

Live again and repair your birth process
The birth process in Psycho-Organic Analysis

Marc TOCQUET

Abstract :

In this article, I present the "therapeutic birth process" in Psycho-Organic Analysis. I define the objectives, the indications and I provide elements on the way it takes place.

Key words : "Therapeutic birth process", Psycho-Organic Analysis.

Psychotherapeutic work around birth is currently associated, in the world of psychotherapy and among the general public, with that of "Rebirth".

The "birth process", as we conceive it in Psycho-Organic Analysis has nothing to do with this method initiated in the United States in the 1970s and it is even part of a way of doing things and on foundations of a radically different theory.

What is it about rebirth?

The basis of the work proposed in this technique is thoracic hyperventilation which produces a sharp increase in the level of oxygen in the blood. This hyper-oxygenation causes significant changes in gas exchange in the blood, with cerebral consequences, especially in the cerebellum. The psychic effects, and in particular the modifications of sensory perceptions, caused by these blood disturbances are used so that the person can get closer to the conditions of his birth, relive any sensory experiences of this event, free himself from the supposed traumatic experiences that took place at that time, and thus initiate a process of healing. The theoretical postulate is, in effect, the thesis of a birth trauma that we would all have experienced.

In Psycho-Organic Analysis we position ourselves in a radically different way, since we are as close as possible to the physiological functioning, that is to say "normal", of the human being. There is therefore no search for a transformation of physiological conditions for the person who revisits the moment of his birth, or rather the whole of his birth process, but, on the contrary, we look the finest possible approach of its natural feeling during this process. It is the normal functioning of the human person that interests us, and it is it that we seek to contact, so as to allow the person to experience what he or she has not fully experienced.

I do not, on the other hand, believe in the hypothesis of a major systematic trauma at the time of birth for each of us, as the first, O. Rank, put forward. It is difficult for me to conceive that the genius of evolution, the achievements of which we see everywhere in the perfection of the human body as well as of other living creatures, would have allowed a systematic trauma to set in when the little human entered in his extra-uterine life. I believe, on the contrary, that the human being is perfectly adapted, in a natural way, to what happens to him at the time of his

birth¹ and our therapeutic objective is precisely to free this natural behavior from what may have hindered its full development.

Paul Boyesen immediately introduced the work of the birth process as not just about the moment of the “passing” of the birth itself, but more generally as a continuous process that goes from conception of the child to the welcome to his birth by his parents.

It happens that the full development of this process is hampered: difficult pregnancy, anxiety or depression of the mother, absence of the father, situation where the child is unwanted, not expected, scheduled delivery, cord circular, cesarean section, etc.

We find that when the birth process has not been able to be lived in a sufficiently complete way, that when the intrauterine experience and the birth itself have not been sufficiently satisfactory, sufficiently nourishing for the baby, this situation leaves lacks, deprivations, a deficiency that can continue to have echoes once this baby has become an adult.

It is therefore the natural process of birth that we seek to bring about from a therapeutic point of view, for it is this normal, fullest, most complete birth possible that we have all been waiting for.

This work can be considered as typical of our therapeutic method. It operates from three major concepts in Psycho-Organic Analysis: work within situations, the Primary Impulse and the Consequential.

- The importance of situations:

We know that these are situations that have shaped our lives. These are situations that we live in that still shape it. It is at the heart of situations that we develop, it is within situations, with their hazards, that our identity occurs. “The unconscious is situational,” says Paul Boyesen (Boyesen, 1992, p. 11). Our unconscious is inhabited by situations that we have experienced, but also those that we would have liked to experience and that we have not experienced. It is this whole that conditions what we are currently experiencing.

The whole of our birth process is of course a fundamental situation for each of us. Some things went well in this situation, others maybe not. Still others did not take place when we were biologically prepared to experience them and therefore waiting to experience them. It is at the heart of situations that we work in Psycho-Organic Analysis.

