

Personal logic

Everybody has a unique way of thinking, evaluating situations and making decisions: our „personal logic“. We have been developing our patterns of thinking all our life and that's why they are conclusive for us – but they are not necessarily „logical“ for others. This has two reasons: On the one hand we're individuals and our mind is unique. On the other hand we always have parts in our thinking which are lies in God's perspective.

When we counsel others, we need to be aware of the following:

- *My personal logic is influencing the way I counsel others.*
The more I am aware of this and am working on my personal „life lies“, the better I can counsel others.
- *In order to help someone, he has to understand the issue in his own personal logic.*
I need to guide the other person through questions so that he can understand the problem himself. Even if I see the problem clearly I often can't communicate that to him because I would explain it with my personal logic he doesn't understand.
- *It is not essential that I fully understand the personal logic of the other person.*
It may happen that his answers make no sense in my eyes. But with a good question from me he can have an „aha experience“ and understand his problem – whereas I still don't really get it.

To mirror

When we counsel someone it is important to use his words because they reflect his personal logic. But if we restate what he said, we mix in our personal logic. Then it's no longer „his own“ and it can happen that he feels misunderstood or even hurt because the words have a totally different impact on him than on us.

In our role as counselors we work out the personal logic of the other person. We look for the words which reflect most his answers on our questions and we make notes of exactly these. We can „mirror“ these answers by repeating them exactly and giving him the possibility to listen again to his thoughts and understand himself better.

By practicing we can learn not to mix in our personal logic, but just „mirror“ the words of the other person back to him. To ensure we listened and repeated correctly, we can ask after every sentence whether we understood everything right.

Practice in groups of two (change roles afterwards):

One takes the role of the counselor and makes notes. The other one thinks of a problem and explains it. The counselor is mirroring it and asking the „what for“ question until it ends in a circle. He is mirroring back each answer. In the end he repeats the situation and all answers and makes sure that he perceived and repeated everything correctly.

Our personal opposites

In our mind we have an opposite for every word and statement. These opposites are again part of our personal logic and differ from person to person.

(Test as a group: What is the opposite of „lonely“?)

To a certain extent we're driven by different aims which motivate us to act. But often it's also the opposites which drive our actions: The negative things we want to avoid.

Practice in groups of two (change roles afterwards):

Ask for a problem and then pose several times the „what for“ question. For every answer also ask „What is the opposite of this?“

Finding a healthy middle

Often our „opposites“ are actually wrong alternatives. To avoid one extreme we end up in the other extreme which is of course not healthy for us. If that is the case it will be visible in the corresponding pair of opposites which drive our actions.

To get out of this unhealthy pattern of thinking and acting we need to become aware of these extremes and find a „healthy middle“: A word (or group of words) which is in a healthy way in between these two opposites and we feel comfortable with. Again it is important that this „healthy middle“ comes out of our own personal logic. A term from „outside“ is often not helpful.

Practice in groups of two (change roles afterwards):

Take a pair of opposites of the other person and write them down on two ends of a sheet of paper. Support him now in finding a „healthy middle“ by asking questions. If he's still not able to find it, you can tell a short creative story: Include two characters with these two extremes and one in between. Now ask the other person to find words and characterize that middle character.

To get out of our wrong patterns of thinking we start with prayer. We name the old pair of opposites as wrong alternatives and ask God to support us so that we don't fall into these two extremes anymore but live in a healthy middle. Then we can take this new middle and put it into the original problem (or any other situation) and think through it: According to that, how can I act now in place of my old behavior?