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# Adam Charvatis Good practices for the Children of the World: Narrative Support and Collaboration Group for Parents of Adolescents with special needs

The application of the present narrative parent support and collaboration program sets forth from the idea that thinking & action is always local and at the same time global. Even when we do not consciously think and act globally, this is still a global action, since it influences wider relationships by exactly the same fact that it excludes them.

In this presentation we present the application of an innovative parent group support practice as it was applied with 10 parents of “adolescents with special needs” in a public school in Greece. It is a semi-structured group work that was evolved after years of group support practice for parents of children with disabilities. In this parent group it was attempted to highlight and develop those good practices that parents already possess, linking them to their values and to their dreams for life and for the society that they want their children to live in. At a phase of the group, other stakeholders (children themselves, other volunteers or professionals directly or indirectly involved with children and their future, other parents) are equally involved in the discussion. This wider discussion is organized by the parents themselves. Thus, discussion and action consciously become at the same time both local and global.

*Adam Charvatis, MSc, PhD, a narrative therapist from Thessaloniki, Greece, working as school psychologist in schools for adolescents with disabilities and therapist. Director of the Institute for Narrative Therapy & Community Practice -Greece.*

# Andrea Lazar Expanding ways of Using Definitional Ceremonies with Families Struggling with the Influences of Trauma

Families coping with the influences of trauma can find themselves struggling with emotional distance and disconnectedness brought about by feelings of despair, shame, blame, depression, anxiety and acute alertness as well as many other forms of distress that trauma brings into their lives. The use of the narrative practice of definitional ceremonies, with family members or the therapist as outsider witnesses, encouraging them to acknowledge steps taken by other family members, can be very helpful in different ways.

* It helps them acknowledge family members' efforts to find their own unique ways of achieving their personal and shared goals.
* It reinforces existing family ties and forges new ones while discovering new paths of communication.
* It promotes a shared space mediated by the therapist where room is given to the different steps and voices within the family when the whole family cannot be brought together.

In the workshop, I will share ways in which I have implemented this practice in my work and how this has helped both families and my work.

*Andrea Lazar, Israel, a Family Therapist using Narrative Therapy practices with families, couples and individuals.*

# Anne-Sophie Vernhes Re-inventing the future of French medicine with young doctors and narrative approach

Anne-Sophie Vernhes is working for the French Medical Board to help young doctors to get established. She is using the narrative framework to face this challenge, building bridges between narrative approach and project management. She will demonstrate how she conducts a cooperative narrative management and share new insights.

The workshop will focus on the power of narrative to conduct a therapy at a systemic level.

We will discuss how ideas from narrative approach may be used in project management.

Themes: The systemic externalization - the position of the project manager - narrative methods in a collaborative perspective - the dominant discourses in a context of social change

Participants will leave with a strong analysis, narrative tools and new perspectives.

*Anne-Sophie Vernhes, narrative practitioner, based in Strasbourg, France, currently acting at the heart of public health, on a mission for young doctors. A primary focus of her work on narrative is supporting burn-out and career transitions.*

# Annelies Huybrechts & Steve Bua Trenziria World’s#1 awesome world trip! Conversations with people from different cultural backgrounds or in the context of migration

Trenziria sessions are group sessions where people come together in diversity to share stories. Living together in diversity with people from around the world can be very enriching and meaningful but it can also lead to misunderstandings, fear and prejudices about each other resulting in division and single-sided stories. It is interesting to experience that the way stories are questioned and shared matters and that it can elaborate and enrich our ways of thinking, feeling and talking.

A Trenziria session is like a guided walk with a specific itinerary, nice viewpoints and clear safety guidelines which gives the opportunity to share and listen to stories, to understand cultural differences and to feel (re)united and connected to each other. Trenziria sessions lead to an improvement of the group climate, an awakening sense of curiosity in each other, to a new language to exchange and dig out daily and complex sensitive intercultural topics. After a Trenziria session the participants can look at themselves, each other, the group, the community and even at the world with different eyes!

Be very welcome and catch a glimpse of it!

*Annelies Huybrechts works as a cultural sensitive therapist in a private practice and as a freelance trainer (Interactie-Academie, Antwerp). She developed the method ‘Trenziria’ based on the work with non-accompanied minor refugees in Brussels.*

*Steven Bua: medical Clinical Officer in Uganda, volunteer teacher in Elshaddai Refugee School in Malaysia*

# Birgit Bongaerts Rediscovering meaningfulness: a challenge for caregivers and the nursed alike

In this workshop we share our work with reflecting team-practices for caregivers, nurses, logistic and cleaning workers in nursing homes and psychiatric wards. We try to step in the tradition of acknowledgement Michael White describes in the chapter on definitional ceremonies in his Maps of Narrative Practice. We learned that caregivers who work and live with people that are challenged by psychological vulnerability can benefit from this narrative tradition of acknowledgement, especially if we want to create and sustain a living environment where staff and patients alike can develop a growing awareness that they are truly meaningful to others.

One of our starting points in (peer)supervision groups is that we support staff members to explore how they are affected by dominant professional and other discourses. These often contain prescriptions on how to handle adult and elderly persons suffering from psychological problems and behavioral distress. We invite them to evaluate these prescriptions, and to (re-)position themselves. Furthermore, we look for (small) signs of relational agency and look for ways that inspire carers to get a better view of their acknowledging and therapeutical effects. They do not achieve this by applauding, or pepping people up, but rather by re-discovering unique moments of relational well-being that lead to the development of respectful relationships.

*Birgit Bongaerts is a clinical psychologist and systemic psychotherapist, supervisor and trainer at Interactie-Academie Antwerp Belgium*

# Bruno Hillewaere & Marco Visser Psychomotor family therapy. How a narrative-experiential way of working with families enriches new family stories

In our way of working, narrative and dialogical ideas play an important role. But doing so, we felt often that families could not always express themselves in a proper verbal way. Knowing that words and language create new story lines and richer identities, we also wanted to explore how pre-verbal and non-verbal experiences could enrich narrative ways of working. The work of Griffith & Griffith (‘the body speaks’) and Glenda Fredman (‘Transforming emotions’) inspired us to discover how we could help family members to speak with each other through their bodies and help them develop different ways of acting and expressing emotions and being connected with each other.

