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Reinforcing goal commitment: Work with personal values in Strategic Behavioral Therapy (SBT)

ABSTRACT

Strategic behavioral therapy (SBT) extends the central goal of behavioral therapy methods about the resource-oriented work with personal values. We first show how a tailored therapy strategy of approbiate treatment goals are developed and how values work must be designed so that concrete goals elaborated in therapy can be tackled powerful and authentic. In the chaos of diffilcult feelings and partial destabilization during a change process, it is always important for patients to keep the thread and to feel clearly why she wants to undergo this demanding situation at all. The internal response to this "why" should be a revitalizing, affectively positive judgement. A strongly perceived personal value is a fixed star, who in the turmoil gives strength and orientation.

Key words: values, goals, self regulation, intrinsic motivation, survival rule.

SBT and values

SBT sees itself as a behavioral therapy which includes the satisfaction of basic psychological needs in its conceptional considerations, and combines the verified efficacy of behavior therapy treatments with the development and personality-psychological findings of psychology (SULZ, 1994; SULZ & HAUKE, 2010; HAUKE, 2006a; HAUKE, 2010). A central aspect of the therapy conception and the practical work is the so-called survival rule. SBT proceeds from the assumption that all behavior is designed to satisfy central basic needs (e.g. for protection, self-determination etc.) and to deal with the consequences of this need fulfillment. In the relationship with significant reference persons we learn to develop modes of need fulfillment which, even under difficult conditions, are meant to guarantee a minimum of what is desired. These modes are represented in cognitive-affective schemata. We describe these as survival rules because they guarantee a minimum of inner balance, i.e. emotional survival. If behavior according to the survival rule corresponds to life on a "flat disc", the therapy is aimed at extending the perspective to a sphere. This is doubtlessly associated with anxiety because first one has to

move to the edge of the disc in order to establish that it does not end abruptly and that one does not fall off, that there is, in fact, a world beyond the horizon. The experience is systematically communicated by a strategy of therapy: patients are supported in gradually contravening their survival rule, which has resulted as the quintessence of what are often painful learning experiences. In an experience-activating process patients learn to give themselves more and more space and gradually loosen the "grip" of the survival rule (HAUKE, 2009a, b). This ultimately leads to the formulation of a "life rule" which considerably expands the hitherto experience space. It forms a thematic corridor for more concrete learning targets (e.g. setting limits, taking pleasure, identifying and showing feelings etc.). As the dissolution of the survival rule triggers anxiety, the new experience can be sought gradually in such a way that the rising anxiety can be carefully contained (HAUKE, 2006c; 2009b). This therapy process is supported by six working modules (Fig. 1):
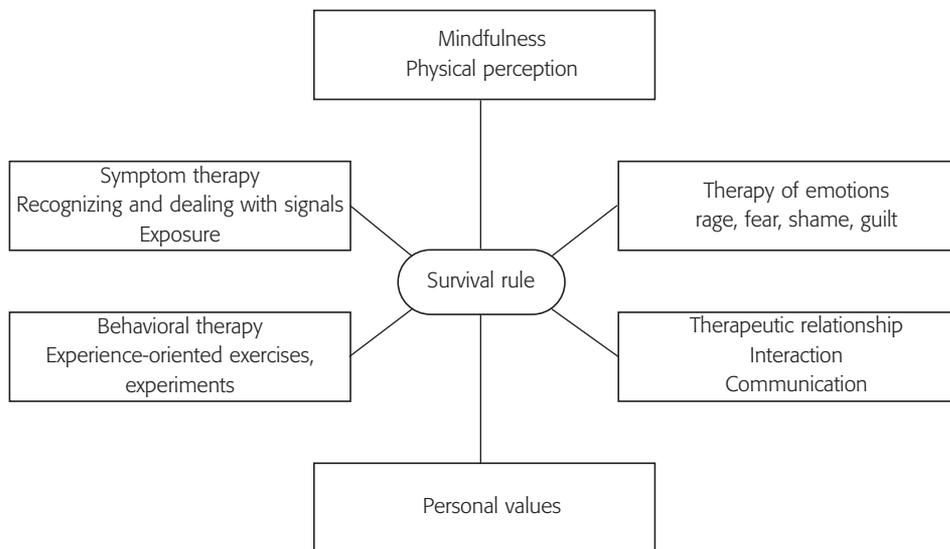
Fig. 1: The six working modules of Strategic Behavioral Therapy (SBT).

For the imminent change processes we regard the work with personal values as an absolutely indispensable module (HAUKE, 2004, 2006b). The change motivation can be very favorably influenced by working with personal values. Approaches up to now combine the desired behavior change with areas of life which are in some way sense-giving, valuable and important to the patient. It is assumed that this increases the reinforcement value of the aspired-to behavior (HAYES, 2004; KANFER ET AL., 2006; HAUKE, 2001, 2006b; TWOHIG & CROSBY, 2008). SBT depends to a large extent on this relationship, but focuses more intensively on personal values as resources. But how can their motivating power be developed and maintained? We want to

show here how value work must be structured in order that the concrete targets elaborated in therapy can be dealt with in a forceful and binding manner. In the chaos of difficult emotions and partial destabilization during a change process, it is always important to keep the red thread and to feel clearly *why* I am subjecting myself to this torture in the first place. The inner answer to this "why" should consist in a vitalizing, affectively positive evaluation. An essential point of our argumentation consists in the fact that it is important and indeed indispensable to deal with the details of new modes of behavior, to deal with the details of the experience and behavior if only for reasons of efficient confrontation or honest acceptance work, e.g. within the framework of microanalyses. This is a kind of "local" perspective. Our module "value work" extends this local, detail-oriented perspective by a global perspective. Struggling in problematic situations, the momentary endurance of difficult feelings and avoidance tendencies is like protecting a boat from keeling over in stormy seas. From one minute to the next, the forces of extreme turbulence and high waves have to be withstood. Nonetheless, the destination of the journey – the global perspective – has to be reached, the set course must be maintained as far as possible. A strongly held personal value is a fixed star which gives me strength and orientation in the turbulences experienced.

