic of failure by means of an overview and background information from various schools of thought such as classical psychology, philosophy and sociology. Then the basic concepts and the basic understanding of process work, also in regard to failure, are presented and explained.

In almost all chapters, various exercises are presented in detail or as examples. These should give the readers a practical insight and encourage them to try them out for themselves.

In the last chapter, conclusions are drawn and a connection as well as a link between the younger part of the author and the present therapist. This as a summary of learning and recognition of the different internal parts in one-self which should be used for further personal development.

Introduction

Motivation

With my 55 years of age I look back on a life that is characterized by many experiences, adventures and situations that I did not understand for a long time and often not at all. I asked myself why something is the way it is or was. A lot of painful things are connected with it, lack of understanding and struggling with myself, devaluing myself, letting myself be driven, always doing more to make it work "better". It is about something else: finding yourself means to understand yourself or to get to know yourself on a deeper level, to meet yourself and to have a wonderful, healthy relationship with yourself.

Many things have shaped me since childhood, many things I have tried to explain to myself, I have fled into relationships, into working environments; I have sometimes put on a mask, put on a piece of clothing that did not fit me at all, that was not me at all terms. In addition, I didn't want to show too much how I was doing and certainly didn't want to talk openly about my feelings and sensations - I could have been hurt even more. In this attitude I lived for a long time, too long - which certainly didn't feel good for me and also let me go through the world with too little joy of life.

What a coincidence, what a wonderful gift, that I have been slowly beginning to understand myself for a good of 10 years now and am learning to be myself more and more. This thanks to the fact that process work found me in 2008. I am slowly but surely getting on the track of the whole pattern. A long, deep, painful process that I have gone through and am still going through. But from year to year I realize more and more how valuable, how wonderful and full of chances and almost blissful this path can be. I do not mean in any way that I have made it now, in the true sense of the word, but that the lifelong "reinventing oneself again and again", getting to know each other and in "going one's own way" - something so precious is that it is worthwhile to stay with it. It's a bit like with the genie in the bottle, once he has escaped from the bottle, then it's a thing of impossibility to bring him back into the bottle and to close it!

Many people, especially in our western world, including myself, are identified with a compulsion to succeed, pressure to perform, perfectionism and the fear of failure that comes with it. In the long run, this destroys our self-esteem, takes away our joy of life and endangers our health; on a mental and finally on a physical level. This does not have to be!

Therefore, I am interested in how process-oriented methods can be used to understand "failure" and to transform into something positive. How can I support myself or others in such a way that "failure" receives productive energy and a fruitful drive?

Objectives of this thesis

I would like to encourage people that things can be done "differently" and that we ourselves can contribute to our own happiness, with the result of reaching our deep inner self. For this I would like to draw the attention on my own experiences and on my therapeutic work with two clients.

With this diploma thesis I would also like to sensitize that there are possibilities and ways - which certainly require a certain amount of time, a trustworthy framework, a certain amount of courage as well as sticking with it and curiosity - to arrive at oneself despite a feeling of failure. To live one's own life in a fulfilling way, not to live up another person's life or the expectations of others, and to learn to face "failure" with a newfound ease. It is a spiritual path and essence work.

Target groups

I am writing this diploma thesis for myself, to reflect and describe, analyze and explore my life so far with the focus on my failure. How do I deal with it today? What have I learned from it and what have I understood for myself and how it leads me to my deeper inner self. In the second place, I would like to use this work to give other interested people access to how they can approach failure on their own path of life and from this, to better cope with painful experiences and getting insights through the process-oriented method, and find their way to themselves respectively.

Research questions

This diploma thesis is based on the following research questions, which had to be answered:

- ⇒ *How is failure understood in the field of other schools of thought?*
- ⇒ *How does process work understand failure and how does it deal with supposed failure?*
- ⇒ *Which process-oriented tools and methods are suitable for dealing with failure, for tracking it down, as I said above, and for turning it into a signpost on the path to become yourself?*