As family therapists and psychomotoric family therapists, we experience that the combination of narrative ideas and an experiential way of working leads to richer stories, both for ourselves as for the families. Learning by experience is a way children are connected to the world around them, as words and the spoken language are not always accessible and helpful for them. By working in the here and now in an experience-oriented way lost family-narratives of hope can return.

In this workshop participants will learn the underlying ideas about this way of therapeutic work, and they will get to see some video’s they can reflect on. The participants will also be invited to experience an exercise themselves.

*Bruno and Marco are both associated with Euthopia, a centre for family therapy, training and supervision in the Netherlands. In their therapeutic work with families, they are focused on the collaboration and dialogue with the family and larger system. They provide training and are author of some articles.*

# Carlos A. Chimpén López Narrative conversations with young people living in Judicial Homes who use violence against parents

The present workshop is part of the development of a double story in young people in their late teens and early twenties who use violence towards their parents. The criminal courts should take an approach to working with young adults which acknowledges their different needs. This includes the extensive knowledge of the effects of the problem and a rich description of alternative or preferred stories. If the criminal justice system adopts an approach which takes into account the development of a rich story and not a single story of young adults, it can make them far more likely to ‘grow out of crime’. Meanwhile, it could be possible to offer this perspective to the workers of Judicial Homes to prevent some consequences of the crime such as the more likely that young people to be unschooled on arrest and have very high levels of illiteracy.

In the workshop, we present three steps followed by facilitator to work with young people living in a Judicial Home. Firstly, deconstructing conversations and re-membering conversations. After that, the use of collective narrative practice that involves using the Journey of Life, the Team of Life and the music as a way to respond to the difficulties of life. We end the process with a definitional ceremony and the delivery of a certificate with a focus on the alternative story. Re-authoring conversations traversed the entire process.

*Carlos Alexis Chimpén López, PhD. Psychologist and Professor of the University of Extremadura, Spain. Founder and President of the Spanish Narrative Therapy Association Working in private practice and in an Association, with children and adolescents in contexts of legal protection.*

# Daria Krayukhina, Irina Kutilina (with Daria Kutuzova) Narrative practice as a basis for support groups for people affected by rheumatoid diseases

Rheumatoid diseases are progressive chronic auto-immune inflammatory diseases, to which at this time the allopathic medicine has no cure. They have an adult-onset form and a juvenile-onset form; both are potentially incapacitating and significantly affect the quality of life of the diagnosed person and their relatives. Anxiety and depression are common comorbidities, and there is a huge need for psychological support. Narrative practice provides many ethical principles and techniques that help to conduct support groups, offline and online.

In this presentation the authors - patient-experts and narrative practitioners - will share their experience of running a narrative-based support group for the fellow patients with RD and their relatives. They talk about the highlights and the challenges and will discuss the questions that deserve further research and development of practices specific for the context of living with rheumatoid diseases in Russia.

# Daria Kutuzova The Imaginary Sanatorium of Anti-depression

“Depression” is an “umbrella term” for a complex phenomenon with different individual presentations in the lives of different people. What is common is that it severely undermines the person’s ability to exert authorship of one’s life, to envision and embody the preferred stories of life.

In this workshop I would like to introduce the participants to an informal research conducted on the basis of a narrative journaling exercise “The Imaginary Sanatorium of Antidepression” - its immediate and postponed effects on the perceived capacity of authorship of one’s life. The journaling exercise consists of (1) creating a story in “alternative possible present/future” about spending several weeks in a sanatorium of anti-depression, (2) reflecting on the particular factors that played the “anti-depressive role” in this fantasy scenario, and (3) reflecting on the possible ways of creating a smaller-scale/shorter-term versions of this sanatorium in one’s given life circumstances.

*Daria Kutuzova (Russia/Malaysia), PhD, psychologist, narrative therapist and therapeutic writing facilitator, works at the Good Skills Ltd., registered in Russia (but residing in Malaysia).*

# David Nylund Letter writing practices in Narrative Therapy

This workshop offers participants the necessary push to make their own letter writing practices part of the foundation of their narrative therapy practices. Participants are offered tools and creative ways of overcoming obstacles to therapeutic letter writing and – are taught the style, intentions and possible further uses of their letter writing practice.

# Deanne Dale Decentred and Influential positioning in the teaching of Narrative and Social Justice approaches to therapy

According to Michael White, the preferred posture of a therapist is de-centred and influential when taking a Narrative or Social Justice approach. When the role is teacher of these ideas, is a de-centred and influential posture feasible and ethical to inhabit or even aspire to? What may be some challenges in maintaining this preferred posture?

These questions will be explored in the context of teaching of Narrative and Social Justice approaches to culturally diverse Social Work students at an Australian University. The teacher holds intentions for power relations in the teaching environment to be made transparent and become a reference point and resource for exploration of ways and means of Social Justice doing. I am hoping to exchange ideas and experiences with others who have stepped into the role of teaching Narrative and Social Justice therapy to develop a framework of teaching practice that is consistent with the relational ethics and principles of this way of working.

*Deanne Dale is an Australian Social Worker, working therapeutically with people responding to violence for over 30 years. Teaches Social Work students at 3 Sydney Universities and provides supervision to Social Workers and Managers working in Violence Prevention and Response Services.*

# Ellen Cornfeld Quantum Leaps from the Safe Space: an ‘intensive’ family gathering in response to childhood sexual abuse in the Orthodox Jewish world

Emerging stories of experiencing childhood sexual abuse in the family tell of silences, hazy memories, and confusion. When religious law, family culture, and cultural customs entangle unrecognizably- where are we to look for ownership, responsibility, and healing? The belief in creative narrative practices, the belief that families can heal, and the belief that everyone has a voice that deserves to be heard and engaged with, inspired me to organize a week-long gathering with 6 family members from half-way around the world in response to childhood sexual abuse.

The sessions were rich in double-storied testimonies, outsider witnessing teams, and re-membering practices. Woven into the honoring of this family’s religious practices were cross-cultural definitional ceremonies, and an innovative ‘rescuing words’ exercise which enabled all participants to re-tell our work, both personally and collectively. With the writing of archival letters, the family recognized their ability to enlarge their influence. That influence continues in the sharing of this story with their permission.