In order to make our mode of procedure clear in practice and theory, we would like to present a case example.

Case example: Male patient, recidivist depression, elements of insecure personality.
Claus is a 37-year-old, good-looking man. He came out as a gay a long time ago. He feels well integrated in the gay scene. Professionally, he has had some success as a singer and composer in music and theater but is plagued by self-doubt and suffers major anxieties with psychosomatic symptoms before his performances. For the last three years he has worked as a dramaturge at a theater, but is not happy there as he feels that his actual vocation is music. But at the moment he can no longer fight. He wants to realize and represent something socially and creatively but always has to run away. He has a stable social network which is very important to him, which gives him an anchor in life, and has not been in a relationship for around 3 years because that would be too difficult at the moment. He lives alone in an apartment. "I can hardly sleep anymore, I am constantly thinking of my life which I regard as a mess. Somehow, I just can't make it. I don't have the confidence to demand something, even when I know I am entitled to it. I can only deal with other people in my head, but avoid open confrontations and conflicts. This means that I can only achieve anything in my life with great effort. I am totally unhappy with my professional life, I create nothing, achieve nothing. In my relationships I am full of longing, but extremely insecure."

The patient was born as the second child in the family. Following the still-birth of a boy, the mother wanted another six sons. The patient was born as the middle child of three (2 sisters: +2 years, -2 years). The youngest of the sisters was already unwanted; the parents'

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marriage had been problematic from the start. The patient was a very lively child, his urge to explore regularly brought him into dangerous situations. He soon developed anxieties, e.g. about illness, getting lost, being attacked. He found protection in quickly making himself popular with everyone: women had always liked him, for his mother he was always the golden boy. As his life was always dominated by women, he always had to pander to them, particularly, of course, the mother. His father, a church musician, was always very distanced, his attention only ever granted as a reward for good performance. He can only remember some few choleric fits of the father, otherwise he never showed feelings, would punish or reward arbitrarily. When the patient was 12 years old, the father left the family. In the eyes of the mother all men are zeros, except, of course, her son. He is her anchor, the apple of her eye. Their conversations were always very intimate; he always found it very strenuous listening to her hour-long tirades. She contracted terminal cancer, which put even more pressures on him. At 18 he moved out and went to live with a friend. As a result of this his father disinherits him and his homosexuality is never referred to again. After leaving school he performs civilian service as an alternative to military service. The staid middle-class lifestyle of his friend soon becomes too confined for him and he has fantasies that he has to kill him. This is the start of an unstable existence over ten years. He lives in Paris, Berlin, Hamburg in numerous homosexual relationships.

## Values, goal hierarchy and self-regulation

A positive influence on the change motivation can only be expected if the self-regulation of patients can be oriented in such a way that the desired behavior becomes more frequent and the undesired behavior less frequent until it finally has no reinforcement value and disappears completely. How can values be of any benefit in this? We can understand this better if we understand their importance for self-regulation more exactly.

Mental self-regulation is based on a goal hierarchy (CARVER & SCHEIER, 1998; 2001) (see also Fig. 2).

In the goal hierarchy, the lower levels have a more concrete orientation. Concrete means here that a goal is visible and reachable and can be realized in the here and now. Accordingly, the attention is focused on the details of the behavior. Thinking on these levels is "narrower" and more linear. This would describe, for example, the state of an individual who is totally immersed in using a tool, playing a video game, breathing consciously or chewing. Here the "how" is at the center of attention.

Development of do-goals: From the survival rule to the life rule.
When therapy begins, concrete problem situations are discussed, selected and imagined with Claus, in order to generate sufficient material for the formulation of the survival rule.
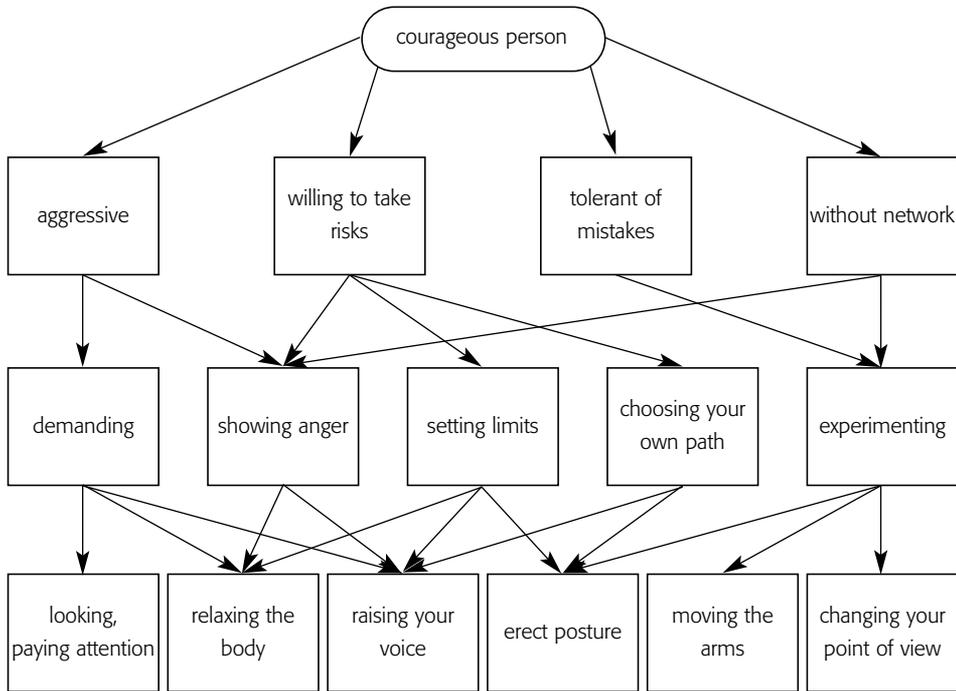
Fig. 2: A goal hierarchy