If we cannot change the situations of the past, we can change the experience we have of them and therefore the influence they still have on us. The birth process fits into this framework.

- The Primary Impulse and the Consequential:

Psycho-Organic Analysis is a process psychotherapy. This means that we trust the patient to actualize, during the sessions and in the transference, the situations that are problematic for him and that he wishes to resolve.

This way of trusting the patient means that we believe in a healthy core in every person, who seeks to realize himself as fully as possible. This is part of a powerful movement for us that we call the Primary Impulse.

Here's one way to illustrate and define it:

A baby when he is born expects to experience a number of things: just as it is ready for atmospheric breathing, ready to suckle its mother's breast and digest her milk, to regulate its body temperature in relation to that of the world in which he happens, in the same way he

¹ We know now to perform an electroencephalogram for the baby at the time of birth and this electroencephalogram is often very quiet.

It also happens that the baby sleeps at the time of his birth!

waits to decide the moment of his birth², to live the search for the passage by digging his head, to participate actively in his exit from the uterus by pushing in particular with all his force with his feet on inside his mother's sacrum, to feel the passage itself, to be welcomed, nurtured, supported, recognized, pampered and loved.

The need, inscribed in us, to experience what allows us to develop and become as much as possible ourselves, that is the primary Impulse.

This Impulse is confronted with reality. The birth process, for example, can be countered by a series of events. Does the fetus have the opportunity to experience its development quietly in the womb? Can he act his birth?

Once born, with all its potential, the baby arrives in a context, more or less favorable to its development. Is he the expected child who will be lovingly cared for and who will find his place right away? Isn't it that expected or not even expected at all? Is he experienced as a burden? His expectations may not then be so easily met, if at all. Real situations allow, in fact, a greater or lesser realization of the Impulse. Its accomplishment encounters obstacles, concrete, material impediments, due to the place, the culture, the period in which one lives and which do not make full self-realization possible. Other obstacles arise from relationship issues: family neurosis, for example, which assigns everyone to a certain place, constrains the person, limits their freedom of development.

The difficulties produced by the family structure, the unconscious movements projected on the person, the loyalty contracts in which the patient is caught consciously or unconsciously are elements on which the therapeutic process can act and thus release the realization of the Impulse.

It turns out, in fact, that the unrealized part of Impulse is still waiting to be fulfilled. This is normal, we constantly have within us the desire to realize ourselves as fully as possible.

The child who has not been sufficiently loved, considered, supported keeps within himself, even when he becomes an adult, these living expectations, more or less buried. This is what fundamentally motivates the therapeutic process and makes it work. These unrealized parts of the Impulse, hindered, these living and energetic parts that remain on hold, we call the Consequential.

Throughout his life, human being is confronted with the Consequential. Every living being, a plant, a tree for example, aspires to develop as well as possible. Everyone can observe how a tree in the forest or in the city, tries to take root as well as possible, it circumvents obstacles sometimes, it twists or grows to obtain the maximum light. A tree has the capacity to adapt in order to live and develop to the fullest. Throughout his life, the human person also constantly seeks to achieve as much as possible, to develop his talents, his desires, to satisfy his needs, his capacities, to embody what he feels he is made for. The Consequential is the non-lived that waits to be lived.

Yet another way of defining it is to say that the Consequential is what produces the great suffering that an individual feels when he cannot accomplish what he desires and wants to

² We now know that it is the fetus that decides when he will be born: the pituitary gland of the fetus, at the appropriate time, secretes oxytocin, which causes the placenta to produce prostaglandins. These prostaglandins will increase myometrial contractions and trigger childbirth. At the same time, the mother's neurohypophysis also releases oxytocin and it is these high concentrations of oxytocin and prostaglandins that will trigger the rhythmic contractions of labor itself.

achieve. This pain can be very intense, it results from the incompleteness of the realization of one's own subjectivity³.

