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Professional Outline

# HEILPEDAGOGUE

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profession  
discipline  
practice

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BERUFS- UND FACHVERBAND HEILPÄDAGOGIK E.V.

The translation of the *Berufsbild Heilpädagog:in* uses the German term "Heilpädagogik" (as well as heilpedagogue, heilpedagogic) according to the decision of the IGhB (Internationale Gesellschaft heilpädagogischer Berufsverbände) (see <https://ighb.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/20171108-Leitlinien-IGhB-EN.pdf>, p. 5).

Common terms are special education, inclusive education, remedial education, therapeutic pedagogy and curative pedagogy. The numerous possible terms highlight the spectrum of special educational professionalism and areas of practice. The German term "Heilpädagogik" literally means "curative pedagogy", however, at this point it is important to stress that this term does not describe medical curing. Due to its long, diverse and varied history, the BHP holds on to the term "Heilpädagogik". There have been many discussions about this term. The BHP understands the word "heil" (English "curative", but also "whole") in the sense of "holistic", to emphasize the special educational conception of humans and its comprehensive view of people with disabilities.

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# I Explanatory introduction

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The following professional outline follows up on the professional outline adopted by the BHP General Meeting in 1986 and 2001 as well as 2010. The professional outline is subject to a dynamic process and shall be regularly adapted, changed and updated. It describes the self-conception, characteristics, principles and areas of practice of the profession of heilpädagogues.

The professional outline is a model which describes and specifies the self-profile and value of heilpädagogik within the network of related social, pedagogic, psychological and medical professions. It is oriented around humanistic, theological and ethical positions and consistently follows the human rights guidelines of the UN conventions, particularly the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD) and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC).

Thanks to the principles of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (hereafter abbreviated as UNCRPD), the perception of disability has changed. The medical model of disability was replaced by the bio-psycho-social model<sup>1</sup>, and the UNCRPD forgoes a final definition of disability. Disability is understood as a dynamic and open concept<sup>2</sup>. Disability is thus also described as an impediment to equal opportunities and as an interaction of different categories of disadvantage (impairment, age, gender as well as social or socio-economic, regional and cultural background).

The *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (hereafter abbreviated as UNCRC) puts the support of children's rights at the forefront. It is characterized by four basic principles: the prohibition of discrimination, the right to life and personal development, the right to participation and the primacy of the best interests of the child in all decisions that are made.

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1 See *International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health* (ICF), at <https://www.dimdi.de/dynamic/de/klassifikationen/icf/> (accessed on Nov 3, 2020).

2 Aichele, Valentin (2010): *Die unabhängige Monitoring-Stelle zur UN-Behindertenrechtskonvention in Deutschland: Hintergrund, Ausrichtung, Wirkungszusammenhang*, see <https://www.inklusion-online.net/index.php/inklusion-online/article/view/144/144> (accessed on Nov 3, 2020).

This has fundamental and far-reaching consequences for the self-image of heilpädagogik. Heilpädagogues take an even closer look at socio-political decisions and social conditions than in the past. With a consistent disciplinary and professional background, they analyse, focus and address the interactions between social and political conditions and the realities of life for people at risk of exclusion and work with them to create spaces for encounters and shape inclusion and participation.

As heilpädagogik puts human dignity at the centre, views people as human beings, and demands and shapes fair and just living conditions and opportunities for participation for everyone, it has its very own, historically founded and constantly updated mission in social development processes. It is therefore particularly important for the profession of heilpädagogik to take a courageous, open-minded and conscious stand for a peaceful, just, social and ecologically sustainable world in line with an ethic of responsibility and the United Nations 2030 Agenda.

This professional outline provides the foundation for the dialogue between heilpädagogues as well as with educational institutions and universities. It serves as a basis for communication with employers, representatives of affected parties, ministries, sponsors, associations, institutions and organizations, interested parties and future specialist colleagues, as well as for interdisciplinary exchange.

Heilpädagogues are the central professional group contributing their personal and professional skills in order to do justice to the diversity and variety of their clientele, the children, adolescents and adults who live under difficult conditions, and to accompany them in their development by providing a differentiated and tailored service that is personal, situational and family-oriented and with regard of the social environment. Heilpädagogues are the essential professional group with the knowledge, skills and competences to consistently develop, unfold and implement inclusive structures, cultures and practices in society and its institutions and organizations.

# II Heilpädagogik as a profession and discipline

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Thus, heilpädagogik sees itself as an independent (practical) science, discipline and profession with special skills and tasks, which focuses on human dignity and human rights on the basis of its professional ethics.

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A person's dignity and worth must not be measured by their performance, their benefit to others, their health, their age or their gender. Accordingly, heilpädagogik also sees itself as a human rights profession as well as participatory education. The UNCRPD stipulates a more far-reaching principle of non-discrimination. Discrimination is already given, if reasonable provisions for participation are withheld<sup>3</sup>. This is why heilpädagogik also focuses on creating awareness for unaffected persons. Heilpedagogues call for comprehensive participation and equal opportunities for people of all ages whose opportunities are systematically restricted by social, political and individual processes due to disadvantages, exclusion, attributions and barriers to access.