These are social situations from his private and working life. Usable material can only be gained if it is possible to work in an emotionally activating manner. The procedure for this is described in detail elsewhere (HAUKE, 2009 a, b, 2010). Therapist and patient work together to sort the experiences. For this purpose SULZ (1994, 2006) recommends the following syntax:

Only if I always …………………………….
(dysfunctional behavior)
and if I never …………………………..
(forbidden rage or desire-for impulse)
do I ensure for myself ………………………………….
(central need)
and prevent that ……………………………….
(central anxiety)

Thus the following **survival rule** was developed for Claus:
Only if I always make sure to be friendly and cooperative and attentive to the mood of others,

and if I never say anything wrong, express my own wishes, reject the demands of others, provoke displeasure in others,

do I ensure for myself the chance of being accepted, that people like to meet me and want to be with me

and prevent that someone acts aggressively towards me, prevent myself being cast out and rejected.

The patient is instructed in systematic observation in order to test the validity of his survival rule in a wide range of everyday situations. This phase also serves to define the survival rule more precisely as necessary. The sharpening of physical perception by attention exercises makes the strenuous and restrictive character of the survival rule in everyday experience especially clear.

In the next step Claus learns with the aid of experience-activating work what it is like to loosen the grip of his restrictive survival rule and to give himself space. Against the background of this experience, he is ultimately stimulated to formulate a life rule:

I permit myself, not always to be friendly, not always to switch on the radar. I can say something wrong if I want, talk nonsense …

I would like to get to know and express my needs, set limits and reject work orders, learn to consciously feel anger and to express it step by step.

I would like to examine more precisely whose appreciation is truly important to me, then separate the wheat from the chaff: always trying to gain appreciation is much too strenuous, I can take criticism, I can't like everybody.

I would like to learn to expose myself to the displeasure of others, I want to risk not being liked 100 % of the time.

The targets in the sense of the do-goals are now formulated.

Abstract, on the other hand, means that the details of the immediate, sensually perceptible are not so important. Being a "courageous person" describes the essential, a class, but does not establish either precise characteristics or certain actions and approaches. That only happens in the top-down direction. Thought processes refer to the wider implications of behavior. Here it is not so much the "how", but more the "why" of a behavior which plays the essential role. Past, present and future aspects are put in relation to each other. The interpretation of an event integrates this in the context of more general structures. In this way events and experiences are linked with each other and, for example, put in relation to the desired values through which the self is defined. This construction process also provides meaning (SCHMITZ & HAUKE, 1993, 1994, 1999; HEINE ET AL., 2006). Accordingly, the thought process is more "interlinked" and not linear. In figure 2 the highest level would be represented by an ideal self-image of want-

ing to be a "courageous person". The output for the next level is its desired value: to orient one-self in such a way that one corresponds to the ideal self-image. This can be realized by the corresponding value orientations, such as being aggressive, willing to take risks etc. This in turn defines the output for the next lower level, i.e. to act in such a way that one can correspond to the preferred attitudes and values. Examples of activated behavior programs are "showing anger", "experimenting" etc. Then, on the lowest level, the behavior programs, which function here as the desired value, have to be executed with the aid of behavior sequences.
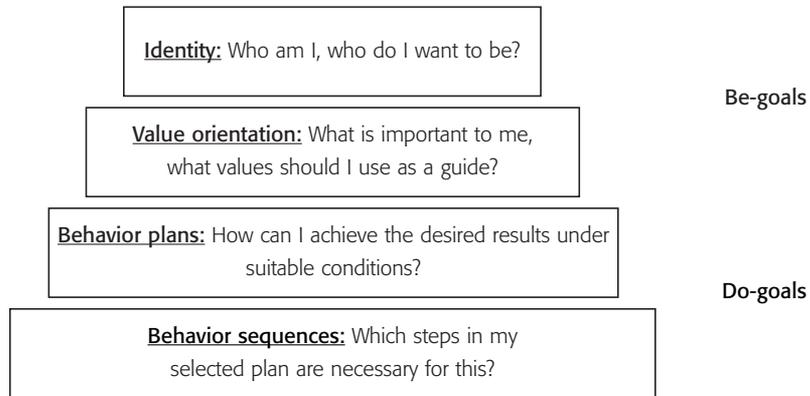
Behavior serves to reduce the perceived difference between the reached and the aspired-to target state. This fundamental operation refers both to motoric goals, e.g. body posture, but also to more abstract goals, such as being tolerant of errors, and even more abstract goals, such as being a courageous person. This feedback control takes place simultaneously on all of these levels. Self-regulation refers here to those strategies with the aid of which the self controls its behavior with respect to certain goals. This includes, for example, the modulation of thoughts and feelings, the activation of suitable modes of behavior and, in particular, of attention control in the interests of goal achievement.

CARVER & SCHEIER (1998) distinguish between four hierarchy levels in the goal hierarchy:
- **System concepts:** These form the head of the hierarchy, e.g. the identity of a person, the ideal self as a "courageous person".
- **Principles:** These are defined by desired values which establish the way in which one wants to achieve the ideal self ("be" goals), e.g. being "willing to take risks". They specify characteristics in the sense of a metascript. Such leading principles can be determined, for example, by personal values.
- **Programs:** These establish a general course of behavior ("do" goals), e.g. "showing anger". The details remain unspecified on this level. This leaves room for decisions and the adaptation to situation-specific circumstances.
- **Sequences:** A course of behavior is already specified on this control level and established by goals of senso-motoric control, e.g. body posture.