This work demonstrates how the abused, the abuser, and their families can move from places of silence, suffering, despair and estrangement to preferred places of understanding, ownership, responsibility and reconciliation. Sharing this work will offer new ideas to enrich the Narrative literature.

*Ellen Cornfeld (Israel) – MNTCW (from Dulwich Centre and University of Melbourne), Narrative Counselor working with children, adults, couples, and families in private practice in Israel. Group facilitator, clinical supervisor and international consultant, gives workshops and lectures.*

# Els Wouters Trauma and group – is a match?

There is a common idea that it’s better to work individually with traumatic experiences. Clients and professionals are concerned about re – experiencing, the effect on other group members, being defined by the traumatic events, …

When we work in group, we often use psycho – education to normalize the post trauma effects. On the other hand, there is the dominant discourse that it’s healing to speak about the traumatic events. There is a hope or an expectation that therapy brings relief or reduces the post traumatic complaints if speaking is possible. Often, we notice that the problem/victim identity is unintentionally reinforced in that way, and that people lose sight of what makes them valuable.

In this workshop we challenge some dominant ideas about trauma and explore how we - as a group - can answer in a way that we protect the group from re – traumatising experiences. How can we reduce the consequences of these traumatic experiences and re – attach people with the knowledge and skills they used during and after these events?

*Els Wouters (Belgium), psychologist, systemic- and narrative therapist at Elim: residential setting for psychotherapy, Agora: private practice for psychotherapy and trainer at Interactie-Academie*

*Antwerp.*

# Heleni Andreadi ‘When I look at you, I don’t see your illness, I see YOU!’: Using Narrative approaches to re-author the lives and relationships of couples affected by severe mental health difficulties.

This workshop is a re-telling of the story of a couple affected by mental health difficulties and our work together in a National Health Service (NHS) setting in the Centre of London, UK.

Contrary to dominant understandings that focus primarily on individual pathology and diagnosis, Narrative approaches provide a collaborative and dialogical framework for exploring how relationships may be affected and transformed by the presence of MH difficulties and how our social and political contexts can enable and/or obstruct us from living in good mental health; and practices that create a space for externalising problems, promoting compassionate ways of drawing on and acknowledging each other’s responses and knowledges, building relationships and communities that protest against stigma and discrimination.

Participants will become witnesses to the couple’s narratives of living their preferred lives and relationship in a city where stigma, discrimination and limited resources remain, despite its diversity and wealth; they will also be invited to share their collective appreciation for the couple’s on-going response to prevalent discourses prescribing what constitutes ‘successful and fulfilling relationships’.

*Heleni-Georgia Andreadi, originally from Greece, but living and working as a Systemic and Family Psychotherapist and Supervisor, in London, in children social care and adult mental health.*

# Ion Dronic Software toolkit for narrative practitioners.

For the first time in human history, there is a mismatch between median family income and productivity output per hour. In other words, humans produce better and better tools, but fewer and fewer people benefit from them. Since it's unlikely that humans will develop ma-chine skills overnight, we propose to re-invent what economic activity is. A software toolkit to assist narrative practitioners is the stepping stone towards a new economic model.

The first part of the workshop will briefly present two-year long research blending narrative ideas and machine learning techniques. The second part invites workshop participants to test a pilot software tool that emerged as a result of the research. A final reflection will invite participants to contribute with comments, ideas and opinions on how such a toolkit could augment their own practice. Every participant will benefit from online post-workshop access to the conversation log and speech-to-text generated transcript.

Prerequisites: A working smartphone.

*Ion Dronic, Founder at Narrafy Foundation, Oslo, Norway. Software engineer and narrative enthusiast. Researched the industry of artificial intelligence and benefited greatly from narrative ideas in his journey (absent but implicit; deconstruction; the social construction of reality)*

# Jacqueline Françoise Sigg Carrero Responding to violence: Coloring therapeutic possibilities in the territories of justice, dignity and art

This workshop aims to approach participants to their spirit of adventure and their pulse of curiosity to navigate into innovative territories to respond to violence through the prisms of justice, dignity, and visual art processes.

The workshop, articulated through short theory reviews, pieces of therapeutic conversations and the participation of attendees, will offer during the first part a space to explore the effects of giving voice to justice and dignity as active participants to respond to violence in the therapeutic conversations. We will inquire on justice and dignity as active members of externalizing conversations, as witnesses of the acts and stories of resistance and as promoters of possible lines of flight to agentive places that open new vistas into relational, contextual and agentive territories where re storying is possible.

During the second part of the workshop, participants will give a pause to the underlying privilege that is bestowed on words in therapy, by witnessing how art media, art processes and emerging images knit together to amplify the cartographies of meanings. In doing so, they will reflect on the means art making provide an agentive territory to transform and repaint the internalized violence into preferred stories, sparkled by justice and dignity.

*Jacqueline (Mexico): psychologist - MA in Narrative Therapy from the University of Melbourne, Australia, current student of the Taos PhD program. Torture and trauma counseling services to forcibly displaced people. Founder of Espacios Narrativos (Narrative Spaces), a non-profit organization committed to providing therapy and community work services as well as expanding narrative art practices in Mexico.*

# Jan Olthof The metaphor of football in narrative therapy: Johan Cruijff and the charm of complexity

Jan introduces the concept of a metaphorical third space that allows a story to be shaped in dialogues. In this workshop the football game is used as a third space in order to deconstruct problem-determined stories, and shape richer stories. Jan refers to the philosophy of football player Johan Cruijff learning how to respond to complex situations.

If a situation is complex, for instance when a family is in a crisis, often multiple parties are involved in the process of relief assistance. Such a multitude of social care workers and institutions tends to make the practice of care very non-transparent, cluttered and complex. We then often try to diminish the complexity by cutting the whole up into different pieces in an attempt to make it easier to tackle. This often makes the situation more complex, because participants all work along different tracks. “Complexity is the state of having many different parts connected or related to each other in a complicated way “(Collins English Dictionary). Complexity is a whole. Cruyff introduced the idea of “Total Football”. The ball is brought around almost ad hoc and randomly, without choreography and a concept, without a direction and a director. Cruijff's philosophy of “total football” can be an inspiring metaphor to relate to complexity in an aesthetic way.