The Consequential is like a seeker head, driven by the energy of life, which strives to ensure that being, as soon as possible, can be realized. It is thus understood that in the therapeutic process we accompany the patient in this natural movement of his realization. This movement involves repairing a number of stages or situations in his life which have inhibited, blocked, made impossible this realization.

I am talking about natural movement here because therapeutic experience shows that we unconsciously know what has stopped us in our development. Our whole being knows what it missed. We know the places that we have to revisit (this is essentially unconscious knowledge), where we have to replay things, the situations where we have not been sufficiently supported, where development proposals do not come to us and which we wish to repair or develop for greater wholeness of ourselves. The therapeutic process is fundamentally driven by the person's need to go through different stages and situations in his history. By taking up what happened or what did not happen for him at these times, the person frees the course of what he expects, of what he wants to live and can then start again in the reality of the elements of his evolution.

In Psycho-Organic Analysis, we therefore follow the path of the patient, without preceding him, without knowing for him, without knowing where he is going to go, without leading him where we would like him to go and in the way we would like him to go: it is the person himself who unconsciously orients himself towards what he needs.

The therapeutic work of the birth process is most often done in groups. It can also take place, with adjustments, in individual therapy.

The group will constitute the matrix which will welcome and then allow the baby to develop. In this group, participants are chosen by the person who will go through his birth process to personalize his mother, his father, someone who will help him at the time of birth by offering support to the feet of this fetus, another still will have to manage the actual passage of birth. We are in fact creating the possibility for the participant to experience his birth process as it could or should have been.

In this therapeutic work, we only recreate the conditions that allow the body and the whole person to repair himself, to repair and to transform what has been badly experienced or not experienced at all by him.

The whole art of the therapist's work is to achieve the most adequate situation possible, we all have a great capacity to regress, in a very fair way (as if we were just waiting for that, in fact), seeking precisely and often unconsciously to repair ourselves, that is to say to be able to live what we have not experienced:

- to feel "accompanied" during this gestation for example: to feel that in the womb we are in contact with an already attentive and loving mother, and also, we sometimes forget, in contact with the presence of the father, with the sound of his voice, with his effective and already very specific presence.
- have time to develop in the matrix, to go to the end of this maturation.
- have time to feel his desire to be born (when you are born through a "scheduled" childbirth or a mother who is anxious, in a hurry, having had a bad pregnancy).

³ Jung, in his own way, saw it well when he wrote: "Unlived life is a disease from which one can die" (Jung, 1961).

- feel his strength well at the time of his birth.
- feel the passage of birth itself (this is always deeply transformative and restorative for those born by Caesarean section and could not feel their strength and the outcome of this passage).
- experience the happiness of contact with a loving, caring and very present mother, hear the voice and feel the presence of a welcoming father, taste the contact with them.

I was born by Caesarean section, I couldn't be born on my own, says one participant. Does it have to do with the fact that in my life, things have presented themselves to me, that I have taken them on the fly but without having the initiative?

My husband chose me, in my professional life I accepted the positions that were offered to me. I begin to wonder about my renouncements. How to dare to make choices today, to say "I", to decide?

After this caesarean, I spent the first night in an incubator. When and how did we meet, my mother and me?

The birth process begins even before conception. It may sound curious, and perhaps even esoteric, yet put in this situation, many participants have a perfect sense of the moment they are waiting to be conceived. The "yes" to conception is what inscribes the flow of life in human beings, the flow of this force which goes beyond him and of which he is a link.

This acceptance or desire to be conceived is often a very high point in the process.

Incarnation is the moment of encounter with matter. Here too a big "yes" is necessary to accept to become this egg made up from this ovum and this spermatozoon, with their potentials, with their stories. It is the pleasure of integrating a physical body but it is also the dependence on reality, the reality of that body, of that uterus. A reality where from the start we have to deal with the other.

When the person says "yes" to the incarnation, they turn to the fetal position on their left side and womb labor begins.

After conception and incarnation, comes the time of actual gestation, what we call "movement": movement of cells that multiply and develop, movement of the fetus in the maternal womb as well.