With reference to our work with personal values we present this goal hierarchy again as a diagram in Fig. 3:

In the meantime such goal hierarchies have been firmly established in various psychological research disciplines (CARVER & SCHEIER, 1981; VALLACHER & WEGNER, 1987; CROPANZANO ET AL., 1993; BAUMEISTER, 1999; SCHMITZ & HAUKE,1993; TROPE & LIBERMAN, 2003; DESHON & GILLESPIE, 2005; HAUKE 2006a; STORCH, 2009). Some of the concepts differ slightly in terms of the number and names of the hierarchy levels. The common denominator, however, consists in the fact that the degree of abstraction of the goals decreases from the head of the hierarchy (e.g. being a courageous person) to the lower levels (e.g. raising one's voice). The impor-

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Identity: Who am I, who do I want to be?     │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
  ┌───────────────────────────────────────────────┐      Be-goals
  │  Value orientation: What is important to me,    │
  │      what values should I use as a guide?       │
  └───────────────────────────────────────────────┘
 ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
 │  Behavior plans: How can I achieve the desired     │
 │           results under suitable conditions?       │
 └──────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
┌────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐    Do-goals
│  Behavior sequences: Which steps in my               │
│       selected plan are necessary for this?          │
└────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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Fig. 3: The goal hierarchy for the work with personal values.

tant thing about such a behavior concept is that every observable action can be defined on different abstraction levels: it defines who I am in a particular moment, which values I want to give expression to, which plan I choose for this purpose, and how I am going to implement it. More abstract goals are described as "be" goals. These describe the desirability, an attitude, focus on the personally essential and valuable (being a courageous person, willing to take risks). They are cited when we ask people "why do you do that?" Do-goals specify concrete behavioral steps, details, concrete action (choosing one's own path, relaxing the body) and focus more on the question "how do you do that?" How can we categorize the concept of personal values?

The current literature agrees on five definitory characteristics for the value concept. According to this, a value (1) is a conviction which refers to a (2) desirable end state or guideline, (3) is trans-situative, (4) controls the selection of the evaluations of modes of behavior, people and events and (5) is arranged in order of importance in a system of value priorities (SCHWARTZ, 1992, 1994). Formulated in simpler terms: values are desirable, situation-independent goals, whose importance varies and which function as a guideline in human life. They represent an active orientation towards the creation of the most favorable future, i.e. to creating something, building something, realizing something which one regards as "good" or "true". They make putting in the effort worthwhile. These definitory comments again make it clear: values can be regarded as abstract goals and thus assume the position within the goal hierarchy of be-goals, i.e. personal value goals.

Development of Be-goals: Elaboration of personal values.

The validation of his survival rule was for Claus, on the one hand, an encouraging experience. On the other hand, it also made the anxieties very clear which prevented him from yielding more readily to his impulses and realizing his ideas. The observation of the goals

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which resulted from the life rule was quite promising, but also fraught with anxieties as to whether he would be able to handle the process. The prospect of addressing partial goals on a gradual basis did little to change this feeling. Before the start of such an implementation phase it is a good idea to initiate the work with values and thus establish a suitable attitude which helps the subject to take on the strenuous process himself. It is a question of not losing the red thread and of feeling clearly *why* he is exposing himself to these difficulties in the first place:

"Recently you have been actively confronting problems and anxieties in your life. Most people have a source of strength which helps them to confront difficult situations and to master them. This has something to do with the personal values which a person uses as a guide."

Procedure:
- Spread out a cloth, a blanket or a flip chart.
- "Use articles from this room (it may also be articles brought from home) to symbolize what is important and valuable to you in your life (synonym: what is the guiding principle of your life, what your behavior is based on, what gives your life meaning, what you regard as valuable and indispensable, with which you identify strongly and positively)".
- "Spread out these articles and then write down on a piece of paper which value is represented in each case; then place these pieces of paper with the articles."
  "Now take each article, one by one, in your hand and say out loud "I am … (designation of the value) in the life of Claus and I stand for … (information about what effect the value has in the life of Claus). Example: The patient picks up a small bronze figure of a warrior with bow and arrow. "I am the courage in Claus' life and I stand for combat, determination, not giving up despite defeats, clarity and strength."
- "Tell me briefly how you arrived at your values, what is the history of your values? In which situations could you be guided by your values? How have you felt their strength?"

In this exercise there is usually a collection of around five to eight values. Claus names the following values: courage, spirituality, curiosity and creativity, friends, love/partnership, music/singing.

Selection of a behavior goal and determination of the matching value:
This exercise generates a positively charged atmosphere as the patients feel clearly which powerful attitudes they can activate under the guidance of their values. Against this background a behavior goal (do-goal) is selected as well as a value (be-goal) which communicates the appropriate attitude in the realization of the behavior goal.

- "Take a look at your life rule. Which of the aims formulated there would you really like to realize?"
- "Please describe it again!"
- "Values can communicate an attitude which helps to meet challenges in a positive manner. Which of the values in your collection, which value-oriented attitude would you need to realize the selected behavior goal?"

Claus decides on the value "courage" and would like to have a long overdue talk with his boss in this attitude. He wants to talk about extending his job profile in such a way that he would have more to do with music.

Adopting personal values:
Seeing the wood again despite the trees

Claus' planned talk with his boss about his professional position immediately threw up a whole series of detailed questions which put him under huge pressure: How will I start the conversation? What happens if I can't express myself, if I get muddled when he refuses to understand me, or even laughs at me? What is the appropriate framework for such a talk? What should I wear? Oh God, I don't even have a good jacket! Therapists are familiar with such reactions. Thinking about difficult situations on the level of the concrete do-goals activates negative feelings and defensive behavior patterns (see also KROSS, AYDUK & MISCHEL, 2005). He is in danger of not being able to see the wood for the trees. Instead of following the patient in his confusion and anxiety, we steer his attention to the level of the abstract be-goals or his personal values (Fig. 2 and 3). How can the strategy be substantiated?

