

## The essence of Daseinsanalysis

PhDr. Ales & Dr. Sarka Wotruba

The main contribution of the Zurich School of Daseinsanalysis to psychotherapy of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is a thorough philosophical reflection on the very essence of human being by means of *deconstruction* of the until then prevalent *metapsychology* concepts.

In the late sixties, the *American Psychological Association (APA)* selected *Medard Boss* as the recipient of the precious award for “*Great Therapists*”. The award was granted for his unusually innovative approach to the field of psychotherapeutic praxis. On the basis of his phenomenological approach, *Boss* succeeded in re-formulating all central psychoanalytic termini in fundamentally new ways.

His voluminous opus “*Foundations of Medicine and Psychology*” (1979) formulates all his findings on the basis of not more than one single case. (i. e., one patient). At that time, his consistent and persistent application of the phenomenological approach led to a radical departure from the prevailing hard-core, scientific requirement for statistical data from large samples of patients and statistical tests.

Unfortunately, the discussion of everyday daseinsanalytic practice has rather stagnated since *Boss* passed away. In the subsequent three decades, the emphasis has been rather on philosophical implications, and these are becoming more and more the sole source of our school’s identity. The novice daseinsanalyst is preparing for his handicraft primarily by lectures of *Heideggerian* writings and by being practically coached by his training analyst(s). Although as a rule professional psychotherapeutic practice still remains an individual one, in some countries the originally individually based training / (Lehr-) analysis has been completely replaced or substituted by solely self-experiencing group therapy.

In Zurich, the city of our roots, daseinsanalytic education has been completely abandoned by the university for decades and substituted by neuropsychology and other, strictly scientific disciplines. Philosophical reflection, which constitutes our professional identity and activities, is no longer welcome. New candidates for daseinsanalytic training have no choice than to study in institutes, which struggle for official state recognition. Our completely privatized Daseinsanalysis suffers from lack of financial funding as well as staffing, with dire consequences for both patients and