



German Society for Pastoral Psychology (DGfP)

Professional Association for Pastoral Care, Counselling and Supervision

The German Society for Pastoral Psychology is the denomination-encompassing professional association for pastoral care, counselling and supervision in Germany.

It comprises around 700 pastors, priests and employees of the church, who have completed further education in psychology, psychotherapy, supervision or counselling along with their theological qualifications.

Its members work as pastoral caregivers, supervisors, instructors and counsellors in fields of work of the church.

Depending on the kind of completed psychological further education, its members belong to one of the five sections, which have evolved within the GSPP. The sections are as follows:

- Group – Organisation – System
- Pastoral Care and Gestalt, Psychodrama in Pastoral Work
- Clinical Training for Pastoral Care
- Individual-centered Psychotherapy / Pastoral Care
- Depth Psychology

The German Society for Pastoral Psychology was founded in 1972, and has made it its task to prompt, coordinate and qualify offers of further education in the fields of pastoral care, counselling and supervision.

Apart from an annual conference which takes place during the first week of May and always deals with a current theme, the sections meet separately for various activities.

Those members of the society who have a status of instructors for further education, offer their own trainings or further education, according to DGfP standards.

Numerous members have obtained a degree as “supervisor DGfP” and/or “trainer of supervision DGfP” and work as such.

Since its foundation, the DGfP has sought a scientific discourse with social and human sciences.

Pastoral-psychological formation of theories has a high standing within the society’s work, and leads to new perspectives and a new scope of action in ecclesiastical and religious practice.

The society holds a scientific and pastoral-psychological discourse in specialist journals like “Ways to Mankind” and “Transformations. Pastoral-psychological workshop reports”. “Transformations” can be obtained from the office.

The DGfP supports the international (ICPCC) as well as the european association for pastoral care and counselling (ECPCC) financially and with regard to personnel. Members of the GSPP work within an international context of further education, and take part in the development of intercultural concepts in the fields of pastoral care, supervision and counselling.

Information concerning the society’s activities is to be found on the GSPP homepage www.pastoralpsychologie.de .

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The sections

Section Group-Organisation-System

Pastoral-psychological work from a systemic perspective

Basics: The pastoral-psychological work of this section is oriented towards methods of group-dynamics, of system-based theory, of theories of organisations and of role-theory.

Tasks: Members are active as trainers, leaders of further education programmes, supervisors and as counsellors in the fields of organisations and communities.

Further education: This section is based on different courses of further education (e.g. group-dynamics, TZI, counselling in communities, systemic counselling, supervision).

Section Pastoral Care and Gestalt, Psychodrama in Pastoral Work

Experience-based ways to mankind

Meeting: Psychodrama according to Moreno takes as its starting point the meeting of people in psychosocial and

transcendental networks. It uses techniques such as change of role, mirror, double creative and spontaneous play. Pastoral Care and Gestalt, according to Perls` Gestalttherapy, promotes processes of integration and healing within the individual and the group.

The strengths of this approach are its variety of methods concerning the work with conflicts and psychological need, as well as creative experiences of faith.

Professionalisation: Both methods offer further education programmes, which run along the usual profession and serve the pastoral care based and pastoral-psychological professionalisation of counselling, pastoral care, supervision and community work.

Section KSA - Clinical Pastoral Training

Experience based model for pastoral care and communication

CTPC is a model of learning, through which pastoral care, communication and supervision are learned and trained via personal experience and reflection of professional practice. Theological reflection and approaches derived from psychotherapy, communicational and social sciences are elements of these further educational programmes and facilitate experience based, individual-centered and identity forming learning.

Pastoral Supervision: KSA members work as pastoral caregivers or employees of the church in the fields of categorial or communal pastoral care, educational work or research and teaching.

Three steps model of further education: The curriculum of three steps of further education authorizes its participants to perform pastoral-psychological qualified pastoral care (1), single-, group- and team-supervision (2) and to become KSA course-leader (3).

Section Individual-centered Psychotherapy / Pastoral Care

Empathy, acceptance and congruency

The anthropological understanding of this approach of counselling is ressource-oriented. In a relation which is characterized by empathy, acceptance and congruency people obtain access to their potential for development and to parts of their personality, which they have not been aware of so far.

The members of this section work in communities, in different fields of education as well as teaching.

Further education programmes are offered with respect to counselling pastoral care and supervision.

Section Depth Psychology

The meaning of subconscious processes with regard to the understanding of individuals and groups

Approach: This is founded on the understanding of the meaning of subconscious processes and interpersonal conflicts. Its origin are concepts derived from psychoanalysis since S. Freud and from analytical psychology since C.G. Jung and its main focus is placed on the deepened perception and clarification of subconscious interpersonal processes, and on the appropriation of one`s own life-story, the facilitation and reflection of symbolic experiences.

Fields of work: pastoral care, counselling of individuals, couples and families, supervision with individuals, groups and teams.

Offers: Further education in the fields of psychoanalytic / analytic-psychological counselling and supervision, and accompaniment of individuals in the course of their depth psychology programme respectively.