We saw how in the goal hierarchy the goals differ in their degree of abstraction on the different levels. Accordingly, goals can also be mentally represented on differently abstract construal levels. In addition to this, representatives of Construal Level Theory (CLT) make an even greater differentiation in terms of the importance of these different construal levels for behavior (e.g. TROPE & LIBERMAN, 2003). They have shown that more abstract constructs with global significance (high construal level) have a favorable influence on the successful self-regulation, while constructs with exclusively more concrete significance (low construal level) are more likely to lead to failure of self-regulation (FUJITA, 2008). The quantity of anxiety-triggering detail problems with which Claus was suddenly confronted illustrates this very clearly. In the language of our regulation hierarchy this means that the activation of be-goals or of attitude goals – these correspond to a high construal level – is necessary to ensure the success of self-regulation. In other words, we could say that self-regulation is favorably influenced when the perception mechanism sets the zoom in such a way as to eliminate the details from the field of vision and

the whole again becomes visible so that the patient can again see the proverbial wood despite the trees (e.g. the courageous person). It is precisely this focus which is generated by the activation of personal value goals.

Here are some of the empirically verified effects:
- People show considerably more self-control, are better able to resist acute temptations and block unintended inclinations, if they assume their attitude or their value orientation in advance, i.e. when they clarify why they want to do something (FUJITA, TROPE, LIBERMAN, & LEVIN-SAGI, 2006).
- Focusing on the abstract goal (e.g. I am a courageous person) does not only reinforce the capacity to resist temptations. It also clearly gives rise to a negative attitude towards the distracting stimuli (FUJITA & HAN, 2009).
- The more abstract perspective can also generate a more distanced perspective to the self. If people are encouraged to describe themselves on a more abstract, i.e. less detailed level, then they become less conscious of themselves for the moment of inner contradictions and conflicts, which is why they report a feeling of greater clarity in themselves (WAKSLAK & TROPE, 2009). This is, of course, a good starting point if people want to face up to certain challenges. Starting off with harmony and clarity is certainly better than if the course of action is undermined from the start by unclarity and gnawing doubts.
- A more abstract construal level also seems to help in dealing with new experiences. New information, after all, has to be integrated in existing knowledge structures in order to be understood. This process can be supported by more abstract and globally oriented processing (FÖRSTER, 2009).
- Reflection on central personal values changes the perspective. The participants in a study (the control group was instructed to reflect on the least important values) described activities in a more pointed manner in terms of their effects on superordinate targets and were better able to join up visual input to form a whole (WAKSLAK & TROPE, 2009). Reflection on important values, i.e. abstract principles, with which something essential is accentuated and exposed obviously allows us to change the zoom and focus on the big picture: The whole mosaic becomes visible, not only individual, differently colored fragments. The perception is then obviously adjusted in such a way that patterns and representations can be used which emphasize superordinate, defining elements. Measured on the basis of the cortisol release, reflection on central values also leads to a significant reduction of the stress level (CRESWELL, ET AL., 2005).

The conscious assumption of a value orientation, i.e. a more abstract attitude goal, apparently has a distancing effect. Details which, among other things, trigger stress, and irrelevancies are zoomed out. It becomes clear what exactly is important and valuable over various situations and contexts. This goes beyond the details of a given situation and focuses on superordinate,

identity-dispensing matters. Who are you here, why are you doing this? This distancing is not the same thing as emotional avoidance. As the person is still able to deal with the aversive feelings of an unpleasant situation (KROSS ET AL., 2005; FUJITA, 2008), these are experienced to a tolerable degree, but not avoided. As in the case of avoidance strategies, the emotional reactivity is reduced by distancing. At the same time the person is able to deal with negative feeling, an essential feature of functional emotional approximation strategies. The authors refer to this type of processing as a "cooling down" of the hot mode. They make a distinction between cooled and cold mode. The cold mode would be predominantly abstract and analytical with simultaneously suppressed feelings (KROSS ET AL., 2005).

Generating lightness and a spirit of optimism: harmonization of explicit and implicit motives

Despite a clear reduction in anxiety and confusion, the effect of the selected value-orientation on our patient was initially very weak. Even though he appeared to be thoroughly convinced of his selection and was firmly determined to realize the personal value "courage" as a guiding principle, he had difficulty in developing the right spirit of optimism. Emotionally he felt mainly the load of a necessary obligation fulfillment. One could, of course, say here that everybody has burdensome obligations in life which just have to be fulfilled. This cannot be denied, but nonetheless we want to ask the question whether we have even selected a properly constructed personal value goal. What had happened so far?

The commitment to the personal value goal "courage" was, in a strong sense, a more cognitive, reflective setting of a goal which was verbalized and thus made communicable. Even though a distancing from unpleasant feelings could be observed, there was still an obvious lack of favorably activating influence of the positive feelings. On the one hand the patient was convincing, as it became clear that his personal values are consistent with his self-concept. On the other hand, he did not really feel truly vitalized by his own values and experienced them as a burden. And desire? Does this have to be sacrificed? Thankfully, no. However, the work on the attitude goal "courage" has to be continued. Only when this value goal receives a positive affective tone, can we assume that it will have a vitalizing effect.

In order to understand this more clearly, we have to keep in mind that our behavior is controlled by a dual motivation system: an automatic, non-verbal, desire-oriented, implicit motivation system and a somewhat cumbersome, language-based, socially oriented, explicit motivation goal pursuit system (MCCLELLAND ET AL., 1989; SCHULTHEISS, 2006). **Implicit motives** are usually not conscious and relatively clearly distinguishable from the so-called **explicit motives**, which, however, are conscious. Both types of motive are characterized and compared in Table 1.

| Tab. 1: Comparison of implicit and explicit motives (Brunstein, 2006; Brunstein & Maier, 2005; McClelland et al., 1989)	
Implicit motives	**Explicit motives**
Unconscious, have to be elaborated	Conscious, can be accessed by self-reports, self-attribution
Predict **spontaneous** behavior in open situations	Predict **considered** behavior in structured situations
Predict **long-term** behavior trends	Predict **short-term** behavior
Acquired in early childhood, pre-language	Acquired later in a social context, influenced by the expectations of others
Neuronal-affective basis	Cognitive basis
Implementation requires no self-reflection, no conscious control of behavior	Implementation requires self-reflection and planning, stronger conscious control of behavior
Spontaneous, expressive and joyful	Appear as obligations and targets

