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REWRITING THE BIRTH STORY-the Metaphorical Process
A way to create change over life perspective and to heal birth trauma
Minneapolis, 2016

Ramona Andrei

REWRITING THE BIRTH STORY

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THE BIRTH STORY©-THE METAPHORICAL PROCESS
Minneapolis, 2016

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Texts are part of the book "Rewrite the Birth Story".

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About the Birth Story ©

Being a holistic being involves that any thought, any idea, any perspective comes and reflects from that unique lifestyle of the person. I used imagination as a gate towards the unconscious mind that nevertheless gives a direction to life through this unique set of beliefs and paradigms that the lifestyle implies.

The therapeutic process of working with the Birth Story was born out of working with the metaphor-recollection, the way Richard Kopp has exposed and introduced in adlerian psychotherapy (Metaphor Therapy: Using Client-generated Metaphors in Psychotherapy, Richard Kopp, 1995, Psychology Press).

What we call a recollection is actually a sensory and emotional imprint (based on the *cause*-the sensorial message that influences the body- and the *effect*-the emotional reaction→ putted together into an image) that reflects the way the individual choose to look at the event, himself, others and life.

The Birth Story process is a meta-metaphor of the relationship with life, of the subjective perception (and most of the times irrational and non-conscious) of the place we chose when we entered life, of the relationship with resources, with people and not least...an image of the meta-expectations we have.

Every image is a bridge towards our unique set of beliefs and perceptions about life. What we are is the result of the beliefs, the paradigms, the expectations and the perceptions we have about our self, others and life and about the relationships we have with self, others and life.

Any change we'll make at the image's level it will be reflected, just like in a mountain lake's mirror, in our complex and extended mind map. We already know that we use just a very small part of the mind's capacity of interconnectedness and development; the Birth Story is our chance and challenge to extend this mind map integrating our full potential, allowing us to access resources that are available but not trained yet. That is so because, although we really believe that we know (almost) all about our self, most probably we know

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only what we have already accepted as truth about us and our life. And what we know is what we ARE!

Introducing the birth story in therapy

The Birth Story is a metaphorical therapeutic process that helps in creating alternatives at the mind's level, due to the vivid way of exploring and awareness of body sensations and emotional reactions

The Birth Story© is the metaphor of the relationship with life. The Birth Story© is the story that was written in our minds, based on the information, experiences and significances collected during our life path, starting with that first moment of individuality -the conception- and usually ending with the first contact with our mother. Our life story is not ending there of course (there may be many other significant moments, that can be integrated during an individual therapeutically process) but this is the original moment that contains the impression of what you decided to believe in about you, others and life. Alfred Adler calls this „the lifestyle”.

Because life is created at the mind's level, it is there that it can also be changed. Working with the Birth Story we will not change the past but will change the way the client defines the present. Changing the present perception, it is the future that changes, because the person- the one writing it- is CHANGED.

Since the memory center and the imagination center are almost overlapped at the brain's level, all we remember is just a metaphor, a sensorial and emotional image of what we decided to take out of life from a certain moment in life and transform into beliefs.

Every image is a bridge towards the unique set of beliefs and perceptions about life. What the person is, is the result of the beliefs, the paradigms, the expectations and the perceptions he/she has about himself, others and life and about the relationships between the self, others and life. Any change he'll make at the image's level it will be reflected, just like the sky map reflected in a mountain lake's mirror, in his complex and extended mind map.

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Using the Birth Story process will help in identifying the client's fundamental beliefs about life, self and others, setting a ground for a life-style assessment, but even more can bring non-conscious information from the body, as my experiences with this process showed. The images that come from the pre-conscious period are more sensorial and based (as images) on the life experiences from the post-conscious period (after the left-hemisphere activation). The practice shows that the mind accesses the sensorial signals (even mother's emotions that create a body reaction to the unborn child) and stores them, as a way to understand and integrate life experience and the mind creates images to explain the sensorial information, based at this stage, that we are collecting them, on the added images collected.

The process proved it's usefulness and relevance not only in birth trauma or pregnancy trauma, releasing the trauma through changing the feelings, the mind's view over what has happened, without altering the challenging conditions, but it worked also in changing basic lifestyle treats that influence the relationship of the client with life, with female/male figures, the self-image and self-value. From *"I feel like I wish I do not exist...I feel their shame. Actually this was my life story...I've always wanted to be seen but always hoping not to be noticed. I came from sin."* to *"I choose to relax, expand and accept their fears. I focus on the environment. I want to discover. I sent them live and this makes me feel relaxed and joyful"* ...the story can start with an emotional message received or perceived and change into any assumed will to have a better life.

An important part of how the process is made to be effective is using the imagination "as if..." which creates at the mind's level an impression similar to a real one (a lived one) and helps in generating **new patterns of reaction** (mental, emotional and sensorial) by adding the power of image to the power of feelings.

