

**Arbeitsgemeinschaft Beziehungsanalyse e.V. (agba)**  
**(Association for Dialectical Relational Psychoanalysis)**

## **1. Structure of the agba**

The Association for Dialectical Relational Psychoanalysis was founded in 1998. Its mission is to propagate and further develop the dialectical relational analysis approach founded by Thea Bauriedl on the basis of psychoanalytic theory and practice. The Association organises academic conferences and promotes and co-ordinates further and continuing training in various applications of dialectical relational psychoanalysis in a number of fields. These include psychotherapy (analysis of individuals and couples and family therapy) and counselling (counselling of individuals, couples and families, clinical social work, social therapy, psychoanalytic pedagogy and supervision).

The agba has established its own guidelines for continuing education which are employed by the institutes it has recognised. The guidelines are aligned with the standards of the Bundesverband Psychoanalytische Paar- und Familientherapie (German Federal Association of Psychoanalytic Couples and Family Therapy).

The institutes recognised by the agba are in Berlin, Cologne, Munich (Germany) and Innsbruck (Austria).

The agba has over 90 members who are doctors, psychologists, social workers/social pedagogues, educationists/pedagogues and other professionals who work in the social and health sectors and have post-graduate qualifications in psychoanalytic couples and family therapy.

## **2. The concept of dialectical relational analysis**

Thea Bauriedl has been developing the dialectical relational analysis approach since 1970. It builds on psychoanalytic object relations theory, developing it into a specifically dialectical relational psychoanalysis that focuses especially on the relationship between the analyst and analysand or counsellor and client. Its specificity lies mainly in a particular conceptualisation of the interplay between intrapsychic and intersubjective conflict dynamics, an understanding of the therapeutic process as experienced and enacted in scenes and an emphasis on the triangular relationship structure basic to human existence.

Dialectical relational analysis is a general theory that seeks to promote an understanding of the scenic interplay between the psychic structures of individual persons and groups of persons in all interpersonal relationships. It is helpful in comprehending change processes in all forms of education, supervision and the analysis of institutions, counselling and activities of social therapy. The approach also provides a basis for analysing societal and political situations and events that takes a critical view of culture (Political Psychoanalysis).

### **3. Continuing training in Dialectical Relational Analysis**

The procedures of psychoanalytically oriented individual, couples and family therapy, counselling and social therapy are forms of applied psychoanalysis. They have their own approach to understanding the interpersonal structures that lead to and maintain pathology and conflict and also their own conceptions of relationship diagnosis and the therapeutic or counselling process. Symptoms are understood as expressions of disturbed relationship structures that are manifested in unconscious relational fantasies and patterns of interpretation and in the interactions of all participants. The dissolution of the symptoms is therefore associated with the transformation of relationship structures. This approach is applicable to many kinds of disorder and can be employed in different settings.

The goal of the training is to enable participants to

- recognise and uncover transference and countertransference processes in work with individuals, couples, families and groups,
- understand the relational dynamics,
- put the pressure of the psychological suffering experienced in the current situation to use in the service of effecting a change in the individual and system and in suitable interventions,
- recognise and change the counsellor's active and passive participation in the conflict process and
- adapt the procedures of the relational analysis to the respective setting.

The training is open to doctors, psychologists, social workers and members of other professions working in the psychosocial sector. Acceptance for the training is based on the results of individual and group interviews. The duration of the training is at least three years. It includes theory seminars, clinical case seminars, family self-awareness modules and supervision. It concludes with a written and oral presentation of cases (therapies or counselling, with a minimum number of required hours). Candidates must submit evidence of having completed a personal analysis in individual psychoanalytic or group therapy (outside of the training) to complete the course.

Uwe Klein