Implicit motives describe our basic needs, e.g. attachment, whose fulfillment secures the biological survival of the organism. They are innate and not subject to consciousness. These primarily biological "motive cores" are then further developed and shaped in early learning processes. Learning experiences determine the individual strength of the respective motive. It is assumed that these biographical experiences occur in the pre-language development phase (BRUNSTEIN, 2006). This is why implicit motives are not verbally represented and cannot be registered by "cognitive" talk in therapy. They are more likely to be accessed in an experience-oriented, visual approach. In particular, they lead an unconscious own life, appear effortless, spontaneous and impulsive. No conscious cognitive or behavioral control is necessary for them to generate activity. They have a direct effect on behavior. **Explicit motives**, on the other hand, are part of our verbally represented knowledge about ourselves. They reflect the **self-images, values and goals** which a person attributes to himself and with which he identifies. They show what concept a person has of his behavior-determining motives (BRUNSTEIN, 2006). Explicit motives thus represent the important, consciously desired values and behavior standards of a person.

If we observe the characteristics in Table 1 it becomes clear that our patient was initially motivated explicitly only by his value goal "courage". His "obligation value" was quite clear, while the adjustment of will to this value appeared strenuous. If we can succeed in combining implicit motives with the explicit orientation "courage", the personal value should appear more joyful and desire-oriented. In Table 1 we can see that in the case of implicit motivation it is a question of experiencing the motivational agent, of process orientation more than of the final goal. This is the responsibility of the explicit personal value.

Various studies have shown that a harmonization of implicit and explicit motives is actually possible (SCHULTHEISS & BRUNSTEIN, 1999; SCHULTHEISS, 2008). However, to achieve this, the explic-

it motive has to be converted to a format which the implicit motives can latch on to. For a better understanding of such findings, SCHULTHEISS (2008) grouped important interconnections in a diagram which we have modified for practical purposes (Fig. 4).
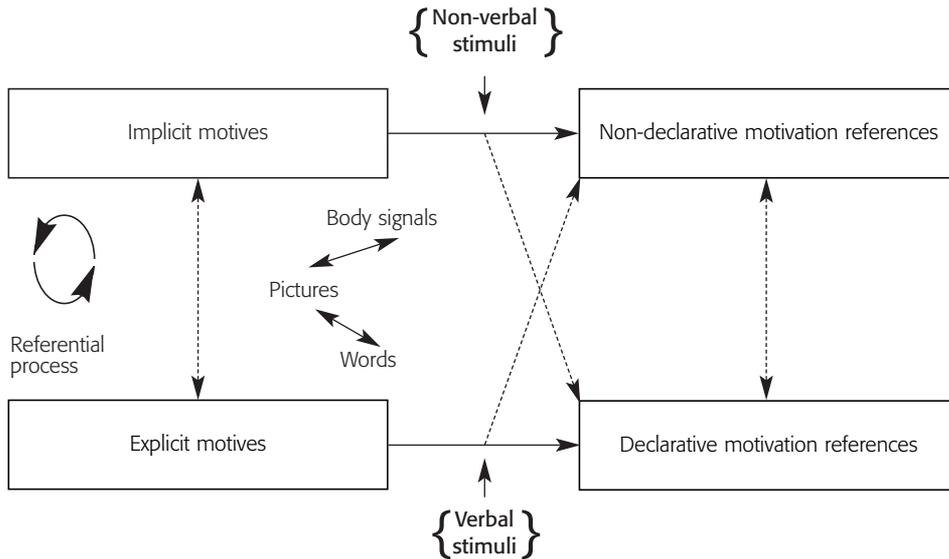
Fig. 4: The referential process combines implicit and explicit motives. Broken lines indicate weak, continuous lines strong correlations (adapted from SCHULTHEISS, 2008; BUCCI, 2002).

As we can see in Fig. 4, implicit motives are triggered primarily by non-verbal stimuli and can only be registered by indicators which are not controlled by the self-image or verbally represented intentions; the measurement method is based on a non-declarative approach. Explicit motives respond mainly to verbal-symbolic stimuli and can be accessed by self-reports as they constitute the verbally represented feeling of self. Accordingly, declarative instruments can be used for motive measurement. However, under certain circumstances, verbal stimuli can influence both the declarative and the non-declarative measurement level. Fig. 4 shows a mechanism described by BUCCI (1997, 2002) as the "referential process". He combines verbal and non-verbal areas of experience, whereby internal images have a kind of translator function. STORCH (2009) worked intensively on the practical implementation of such findings and describes this mediator function very aptly: "On every word hangs a picture, and on every picture hangs a feeling" (p. 196). Pictures generate a connection between the conscious verbal code and the unconsciously processed physical feelings and fundamental affects. In practical terms this connection can be achieved with the aid of a goal imagination, a perception-analo-

gous simulation of the target pursuit and realization (Bucci, 1997; Schultheiss & Brunstein, 1999).

Value orientation in the referential process: harmonization of implicit and explicit motives

- We do not follow the situation-specific considerations and fears, but draw Claus' attention back to his value orientation and continue working with this.
- Goal imagination:
- Can you remember a situation where you showed courage and which you generally experienced as positive?"
- Claus tells of a situation which happened around 3 weeks ago. He had by chance overheard a conversation in which three colleagues were making jokes at the expense of the cloakroom lady, a retired person working to earn a small supplement to her pension. Outraged by this, he challenged the colleagues initially causing disconcertment and annoyance. He was accused of not having a sense of humor. But Claus didn't back down. He explained his standpoint and causing the colleagues to regret their comments.
- Brief relaxation instruction.
- Try and recapture the situation (brief verbal description). Describe the place where the incident occurred, the persons involved, the light, what you hear, see, taste smell…
- What exactly is happening, how do you feel, how does your body react … can you still feel this now? What are your feelings, what is motivating you here?
- Perhaps there are several images which are moving you particularly now…
- Now select the picture in which you experienced your personal value, courage, most strongly and beneficially …
- Describe the picture … How does that feel in your body, what exactly feels so strong, where do you feel it in your body? What is your mood when you are thinking of these things?
- Immerse yourself for a while in these impressions and feelings …
- Now come back here slowly…
- Now – in concrete terms or with simple symbols – paint a picture of this strengthening experience.
- What words, what motto would be appropriate?
- Express it and allow your body to move with it. Start with small movements. Experiment with wider movements and different directions of movement until your body "falls" into a movement sequence which feels right.
- Claus' **picture**: Bamboo shoots bent in the wind. His comment: "If the wind dies down, the shoots are gradually bent less and less and eventually assert their original position."