*Psychotherapist Jan Olthof (Netherlands) is founder of the School for Systemic Training and author of ‘Handbook of Narrative Psychotherapy for Children, Adults and Families.*

# Joanne Murray Sick of not being listened to

When children experience physical symptoms for which no medical cause can be found, they can attract labels such as ‘somatisation’ or ‘psychosomatic illness’ which can have them and their families believing that the pain is ‘all in their mind’. Such thin descriptions of children’s experiences inhibit alternative stories from being heard.

This presentation has been co-produced as part of my work with one young person who was given a label of medically-unexplained-symptoms. She would like you to hear her responses to the dominant discourses of the medical model and her endeavours to take a stand against these. I will invite you to offer outsider witness responses to her preferred identity story.

I will also share my own dilemmas and experiences of this work; my attempts to respectfully decline invitations to reproduce the prescriptions from the medical model and to take steps towards putting narrative principles into circulation within this context.

*Dr Joanne Murray, Paediatric Clinical Psychology, Royal Manchester Children’s Hospital, Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.*

# Justine van Lawick From demonising stories of divorced parents to stories in which children can live

When parents separate, they tell stories, stories where both are involved in the process of being together and losing the connection. These stories can be complex and sad and full of differences. But when parents demonise each other and tell a story of blame, then the whole family and network-systems are torn apart and children are caught in between.

This workshop will address possibilities to invite parents caught in high conflict and in demonising spirals, to tell their story in a different way. They are allowed to mention pain, sorrow and frustrations, but without putting all the blame on the other. A story children can live with. The social network around the parents, i.e. new partners, grand parents, friends, and so on, are asked to help out the parents with the new, non-blaming, story. They also have to move from ‘being stuck’ towards new possibilities.In the workshop we will do exercises, have dialogue and show films of this work.

*Justine van Lawick is clinical psychologist, systemic therapist and co-founder of the Lorentzhuis, centre for systemic therapy, training and consultation in Haarlem, the Netherlands. She is a senior trainer in the Netherlands and abroad.*

# Kaat Verhaeghe & Skrallan De Maeyer A postmodern perspective inspiring the Bachelor program in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)

In the Bachelor program in ECEC students are educated to become coaches in a broad range of pedagogical settings. In these organizations the ‘pedagogical coach’ has a facilitating role towards the child, the parent, the team and the broader society. The goal is to enhance the overall pedagogical quality through coaching. Therefore, students need to become professional ECEC coaches, we assume that their personal identity is the core of their professional identity and development. The student views the world through a personal and interpretative framework. This framework contains values, beliefs and experiences, it guides their actions and being. A clear understanding of meaning and values helps clarify the goals that govern their actions. In the professionalization of the students we focus on ‘the self’ of the coach and the creation of socio-cultural awareness to develop a conscious professional identity. In this session we will explain how postmodern concepts inspired by collaborative and narrative (therapeutic) approaches substantiate the professionalization of the coach.

*Kaat Verhaeghe (Belgium), pedagogue for the ‘bachelor in Early Childhood Education and Care’ at Erasmus University College Brussels, also researcher for the knowledge Centre Urban Coaching and Education. Main subjects are ‘identity’, ‘child and society’ and ‘good parenting?’. Explores In her research the role of narratives in professionalization.*

*Skrållan De Maeyer (Belgium), a master degree in psychological and educational sciences and graduated as a systemic therapist. Combines her work as a lector for the ‘bachelor in Early Childhood Education and Care’ at Erasmus University College Brussels with work as a psychotherapist at Therapiecentrum Hestia Mechelen.*

# Karin Taverniers Deconstructing ‘Couple’ Relationships

What does it mean ‘to be in a relationship’? Are romantic liaisons natural human states or do they respond to social constructions regarding love, ‘coulees’ and such? Have human beings always been amorously involved or is it a more recent phenomenon? Is it a universal experience or is it contextually bound? Are there dominant discourses as to what constitutes ‘normalcy’ relationships?

These are some of the questions I will invite reflection upon in this workshop. I will approach relationships from a post-structuralist perspective, challenging the notion of fixed ‘relationship structures’, postulating that there is no one way of being in a relationship, that ‘couple-ness’ is not a given, nor a preexisting or universal condition, nor what dominant discourse dictates it to be. I will not only propose a broader view of ‘togetherness’, but will also reflect on possible ways of freeing ourselves from the restraints imposed by the mandates of dominant discourse. Lastly, we will discuss how dominant discourse regarding couple relationships does not only revolve around heteronormativity; similar oppressive limitations and prescriptions as to what is ‘normal’ and expected exist in diverse communities; as seen in phenomena such as homonormativity, trans-normativity, etc.

*Karin Taverniers, PhD. Argentina/Belgium. Psychotherapist. Full Professor, Universidad del Salvador (Buenos Aires and Bahía Blanca, Argentina). Director of Centro de Praxis Terapéuticas, dedicated to postgraduate training programs in narrative, collaborative and dialogic practices.*

# Katrien Kintaert Developing narrative spaces of inversion and transition in collaboration with animals

During the last 20 years Patrasche developed a therapeutic context for youngsters that get stuck in problem saturated stories and no longer believe that professionals can help them out. We started working with animals, in our case dogs and sheep, who are themselves in need of assistance. As such we give these young people a chance to become supportive themselves, beyond mere daily care.

What further constitutes this therapeutic environment are material structures that provide a feeling of existential security; uncultivated nature; animals; ’rites of passage’; fire; the idea of transition; humor, and ‘play of inversion’ (animals talk, write letters, clients become therapists, animals become outsider witnesses).

Last but not least our team consists of the clients and the therapist (who is ‘first among equals’). Together we engage in a cooperative process in order to deal with real and urgent animal problems (e.g. attacking and biting out of fear). Clients and professionals are considered colleagues who have to rely on each other. This proofs to be a very powerful resource for the clients as it reveals and strengthens new and underdeveloped storylines.

Although the different elements of this approach constitute a Gestalt, we want to show it is possible to enrich and inspire existing practices with its various aspects.

*Katrien Kintaert (Belgium).Orthopedagogue and animals assisted therapist, responsible for Patrasche, an organisation that works with youngsters with serious mental, social and emotional issues.*

# Kris Decraemer Expanding Narrative Exposure Therapy: reconnecting traumatized clients with their community.

The Narrative Exposure Therapy (N.E.T) offers a therapeutical context in which stories about trauma can be disclosed and transformed. In a temporary new system (client, interviewer, witness and note taker) stories are told, listened to, noted and read out again. However, for N.E.T to be successful, the individual experience needs to be supported by the relationships and social networks of traumatized clients. This is not an easy task. As clients often experience social blaming, negation, disapproval, they mostly find it hard to share them keeping their stories to themselves. To invite witnesses from one’s own community needs a safe therapeutic space for clients, as well as for witnesses.