Another important part of the process is the guidance, that is always about *"what can you change about you...how you feel, how you think, how you express"* which empowers the client to take full responsibility for his own life. The guidance is always leading towards *"what you can do for you to be better"*.

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PREPARATION

Creating the connection with the body and a relaxation premisis.

Creating a connection with the body, for a client that works this kind of metaphorical and imagination based process can help in bringing authentic feelings and sensation, that will connect directly and with no interference or filtering, with the body memory. Breathing, focusing on the senses, can open a space of awareness in client's mind and enhance the effect of imagination but in the same time anchoring to the lifestyle, not to fantasy.

An alternative guidance would be :

"Allow yourself to breath naturally, feeling and observing every breath-in and every breath-out. Observe for a few moments your breathing (2, 3 breathing cycles), feeling the way the air goes in and out at the nose level...With a deep inhale, bring along with the air also your attention inside and let it be there for a few moments and explore...

How does the inside space feels like?

What moves inside (there can be subtle fluctuant sensations, muscle pains, warm/cold sensations, pulsations, feelings...or any other movement inside)?

...then, like in a dance, along with an exhale, bring this attention point outside (you cannot be wrong if you stay connected with your body ; just let the mind to observe, without judgment or interpretation)...and let the mind to observe and feel (with the eyes closed) also the outside...

How do you feel the outer space?

What do you hear?

What comes from the outer space? (vibrations, feelings, sensations, sounds, images, etc.)

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What can you perceive from a far distance /beyond the room you are in? (again don't judge and do not interpret any of these feeling and sensations)

...then, with a deep inhale, come back inside and notice what is new or different there...maybe the way you breath...or the way a part of your body feels like...or a sensation?...or a state of mind? Try not to interpret, to label or to judge!

Once you got all this awareness over your body, allow to your attention to „drop” in that part of the body that you feel now as being the „center of your being”...and breath into this point so that, with every breath your attention is more and more stable and set into this center.

From this point of consciousness, I invite you to step into the story!

THE STORY...

You are there, in that specific moment when a cell from your mother meets a cell from your father and for the first time in this life you exist as a Whole...

What is that you see in this moment? (let the images to be born and trust the process, knowing that the imagination comes from the very same place like any other thought you have)

What colors do you see?

What do you feel?

How do you feel the space that surrounds you?

For the first time in this world you exist as an individual being and you are a cell with its own identity...

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Pieces of story...and changes

Story #1

(You are in that moment when a mother's cell unites with a father's cell and for the first time in this life you are a whole ... what do you hear? What do you see?) I feel I arrived from where I left, I am in the experience I need. (How do you feel?) I have a feeling of confidence although I know I have a long way to go. I feel confident because it is like I would be in front of a door to open and I have a lot of work to do but I know it will be beneficial. (How do you feel your mother?). I do not feel very connected with her, I feel I was somehow a surprise for her. (How do you feel your father?). I feel him connected, but in a suffocating way, he does not allow me to expand myself. (How do you feel?) It is overwhelming, it is very hard for me to breathe. I am starting not to be so confident, I have begun to question myself if it the right environment. (How does this feel in your body?. It is like a tremble, all my flesh quivers. The sensation is that I am rejected at that time. (What do you see?) I see a wall. (How do you feel when you see this wall?) I become helpless ... as I wonder myself: why do you keep me there? (Where from does this wall come?) From my mother? (What do you see next?) The body disappears, it dissipates ... (As if?) As I would be only cognition. I was fighting and at one point I resigned, I see myself angry, powerless. (And you feel ...?) It is a feeling of overwhelm. (How is that feeling in the body?) In the shoulders and in the hands ... I feel pressure and some kind of immobilisation, sadness that comes in waves and freezes me for a while. (What else do you feel?). Around the heart I feel a big tightness, as I choke but a deeper level than the physical one. (The sensation?) ... of choking, it feels like I am drowning, as if sitting in a balloon and the balloon deflated and choked me. (What do you feel?) I feel quitting, giving up myself ... (What else do you see?), I cannot see more, things changed, there is something incomplete; Apparently I have reached the stage

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where I hardly wait for an environment change. (What do you see next?) I thinned, my body is very mistreated, I do not understand what is going on...

The change of the Story

(And now I invite you to return again to that initial time, when two cells joined and for the first time you exist as a whole. You said you feel you have reached from where you left, that this is the experience you need, and the feeling is one of trust. From this point, knowing that you can change anything, so it may go well, what would you change?). When I feel my mother, I connect with her with very much love. I want to show her all our life. (What is happening when you connect with her with very much love?) She becomes less scared. Belonging emerged. (And this makes you feel ... ?) I feel cheerful. I am a cheer cell. (Let the movie go on. What do you see?) I also see my father. I would connect to him with trust. (What happens when you connect to him with trust?) He becomes more grounded (And this makes you feel?). I feel strong and safe...