

Breakthrough to the Essence from the Daseinsanalytic Point of View

An example from practice

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Abstract

If there are any sciences that need to reflect on their philosophic-ontological premises, over and beyond their purely ontic foundations of experience, it is psychotherapy and the related psychology, sociology, and biology. In Daseinsanalysis, it is all about the genuine foundations of being human, human Dasein together with others as Being-in-the-World. Daseinsanalysis raises the question concerning the Being of human beings, and the meaning of Being altogether.

Being-human in Daseinsanalysis:

It is shocking what harm has been imposed on mentally ill people in the course of history, states Ludwig Binswanger in his book “The Human Being in Psychiatry”: persecuted, burned, incarcerated, chained, tortured in closed baths, etc., the old psychiatric hospital near the university of Vienna (built in 1784), popularly called “Tower of Fools”, where such treatments were carried out, reminds us of this. Mental patients still are, and even more so now, the ‘object’ of multiple forms of research. Successful treatment depends on whether the human being is understood as a human being, what it means to-be-healthy and what to-be-ill.

Although the human being is the topic of numerous sciences to do with humanity, such as biology, psychology, sociology, anatomy, brain physiology and others, as specialized sciences they do not offer the appropriate understanding of the human being in the wholeness and uniqueness of being-human, and in therapeutic practice. Only a corresponding anthropology and philosophy offer the proper understanding. It is their task to reveal and make accessible, in a phenomenological-anthropological reflection, the grounds and premises of the world they live in, and in which any science of the human being is rooted. Whosoever feels that we can do without philosophical-anthropological reflection has not left anthropology and philosophy behind, but is tied uncritically to their anthropological prejudice.

When we ask what it means to be human, or about the *ek-sistence* of human beings, one should remember that the human being can in no way be perceived »as a spe-