The group is there, extremely vigilant, united in the perception of what is taking place, the participants very "open" one might say, that is to say very available to what is happening for the fetus, very attentive too to their own perceptions and feelings. The members of the group, helped by the therapist, are totally present, anchored in themselves, listening to the opportunity of any interventions, of what can be done, can be said, to allow the most simple, the fairest, the most beautiful outbreak of this baby.

What happens to this fetus? This is the moment when one can feel the peace of what is going on there, the quietly needed life, in the attention, the adequacy of the matrix. It can be a time of intense rest, surrender to the life that operates in itself. This is the time for the gradual blossoming of sensations, of the first explorations, of proto-forms of self-representations. It is generally a time of intense emotions, sometimes of great movements of a fetus which seems to explore or seek its space and which the womb accompanies. The "movement" is the moment of development and blossoming.

- I was at rest. I felt completely with myself, having nothing to do, just feel the life in me in this protected environment, in a duration of which I had no idea, just feeling myself existing, a

bit like before I fell asleep but without the presence of sleep at all, to exist in my body, and in my sensations, as if body and mind were confused.

- It was a great pleasure, like having arrived somewhere and feeling totally good there.

- For me, it was the connection to the Inner Being that I have read so much about.

- I contacted something that was shelled.

Then comes the birth itself, what we call the "passage":

- I remember very consciously that moment when my body both moved away from the passage and at the same time gained momentum, the last moment of hesitation, suspended between two worlds. THE moment when anything could happen.

- A very precise image in my head: their hands on my sacrum like the starting line for runners, like starting blocks, my starting line to me, forever the landmark and the fulcrum that I lacked for that life.

- What I felt: hands resting on my lower back, as if all the members of the matrix had gathered there, and a tremendous momentum - not as if they were pushing me, but as if I was found the support that I lacked. And a passage that is both dense and fluid. And a deep, immediate peace.

The "passage" is the actual birth.

To feel that one can no longer stay in the matrix, to feel that the time has come when something else must happen, is going to happen. Something that we do not know but which, at the same time, depends on us. We are, by our instinct alone, at the origin of an evolution that we do not know. Simply because the current situation in the matrix is no longer sustainable. Feel his determination at that moment, then his strength, his strength associated with his will, his courage to launch into the unknown without a name, without representation. Going towards something that has to be forced, without knowing what it is. Engage without any knowledge, nor perceive the outcome. Is there a way out? Does it lead somewhere?

And then comes the passage: seek and find the way out, participate with all your strength, with all your flexibility too, by opening up to the instinct that mobilizes the capacities of our body in this situation. The face that faces the obstacle and the unknown, that lets it go and hopes.

And the pleasure of feeling the fresh air on his skin, the surprise, feeling the end of this compression and the culmination of his efforts. To feel this radical transition, I was in, I am out. I was surrounded, I am in the space without contours. Without contours and without limits.

- It was an amazing feeling to feel how I had no more room in this womb, how something had to happen when I had no idea what was going on. Something had to happen, because this suffocation, this compression was no longer possible, and at the same time I had no idea of the solution.

And then there was a reflex movement that appeared: I turned around, I felt my head burrowing, with force, with ardor, I felt how my body was stretched, while lying down pushing with my feet, it was extraordinary, to feel that there is something adapted to the level of the head, and that we can go there, something, an opening, which must be crossed, forced,

but which opens at the same time, which accepts, which welcomes my movement, my desire to change the situation.

Then comes the welcome by the parents.

While I am still in the effort and stunned by what is happening, the other is there, coming to meet me and take care of me. He creates a new outline and supports me, with his physical presence, with his voice, with the attention he gives me. In this birth process, one of the fundamental points of repair is the way in which the person is received at the time of birth.

On the other side of the passage, there are our parents. Our parents who are there, filled with love and joy to welcome their newborn child. Is it necessary here to develop what can be restorative in the joy of being pampered by loving parents, of feeling what passes through the words spoken, the sparkle of our bodily sensations when, at the end of this process, one lives the comfort and the fundamental tranquility of having arrived, of having arrived somewhere, of being expected there, of having one's place there?