In this workshop we present our work with N.E.T and our experiences reconnecting clients with their community.

*Kris Decraemer (Belgium) is a systemic- narrative trainer, therapist and supervisor at Interactie-Academie. She works for more than 25 years with clients who experienced trauma*

# Kris hazenbosch Soundtracks

In this workshop music is the centre of the meeting. We find out how music can be a point of entry and how we can speak through music. When the client isn’t able to speak the spoken language, we start searching for alternative ways of communication. Music can be seen as another language by which we can meet the client. Songs can be the voice of our client. Songs can be seen as stories with important values, dreams and hopes. These songs can be a (re)connection with others and break isolation. Music is often a soundtrack of a great moment, of important times in life who might be forgotten. They can hide memories of special moments one shared with their beloved one(s).

*Kris hazenbosch (Belgium), drug counselor Msoc Vlaams Brabant, Narrative systemic counselor Hestia, Mechelen.*

# Kristel Kuppens Working with violence in families: The clearing of new paths by creating stories.

Speaking with families about violence is complex. Especially when many different emotions flare up. Through the creation of stories with family members it becomes possible to explore unexpected ideas, opportunities and the possibility to reconnect within the family.

To talk about violence or the suspicion of violence evokes many emotions in parents and mental health workers. Speaking with the parent about their own possible aggressive behavior as well as listening to these stories in a non-judgmental way is complex. There are many judgments, taboos and difficulties both on speaking and on listening. Parents feel anger, resistance, shame, …. They react with a silent attitude, anger, they stay away, or they bring socially desirable stories.

In this workshop we examine how to create a dialogue about violence in a non-judgmental yet mobilizing way creating space for change. Through the creation of stories with family-members we question curiously and respectfully the values they attach importance to. This happens in such a way that the contrast with violent reactions can be examined. Families are presented with the start of a story. Together they make up a sequel on it. How do you get five wild animals over a mountain range, a river and a cannibal village?

The workshop will demonstrate this method and will illustrate it with case material. As a participant, you get to work and investigate which helping family identities emerge and which possibilities become visible again.

*Kristel Kuppens, (Belgium), Clinical Psychologist and Systemic Psychotherapist at the department of child and adolescent psychiatry 'TheA', Hospital AZ Sint-Maarten and associated trainer of the 'Interactie-Academie', an institute for systemic training and psychotherapy.*

# Maggie Slaska Trauma-Talk and Collective Activism

Intersectional feminism and social constructionism offer new potentials for thinking about and imagining ‘agency’ and ‘healing’ after events of suffering. This workshop will invite participants to consider common therapeutic utilizations of trauma-talk, re-imagine new conceptualizations of ‘healing’ and discuss how therapeutic interviewing may enable or constrain oppressive identity constructions. Notions of rhizomatic self, movements of becoming and talking new lines of flight might also be explored.

Participants will be invited to engage in experiential activities to further develop interviewing skills aimed at eliciting, remembering and highlighting actions taken after difficult life events and consider the effects on identity. Participants will be prompted to reflect on their own experiences with civic engagement, collective struggle and the impacts of solidarity-building.

*Maggie Slaska, United States, Marriage and Family Therapist, San Diego State University; teaching and private practice.*

# Marie-Nathalie Beaudoin Enriching narrative therapy with positive psychology and neurobiology: Concrete clinical practices to intensify experiences of preferred selves

Following Michael White's tradition of infusing our work with developments in other fields, this presentation examines the rich possibilities of enriching narrative practices with ideas from positive psychology and neurobiology. A number of narrative conversational landscapes can be expanded by better understanding how the brain stores trauma, how memories are re-constructed, and how experiences of preferred selves are activated neurally. While it may seem counterintuitive to inspire a postmodern approach with research arising in modernist worlds, there are many crucial findings that most definitively support our work without losing sight of our theoretical premises. This presentation offers concrete, innovative clinical practices, which can be used in a variety of therapeutic situations.

*Marie-Nathalie Beaudoin (USA), psychologist, author, and speaker, directs a narrative and neurobiology training center in San Jose, California. Pprovides therapeutic services to all ages and enjoys facilitating innovative workshops worldwide.*

# Mark Hayward Michael White on Power, Foucault and the implications for therapeutic practice.

This workshop is based on a video lecture drawn from the Michael White archive that Michael White gave about power. This is the first time this video has been shown outside of specially invited individuals. Viewing excerpts from it we will examine the implications for therapist positioning and for practice. The workshop assumes some knowledge of narrative therapy and will venture with academic and practice rigour into his thinking. The following are some of the subject areas that will be examined:

1. Externalising as de-objectification
2. Specifications of personhood
3. The panopticon, the documentation of lives, classifying and categorising persons, the file and capturing people in writing.
4. Problems for persons when they can't protest norms, can't compare experiences and are active in their own subjugations
5. How it’s not needs or feelings that explain actions but the stories we situate our lives in.
6. Ascending vs descending analyses of power, how techniques of power are most developed, most visible and most vulnerable to influence at the local level.
7. How subjugated knowledges make visible the history of struggle
8. Helping people generate alternative stories challenges techniques of power, is political and establishes a history of alternative knowledges.

We will consider implications for practice at every point, but participants should be clear that the basis for these excursions is an academic lecture. This will not be a ‘lightweight’ workshop, but participants should emerge with a clearer understanding about these ideas and how they fit together and support certain practices. It should help those who themselves teach these subjects with confidence and a breadth of knowledge. Bring something to make notes on!