> • Claus' **motto** is a Chinese proverb: "It sums up my understanding of courage perfect-
> ly: *The bamboo bends in the wind, so it does not fear the storm*."
> • **Body posture**, movement: steps and dancing backwards and forwards, then up and
> down to land firmly with both legs back at the starting point, the body is erect at the
> end.

In order to trigger the referential process, i.e. to harmonize explicit and implicit motives with each other, we asked the patient to find an image for the concept of "courage" – which up to now has only existed verbally – which he feels is appropriate and, above all strong. He smiles when describing the bamboo image and reports a powerful, earthed physical perception, an expansion of the chest cavity, a straightening of the upper body, all of which could be observed. Described by DAMASIO (1994) as somatic markers, such physical indicators are regarded as an evaluation system of our unconscious emotional experience memory. The imagination opens up an access to its implicit motives, whereby the positive affect indicates that the goal features are a positive stimulus of the implicit motive. Claus had thus found a harmonious image to express his (quite abstract) value "courage". With the aid of the Chinese proverb he had achieved a very differentiated verbalization of the inner picture. The spontaneous, physically very positive, affective evaluation completed the referential process described above and illustrated in Fig. 4. This can be restarted again and again, for example as occurred in the harmonization of body posture and motto. The patient can choose how to enter; it can be initiated with words or images or body signals. This should happen more often as the experience is only differentiated gradually and – as illustrated by the blossoming of the somatic markers – the motive congruence is constantly increased. The attempt to fulfill motive-congruent goals can thus be regarded as an affective "hot" mode of goal pursuit which is accompanied not only by an increase in positive feelings, but also by a reduction in depressive symptoms (SCHULTHEISS, JONES ET AL., 2008).

Particularly in difficult situations, this type of felt value orientation should be rapidly activatable and available as a resource. STORCH & KRAUSE (2002) recommend a regular refreshing of the goal imagination and the use of various memory aids which are associated with the strengthening experience, e.g. the use of a certain perfume, listening to particular music, the wearing of favorite clothes and jewelry, hanging up certain pictures, symbolic objects etc. Even the body posture should be represented in an abbreviated manner. Claus opted here for the vertically held palm of the hand moving backwards and forwards.

The value corridor:
Strengthening the connection between be-goals and do-goals

An important step in the value work in SBT has been achieved when patients can commit themselves to the positively felt direction communicated by the now anchored value orientation. In the course of our lives we will naturally face various difficulties, stress factors and obstacles. What is important is that, despite such adversities, we manage to maintain the motivational energy and effort in the pursuit of goals (do-goals). The working group around Lydon (LYDON, 1996; GAGNE' & LYDON, 2001) addressed this very issue. They were able to show that the commitment, the inner obligation, is strengthened for a certain path when people decide on an option which corresponds to their self-definition, in particular their personal values. Furthermore, a person is acting with inner commitment when he does not only firmly commit to an action or decision, but when he also does this publicly. The working model for the value corridor is aimed a facilitating this. This is where the personal values are operationalized. With reference to the goal hierarchy, this means the support of the decision for a program of behavior. By stimulating a process of mental contrasting (what matches the personal values and what doesn't) an even stronger reference to the realization of do-goals is generated. Fantasizing or indulging oneself in a desired future, or inhibitive brooding are replaced by an action-oriented, proactive style. In contrast to indulgence and brooding, which fully independently of the chances of success leads only to moderately binding goals, activates the mental contrasting of relevant success expectations and makes them usable for setting goals (OETTINGEN & MEYER, 2002). If the chances of success are low, people will shy away from setting binding goals. But if the chances of success are high, they commit themselves to the realization of the desired future.

The value corridor: Remaining true to yourself.
- "Your value orientation provides a direction in which behavior should be steered. This does not fully establish how your activity will manifest itself exactly. A wide range of different behaviors can fit into this corridor because they match your value. Others do not fit in as they do not match your personal values. Some behaviors may involve a risk that one is untrue to the value orientation or that one feels overburdened and then fails etc."
- "Please use these objects (ropes, cloths, pencils etc.) to mark a corridor. Choose a width for the corridor which is harmonious in terms of your feelings."
- Claus marks out a corridor which is approximately 1 meter wide.
- "Now place yourself in the corridor, adopt the appropriate physical posture and say your motto out loud."
- "What modes of behavior are appropriate when you think of the meeting with your boss?"

- Gradually he begins to formulate: "I would like to tell him exactly what I want; I realize that I would like to prepare myself more precisely for this. I will also make clear to him the benefits which the realization of my goals would have for our theater…."
- "Now choose a random position outside of the corridor; this represents deviations from the personal values. Take a look at the value corridor. Which behaviors do not match your personal values?"
- Claus is thoughtful: "The meeting can definitely not be postponed any longer. It would not be right if I was to get hazy when presenting my goals. It would also not be right if I didn't suggest in some way a time horizon for the realization of these goals."
- The patient is encouraged to move back and forth, in and out of the corridor. This contrasting effect helps to crystallize an ever clearer behavior program (do-goals) which is a good match for the personal value "courage" (be-goals).