- The welcoming of my "parents" was a highlight. I was able to abandon myself in the arms of my mother and father. And this gift allowed me to experience this love that I couldn't get from my real mother.

- What happened fixed the exit, the calm offset the stress of the reality of my birth.

- Welcome time - break time - time to integrate this incredible moment. This new birth takes root in my being, and becomes MY birth, forever. Something fixed, I fixed something, with their help.

Many other elements are involved for each participant. There is what one experiences during the process of one's own birth, but there is also what one experiences when one is chosen to occupy the different places in the process: father, mother, foot support etc. In these different functions, participants also experience very strong emotional moments, which open up to sensitivity, attention, the strength of being present to the other, and intuition.

- In the role of the mother, I calmed this fear of being like my mother, of not being able to take care of the other, fear of not knowing how to handle it.

I do not develop in this article a whole set of ways of doing that accompanies and allows the unfolding of this birth process and the development of what is experienced by the participant: the experience of a large waking dream in particular which establishes this work and opens up to the emotional and unconscious dimensions of the process.

At the end of this daydream, the participant conjures up a "birth contract" that he will compare to his birth contract at the end of the process, after this restorative experience has taken place. Our work is structured in such a way that the changes that occur to the participant can be inscribed and made sense.

There are many reasons for working through your birth process: many behaviors, especially inhibitions and hindrances in adulthood, can be related to these very early experiences.

This birth work can take place in specific stages, generally in conjunction with ongoing psychotherapeutic work. I remember a man who signed up for this job with the desire to open up to his emotions. Such woman who comes with her desire to have children and who feels that resistance is nestled in what she experienced during her own birth. In fact, she will carry out successful in vitro fertilization with her husband at a later date. Others come to find their

place better today, with family, professionally, in society. Some have come to develop their ability to express themselves. Often the requests relate to arrivals in life without affection, unwanted pregnancies, pregnancies experienced with worry, toxicity, anguish. Often, too, I have already pointed out, this concerns experiences of programmed birth, cesarean section, circular of the umbilical cord.

It is always a question of repairing parts of us, of our development that need to be repaired and of bringing to life parts buried in us, that our history has not allowed to fully exist.

Our work allows us to go beyond conscious memory. Our therapeutic action clearly occurs below conscious memory, before language, as things register in the body. It is the body that remembers these moments and it is to this level that the regression induced by the therapeutic process allows to "go down" and to work.

Do we measure how lucky we are, as adults, to be able to repair such parts of our history? We have the possibility to change, to transform what remains in us which is detrimental to our evolution and which took place during our birth process. Adults, with the support of a few other people, can repair themselves. Awesome!

Here are examples of sentences spoken at the end of these internships, during the sharing where everyone expresses himself about his experiences:

- Now I know where I'm from and I can say "I."

- I contacted my strength and my ability to act.

- The richness of physical contact with others, we made one.

- I was able to "relive" difficult passages: a dark tunnel, the fear of my father's absence. In return, I had a strong determination to be born.

- It's wonderful that we can now fix things from our childhood, from our early childhood and even beyond to intrauterine life. What a great freedom to be able to do that.

- I feel a lot more solid. I know I can lean on my calm strength.

- I feel that my mother will have less impact on me. I took a step back. I filled a gap that made me still need affection from her

- A great lightness, a joy, like a gush. An expansion.

- Love is an exchange.

- My emotion came to the surface, gradually.

- This morning I have the impression of being more solid, more stable when I stand, more assertive.

- I feel a confidence in me, especially in my movements, but also in my actions, in my words.

- I have the impression that my breathing is lower than before.

- I connected my strength.

The abstract inner being, it materialized there. There I connected it physically. This presence has taken shape and meaning.

- Embody a part that wasn't there.

- What I'm doing with my life?

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