*Mark Hayward, UK, family therapist in NHS funded family therapy agency.*

# Mauricio P. Yabar Minor-Attracted Persons Have Alternative Stories, Too

In a society that often shies away from discussing sexuality, it comes as no surprise that the subject of “Pedophilia” has generally been neglected in professional contexts, including helping professions. According to recent studies, minor-attracted persons comprise a significant number of the general population. However, due to misinformation, attitudes toward pedophilia are overwhelmingly negative. In clinical settings, prejudice and scarcity of accurate information leads to an absence of therapeutic support and humane interventions. Consequently, many minor-attracted persons opt not to participate in therapy. Professionals’ unwillingness to seek out knowledge and provide therapeutic support to minor-attracted persons leaves these individuals vulnerable to isolation, depression, and suicide. It is critical that scholars and mental health practitioners take interest in this topic. By doing so, we can learn more about pedophilia and the experiences of minor-attracted persons, while also contributing to public understanding and, ultimately, reduced rates of child sexual abuse. I propose the use of postmodern philosophy and, more specifically, narrative therapy practices to effectively work with minor-attracted persons. Because of its non-judgmental perspective, narrative therapy has the potential to assist practitioners comprehend the experiences of minor-attracted clients, while supporting them rewrite their stories and living realities.

*Mauricio P. Yabar, LCSW, M.Ed., CST (USA Denver, CO). Sex Therapy and Social Work. Has a private practice (Narrative Conversations Denver)*

# Merve Koca & Busra Yazici Narrative Therapy Practices with Turkish Youth

We have started to think about how we can use narrative ideas since we had narrative therapy training as psychologists who work in Turkey. Within this period, collective narrative practices like Tree of Life have guided us. We’ve asked two questions based on narrative practices that we had read, learnt and practiced. First, “How can we use narrative methods properly to fit in our culture?” and secondly, “How can we provide a position where young people can express themselves comfortably?”. As a result of these questions, we made two collective narrative practices which are named “Resilience on the Go” and “Our Growing Flower: Willpower”.

**Resilience on The Go:** this work consists of 6 parts that all take the shape of the journey metaphor. This practice provides us an opportunity to talk about where we come from, our history, knowledge and skills, hopes and dreams, schools, families, friends and special people in our lives. Participants primarily consist of individual life maps called “intelligent navigation system”. Thus, the sources mentioned above are made visible and strengthened. Later, while the group friendship was provided with the road friendship metaphor and at the same time with the Road Songs the session became more fun.

**Our Growing Flowers:** Willpower: In this work willpower is thought as a growing flower. All participant(s) got (to) know each other and they determined the group rules in the first session. After stating the group aim, “collective timelines” practices were used and with this practice they could link their current situation with their past and their cultures. In the second session willpower was discussed metaphorically. In this ongoing session, the aim is to learn the meaning of willpower and anxiety in the life of the members of the group, to strengthen the skills of coping with difficult times and to discover the functional points of the unique results, in the dominant stories about willpower and anxiety by asking the questions of externalization. In the later sessions, metaphors and beautiful words such as pots, soil, flowers, shovels, water, window-sun, insects, seeds are used.

*Büşra Yazici (Turkey), a developmental psychologist, working with kids and young people. Works with Turkish people in a school and with Syrian refugees in a Turkish NGO.*

*Merve Koca, (Turkey), a Clinical Psychologist, works with young people as a school counselor.*

# Mònica Florensa-Biescas & Mariangels Ferrer-Duch On-Line Narrative Supervision Group TTT: PracTice, PracTice, PracTice

When the practice of Narrative Therapy and Community work is very limited in your context the risk of practicing in isolation increases. In such cases disillusion, insecurity and the tendency to practice in a more structuralist style can take hold of the preferred narrative ways of working.

The idea of linking isolated professional lives was born from the experience of one to one supervision. In 2016 we developed a way to create a community of “narrativists” for Spanish practitioners. This extended to practitioners working using the Spanish language base all over the world. Inspired by the face to face group supervision of Hugh Fox in Manchester, UK, we co-created with the participants a similar structure adapted to the new technologies and to the culture and langue of different Spanish speaking practitioners. This practice was about connection instead of exposure and more recently is developing to both scaffolding of learning and case presentations for supervision.

In this workshop we will be presenting the protocol that we are using in our groups which includes collective documents, reflections on readings and pracTice, pracTice, pracTice (from the words of Michael White). We expect the workshop participants to learn about our experience that can be replicated in different languages. We will invite the audience to be Outsider Witness of our presentation and respond according to the principles of narrative therapy.

*Mònica Florensa-Biescas (Spain) , psychologist specialized in Narrative Therapy and Community Work, works with older people (especially those with dementia) and their families. Psychologist of the Platform of People Affected by Mortgage (PAH) in Lleida (support to individual cases and to the community).*

*Mariangels Ferrer-Duch (Spain), trained as a Narrative Therapist having completed the inaugural Master of Narrative Therapy and Community Work (Dulwich Centre/University of Melbourne), Clinical Psychologist and Family Therapist. Currently a joint director of Riverbank Psychology.*

# Monica Whyte My Nest is Full: Subaltern narratives of families living with or recovering from addiction

Models of therapy within the addiction field for affected family members are premised on the family member who is a spouse, partner or child. Yet what we are seeing in practice are clients returning to elderly parents and siblings. I am interested in facilitating the subjugated narratives of this cohort of clients to emerge. These are the voices of ‘the family’ that are seldom heard beyond the realms of services themselves. Subjugated and marginalized narratives are the focus of this workshop. The With-ness that we are situated in with our clients will be presented from an emic (insiders view). In presenting my work I have begun to look at the idea of curating, presenting clients narratives as a curated body of work that our participants can interact with, facilitating the narratives to emerge raw and without too much mediation from me. I have begun to use 4D Immersive concepts in presenting my work. This is social constructionism in action within the space of the workshop but also maintains a strong ethical position encapsulated in the words of Imelda Mc Carthy “To imagine the life of another is to embrace an ethical stance towards the other” (Mc Carthy 2002 p.10)

*Monica Whyte, a systemic family therapist (Ireland). Working in a Health Service Executive (HSE) specialist alcohol addiction unit. Supervises on the Masters in Systemic Psychotherapy programmes in the Clanwilliam Institute and the UCD School of Medicine & Medical Science in Dublin.*

# Nawal Aboulhosn Helping youth in the Juvenile system turn the page

For youth with complex mental health needs entering the realms of trouble from substance use to criminal activities, the juvenile system can further complicate the matter and have a profound and devastating effect. Such placement can exacerbate youth’s mental health symptoms and especially youth with past traumatic experiences history.

