



ICCT2025 Antwerp 27-28-29 October 2025 International Conference Contextual Therapy

The need for connection. Relationship challenges in today's world.

STEPHANIE HAXHE – keynote speaker

Caring for the sibling bond : a contemporary challenge of contextual therapy



Summary:

Over the last few decades, the family has evolved in many ways. Among other things, the issues surrounding the conjugal bond are constantly changing. In this configuration, the sibling bond appears in a new light. Indeed, if the sibling bond has always been the longest of our existence, today it sometimes appears as the most stable, acting as a link between households in the case of marital separation and/or family recomposition.

Yet it's striking how little attention is paid in child-adolescent-adult-couples and even family therapies to the sibling bond, although it determines a whole series of relational experiences in childhood and adulthood. The durability and impact of the sibling bond on our lives, choices and relationships (couple, friendship, professional relationships, parenthood) should lead us to take it more into account, in order to take care of it, for today and the future.

Boszormenyi-Nagy's contextual approach is an appropriate and useful tool for sibling therapy, identifying wounds, breaches of trust and experiences of injustice, but also respective contributions that are more or less recognized, and proposing a dialogue in which each person's needs are heard. Whether this dialogue takes place in childhood or adulthood, it always aims to reduce current suffering, while taking into account the potential impact on future generations. Based on clinical studies as well as clinical illustrations, we will show how the establishment of direct dialogue between siblings can be beneficial both for the dialogue partners and for their loved ones.

Presenter:

Stéphanie Haxhe has a PhD in clinical psychology and is family therapist, trainer and supervisor at l'Ardoise Pivotante (Institut de formation à la clinique contextuelle d'I. Boszormenyi-Nagy, Liège). She also consults with the Family Team of the Verviers Mental Health Service (SSMV), where she works with siblings, couples and families. She published several articles in family therapy journals, as well as two books about contextual clinical practice, "L'enfant parentifié et sa famille" (Erès, 2013) and "Frères et sœurs, des liens à soigner" (Erès, September 2024, preface de Catherine Ducommun-Nagy).