Shaping the future: value balance.

"Threefold is the march of time
While the future slow advances,
Like a dart the present glances,
Silent stands the past sublime." (*Friedrich von Schiller*)

The relevance of the past for the behavior therapy work is condensed in the learning history. On the basis of the respective learning history we are dealing with certain survival rules, modes of behavior can be analyzed in the here and now. This is where we gain knowledge about the shaping of life and relationships, so to speak the mental map for the current life realization. The life rule elaborated allows a healthier functioning. As we saw, values can be instrumentalized as sources of strength. They communicate an attitude which, despite difficult details, places the focus of attention on the essential, and colors the goal realization in an affectively positive manner.

Often, when we think of shaping the future, we are not only talking about the realization of individual goals (e.g. an important meeting with the boss, setting limits for the children etc.). In fact, there is usually a more macroscopic perspective in which several goals are realized. They can be described as a so-called personal project (LITTLE, 2000), e.g. fixing the relationship with a partner, preparing a career change, finding a stance on the issue of death and dying etc. In the shaping of life issues and life phases or sections, it is often possible and necessary to take account of several values. If we remember that personal values can be observed as cognitive representations of motivational goals, a single value or motivational goal is often not sufficient. In the realization of his artistic career, for example, Claus has to take recourse to a greater extent

to friendly contacts in the scene, while also working more intensively on his own individual profile. In motivational terms, he must be both commitment and autonomy-oriented. This means that he may have to realize very different values.

What values are there and what is their relationship to each other?

In the search for the most comprehensive system of human values, empirical means were used to find a 2-dimensional value structure whose validity has since been verified for more than 100 countries (Fig. 6, Schwartz, 1992; 1994; 2006).

Ten different types of values (statistically, but also in terms of content) can be distinguished and differentiated here: this gives rise to segments with different names; let us call them value domains. Each of these ten segments contains compatible, motivational goals, e.g. "selecting your own goals", "independent thinking", "creativity" etc. are allocated to the category of "self-realization". The segment in the category "power" stands, for example, for "position", "status", "authority", "influence" etc. (see Fig. 5).

Fig. 5: Representation of personal values in a 2-dimensional value structure according to Schwartz (1992)

The identified circular structure has some important consequences. Mutually similar value areas such as performance and power are close to each other. Both stand for social superiority and social prestige. The couple power/security is also interesting: the similarities consist in overcoming uncertainty which can cause massive stress (security, for example, through secure relationships, harmony and social order; power through influence, exercising of control etc.). Values, on the other hand, which are in conflict with each other, are far away from each other on the circular structure, for example security and curiosity.

Further-going studies show that these ten value areas can be combined to form two polar dimensions of a higher order (SCHWARTZ, 1992, 1994). This is also illustrated in Fig. 5.

- **Conservation** (tradition, conformity, security)

versus

   Openness to change (self-realization, stimulation)

- **Self-enhancement** (power, performance, hedonism)

versus

   Self-transcendence (universalism, benevolence)

We realize, and the names provide a hint, that the value structure also identifies conflict constellations. Certain value orientations readily match up because their goals tend towards the same direction. We refer to these as synergists (e.g. performance and power). Other value orientations are apparently irreconcilable due to their opposing goals. We refer to these as antagonists (e.g. power and universalism). All poles mark, on the one hand, basic approaches for dealing with complex situations and, on the other hand, however, fundamental conflicts which people have to face up to or which they avoid. Even without any further substantiation, the above juxtaposition makes it clear that everyday life with the challenge of diverse complex situations can not be efficiently mastered in the long term by people who are not sensitive to the necessity of all four poles of the value structure.

One-sided values may generate favorable consequences in the short term. In the medium to long term, however, the people and their system suffer from this (Fig. 6). In times of greater change, such as psychotherapy attempts to achieve, patients must be more capable than ever of striking a balance in their behavior between the antagonistic motivational goals in the value domains. Antagonistic goals must be constructively combined in their everyday professional and private lives. "Either-or" becomes "both" and this dissolves the value conflicts in a constructive manner. The ability to cope with this tension is gradually promoted by acting in contravention of the survival rule. Small but regular steps strengthen the self-regulation muscle. This increasingly gives rise to psychological flexibility: antagonists become synergists.

"He who doesn't dare to sin commits the greatest sin"
(*Erasmus von Rotterdam*)
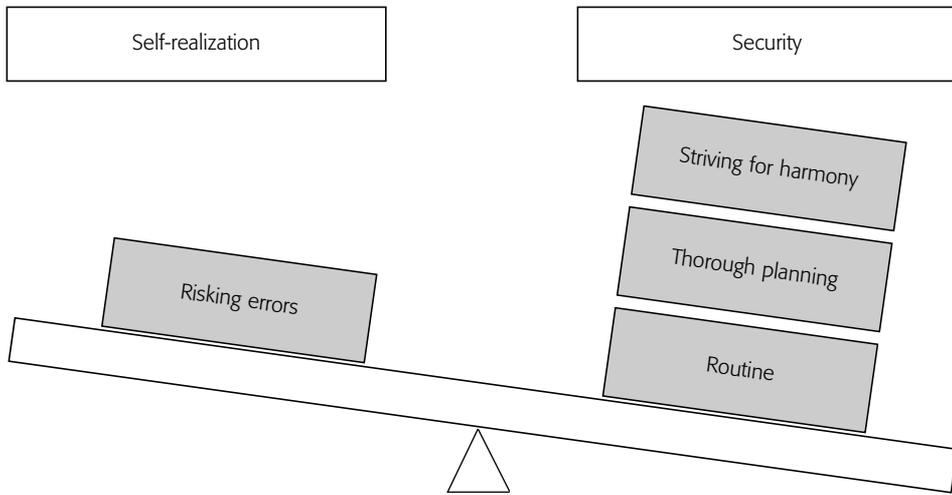
Fig. 6: A surplus of security obstructs Claus in the development of his artistic career.

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