Taking the time to engage and inform youth is a key element in treatment for a positive change. Youth telling their stories and having the opportunity to rewrite their stories, put them at the center of articulating, prioritizing and determining the best ways to address their needs. Youth rewriting their stories open the doors for success lead by positive choices exacerbated by already exciting yet buried and ignored positive outcomes.

This presentation anticipates:

1. To raise awareness about the importance of engaging and empowering youth in their treatment after being involved in the Juvenile system.

2. To focus on the importance of establishing therapeutic rapport with youth.

3. To extract strength experiences and positive outcomes.

4. To teach youth to be their own advocate for change: holding on to positive outcomes to be able to build on them and overcome existing challenges (engagement, involvement, and disentanglement).

*Dr. Nawal Aboulhosn (USA), graduate from Barry University of the United States, specialization in Marriage and Family Counseling. In private practice for over twenty years. A licensed practitioner in Florida and in Alabama, licensed to practice mental health, Family and Marriage Counseling, Substance Abuse Professional, and a Certified Counselor Sexual Offenders Specialist.*

# Ovidiu Gavrilovici & Aliona Dronic Is there something of merit in the “rites of passage experiences”?

Blumenkrantz promotes the „rite of passage experiences” (ROPE) concept and this is embraced in a European funded Erasmus+ project (YOU-ROPE) in Italy, Greece, Spain and Romania. Psiterra Association is collaboratively exploring with young adults and professionals the migration of identity towards adulthood using narrative approaches. The workshop is narratively connecting the participants via the “Something of Merit” experience with personal conclusions on their transformative events and contexts conducive to adult preferred identities. The second part of the workshop invites the conclusions and messages of participants in narrative facilitated conversations and practices from Iasi, Romania. A final reflection will render possible crafting a reverberating message to the Iasi co-researchers by the workshop participants.

*Ovidiu Gavrilovici (Romania), Ph.D., associate professor at the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iasi and president of Psiterra Association – a professional psychological association promoting narrative approaches. Cllinical psychologist trained in Ericksonian, systemic, and narrative therapy.*

*Aliona Dronic (Romania), MA, licensed psychotherapist with private practice. Vicepresident of Psiterra Association – a professional psychological association promoting narrative approaches. Trained in couples and family systemic therapy and currently is involved in narrative therapy training held by Hugh Fox from Institute of Narrative Therapy, UK".*

# Paul Castelijns The ValueSpectrumScan: an innovative dialogical survey tool

In this workshop, we will explore the theoretical and methodical understanding of the ValueSpectrumScan (VVS) and experience its effects through practice.

The ValueSpectrumScan is a dialogical instrument that supports value-based practice. It is currently being used in individual and group sessions with people in search of change in their professional lives, due to relational friction or burn-out.

It aims to establish a joint exploration that centers values and relationships, unveiling a landscape of commonality and diversity. The VSS invites people into a position of consideration and curiosity, shaping new and valuable interactions and enabling therapists, coaches and social workers to quickly discover powerful, rich, and hopeful stories. Curious? Welcome!

*Paul Castelijns is a systemic psychotherapist and psychologist with a strong interest in dialogical, collaborative and narrative practice. He works as a member of staff at the Interaction – Academy based in Antwerp.*

# Ricardo Ramos & Ramón Carrillo Between fate and freedom: story, conversation and event

The Problem Saturated Story, that is supported by the monological conversations taking place in the System Determined Problem, restraints the client´s possibilities of thinking, feeling and acting. But both, story and conversations, are processes in progress New events looking for meaning and connections are always happening in the client’s life.

The ways of giving meaning to an event are related to a) the epistemological background; b) the emotional impact the event has on the professionals; c) the communicational distance from the event. The distance conveys an event without details and personal implications, as an “echo”.

The therapist should work with the family linking the new events in a therapeutic “Story not yet told”, following the logics often narrative structure. But, at the same time, he/she should work with the professional network sending them information (reports and so) able to expand the conversations they have simultaneously with the family, following the argumentative structure of the conversation.

Based on a case, we’d like to show and discuss ways of choosing transformative events, able to build up a freeer story for the family, and conveying echoes of these events to the network ,able to recruit more open conversations to support it.

*Ricardo Ramos, Dr (Spain): Psychiatrist, Family Therapist, Supervisor in Family Therapy, Coordinator of the Human Communication Laboratory of the Psychotherapy Unit of the Hospital de la Santa Creu and Sant Pau de Barcelona*

*Ramón Carrillo (Spain): Psychologyst, Family therapist, Director of CEPFAMI ( family therapy center) in Barcelona, member of the human communication laboratory in Hospital de la Santa Creu y Sant Pau de Barcelona*

# Robert van Hennik & Luc Van den Berge Luc and Robert Dance

“Something is happening and you don’t know what it is, do you mr. Jones?” (B. Dylan)

We offer a pop-up place in which participants share experiences of events during the conference. We’d like to reflect on each other’s experiences of resonance, transport and becoming in many improvisational and performative ways that open up new ways of living together, differently. Come and join this improvisational dance with us, something will happen, even when we don’t know what it really is.

*Luc Van den Berge (Belgium) is a philosopher and systemic and narrative therapist and supervisor who works in a child and adolescent mental health service as a therapist and in a private practice as a supervisor.*

*Robert van Hennik (The Netherlands) is narrative family therapist and he works in an institution of youth mental health and in Euthopia, center for systemic therapy, training and supervision*.

# Sabine Vermeire Genograms and timelines at the kitchen table: a journey through past, present and future with tea, sugar cubes and coffee spoons

Serious problems, difficult transitions, radical changes or traumatic events intervene strongly in families and family relationships. These obstacles or constraints often activate old or silenced family histories. The background of relationships, experiences, events, ideas, opinions, and habits in a family can then especially generate supportive as well as suppressive stories and meanings. During episodes of radical transition, they sometimes offer possibilities to respond to unavoidable obstacles, but they can also burden the family members or make them feel stuck. I want to give a taste of the possibilities of visualisations with families during heavy life periods or difficult transitions using materials that literally can be found at the kitchen table. The visualizing of stories of their past, present and future is not intended to gather information or to detect or even explain “family pathology”. Rather, it is about exploring how respectfully and playfully working with genograms and timelines can open new stories and perspectives on difficulties and confusions and reveal new possibilities for action.

*Sabine Vermeire works as a trainer, psychotherapist and supervisor in Systemic, Narrative and Collaborative Therapy at the Interactie-Academie vzw Antwerp (Belgium). Her expertise is on children, youngsters and families in difficult contexts (attachment problems, violence, abuse, psychiatric problems and trauma) and working in creative ways when speaking becomes difficult.*

# Sara Portnoy, James McParland and Mieke Van Daele Crossing Borders, Linking lives through collective song writing

We will share our practice and learnings from co-creating a song with a group of young people who have a diagnosis of Cancer at University College Hospital in London. Within a few hours a number of individuals became a group through documenting their hard won knowledges in this creative way. Everyone contributed, some used words and helped create lyrics; others used music and created melody or rhythm. They have consented to us sharing their wonderful song.

This workshop will invite participants to connect to their relationship with song and melody and to learn about the main principles of collective narrative song and poetic documents.

We invite people to bring instruments, if you have them!

# Stephen Madigan Narrative Therapy Informed Relational Interviewing with Conflicted Couple Relationships

Stephen Madigan will present new narrative theory, practice and supervision ideas on working relationally with conflicted couple relationships. The workshop articulates Relational Interviewing through post-structuralism and demonstrates the practice through the use of unaltered session transcripts and a variety of couple therapy video’s filmed in Canada and Norway.

*Stephen Madigan MSW, MSc, PhD is an award-winning narrative therapist, best-selling author, training for the Vancouver School for Narrative Therapy, content director of narrative therapy’s largest online interactive training site TCTV.live, and full-time supervisor consultant with Norway's National Couple Conflict team and Trondheim’s High Conflict Clinic team.*

# Suzy MacKechnie Moving beyond ‘diagnosis and treatment’ towards ‘pain as testimony and purposive action in unjust circumstances’ when working with Children and Adolescents.

I will describe my experience of working as a clinical psychologist and narrative and family therapist in mainstream mental health services for children and young people in the UK, where a diagnostic understanding of problems is ‘the air that we breathe’ and how this can ‘clash’ with the ethics of a narrative approach.

Presentation of one or two young people’s stories, using therapeutic documents and/or session excerpts will illustrates how using narrative ideas and maps (including externalising and exploring the ‘absent but implicit’ values) helped us to find ‘small and ordinary’ ways to dismantle pathologising descriptions together and to create more contextualised narratives of problems with clearer possibilities for action.

The context and discourse map will then provide a brief exercise to help participants consider the dominant discourses in their own work places/lives, the effects of these discourses, what any distress or discomfort in their response might mean about their own ethics and how they might take action in response. An opportunity will be given to write a response as an ‘outsider witness’ to be taken back to the young people whose stories have been heard.

*Suzy MacKechnie: worked as a Clinical Psychologist and Family therapist with young people and their families in the NHS, and Australia for 23 years. First encountered narrative ideas during intensive courses at the Dulwich Centre, Adelaide with Michael White in 1999.*

# Sylvia London The wisdom of communities

Following the postmodern turn, reflecting processes and reflecting teams, as introduced by Tom Andersen and The Tromso Group in Norway invited family therapists to open the consultation room moving from the individual to the collective.

From a post-structural perspective Michael White and David Epston within the Narrative tradition included Outsider Witnesses and the work of Barbara Myerhoff to extend the conversation beyond the individual to the community

On the other hand, Adalberto Barreto in Brasil inspired by Paulo Freire carved a community practice where all members are invited to participate collaborating in the construction of possibilities for all.

Drawing from these three traditions this workshop invites participant to an experience where multiple practices interact and enrich each other to create a community experience for the individual and the collective.

Reflections and discussion addressing ethics and practice will follow the experience.

*Sylvia London M.A., LMFT, therapist, supervisor, consultant and coach founder and faculty Grupo Campos Eliseos, Mexico City.*

# Willem Beckers “A life worth living”: working together with parents of ‘hidden’ adult children

This workshop addresses the collaboration with parents of (young) adult children that have become deeply disconnected from daily life, who often struggle with mental health difficulties and show harmful and self-harming behavior towards their families. Many attempts to offer change or to engage these (young) adults in any form of professional care have fallen short. These parents tend to experience a sense of relational and moral paralysis: they are living in a situation where they are often confronted with violence and coercion but are also trying to hold on to their parental values, deeply worried when considering how change would harm their child’s future well-being. In time, these parents become isolated as well, causing their efforts to vanish into thin air. This workshop aims to emphasize the importance of deconstructing the overall narrative of social erasure with and around these parents. What is a life worth living? What does it mean to be a parent? What does it mean to take care of a child? What space can be created to resist an unendurable impasse? Which social stories provide a leverage for change? And within these various and sometimes even contradictive challenges: what does social and professional support look like?

*Willem Beckers (Belgium), a member of staff and systemic psychotherapist at Interactie-Academie vzw, an institute for systemic practice and theory in Antwerp, Belgium. Specialised in family therapy and social network support in the context of child / young adult psychiatry and family violence.*

# William Madsen Bringing Narrative into the “Real World” of Public Sector Practice

While narrative practice offers a refreshing approach to what public sector practice might look like, it is often dismissed as too lofty and disengaged from the everyday challenges of bringing these practices into daily practice in contexts that are often quite hostile to different ways of thinking. Based on many years of struggling with these dilemmas, this workshop offers ways of reframing narrative / poststructuralist practices in ways that appeal to folks in the trenches who have no interest in “epistemology” while holding true to the values and principles of the change we are trying to make in approaching this work.

# Yael Gershoni &Tali Gogol Ostrowsky Helpful memories -reactivating precious moments to help deal with trauma

Memories play a meaningful part in the stories of our lives, both preferred and problem saturated. One of the painful ways in which trauma forces itself into everyday life is through vivid memories, which isolate people, cutting off their sense of self and relationship. This workshop will present ways to access positive memories, often pushed away and covered by trauma, through therapeutic conversations. It is our experience that this practice is helpful for people during difficult times. The active reengagement with positive memories supports a sense of connection and agency and operates as an antidote to haunting memories. In this workshop we will present this idea, and the ways in which it can contribute to therapeutic conversations through an example from Yael's work. Participants will be invited to experience this practice through an exercise.

*Yael and Tali (Israel) practice and teach family and narrative therapy in Israel.*