## II.1 The self-conception of heilpädagogik

The heilpedagogic view of the human being emphasizes the indissoluble unity of physical, psychological, emotional, social and spiritual characteristics, which manifest themselves in each individual person in a unique and equal way as well as in interaction with the social and ecological environments.

The term "heil" (engl. to heal) in heilpädagogik describes the entire and effective participation (inclusion) and stands for the idea of a good and successful life. Heilpädagogik supports the development and discovery of individual resources

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**3** Cf. Degener, Theresia (2015): *Die UN-Behindertenrechtskonvention – ein neues Verständnis von Behinderung*. In: Degener, Theresia und Diehl, Elke (ed.): *Handbuch Behindertenrechtskonvention*. Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, p. 60.

and talents (accompanying support) and encompasses openness for an individually experienced sense of purpose and its forms of realization (self-fulfilment). In the triad of participation, skills and meaning<sup>4</sup>, heilpädagogik strives to initiate developmental processes, harmonizing the personal perspective, cultural aspects and politics.

This development is a process which is fundamentally specific and indisputably human. In this respect, all people face the same challenge, namely to take responsibility for the realization of these three tasks in life. This means the BHP also understands the word "heil" from a holistic and environmental (ecological)<sup>5</sup> tradition and clearly positions itself in favour of the term heilpädagogik.

Heilpädagogues offer support in overcoming difficult situations, threats and burdens in life. They support children, young people and adults in shaping their lives in a self-determined way. Complex interactions of a disability are not understood as a fundamental barrier to self-determination, but as a starting point for individual self-determination possibilities. In addition to adults with congenital or acquired complex impairments, children and young people growing up in poverty, for example, as well as adolescents with a migration background and girls and boys with disability-specific limitations and people with mental illnesses or dementia are at an increased risk of exclusion.

Exclusion also occurs as a result of prejudices and stigmatization processes. For the development of an inclusive society, it is therefore necessary for all members of society to come to terms with their own thought patterns and interpretations. Human rights awareness campaigns, such as those called for in Article 8 of the UN CRPD, support this process. The basic prerequisites for equal opportunities and accessibility are not just structural measures or different communication channels. It is about fair access to resources and consistent participation that consults and actively involves those affected, reflects diversity and offers real choices. Heilpädagogik supports people in dealing openly and respectfully with

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Lotz, Dieter (2020): *Heilpädagogik – über die Beharrlichkeit eines Begriffs*. In: heilpaedagogik.de, issue 2/2020, p. 22–24.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Speck, Otto (2008): *System Heilpädagogik. Eine ökologisch reflexive Grundlegung*. Munich and Basel: Ernst Reinhardt, c58.

the unusual, the irritating, with strangeness and otherness and in realizing an equal coexistence.

Heilpädagogik in a comprehensive sense means accepting every human being as a person and partner. Thus, heilpädagogik results from an attitude that expresses itself in solidarity with disadvantaged persons. Solidarity takes place in interactions and creates relationships. Heilpädagogik takes place as a dialogue, in a relationship on equal footing<sup>6</sup> (M. Buber, 1962). This professional form of relationship is not something abstract, but something that happens between people – however, solidarity also has a political effect.

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Solidarity implies mutual support and includes both helping others and letting others help you. Helping others can in turn aim to create distance from one's own fear of incompleteness and dependency. According to this logic, accepting help may mean feeling one's own inferiority. Help thus becomes an individual problem, and impairment and disability become a state of exception.

Heilpädagogik as a profession comes into play where people of all ages experience barriers to development or participation due to social exclusion, impairment or (impending) disability. Heilpädagogues therefore help to create living environments with all those involved in which – regardless of impairment and disability – they can experience belonging and discover meaning. Heilpädagogik in the sense of a professionally differentiated pedagogy supports people in developing their abilities, setting themselves tasks and making use of their opportunities in life so that they can experience and live a life worth living now and in the future. In these situations, options for action and possible solutions of professional heilpädagogik are put in concrete terms, which perhaps also go beyond the options of general pedagogy.

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6 Cf. Buber, Martin (1962): *Das dialogische Prinzip*. Heidelberg: Verlag Lambert Schneider.



## II.2 Heilpädagogik in a societal context

The social framework and conditions, in which professional heilpedagogic actions are performed, are also characterized by polarities and contradictions. Heilpädagogik therefore takes a consistent analytical look at the constantly changing social situation, as this determines its specific methodological characteristics. As an integral part of pedagogy, the heilpedagogic discipline and profession is therefore constantly developing self-critically in teaching, research and practice.

Heilpedagogues are committed to a society in which diversity and variety have its place. The central, guiding principles of heilpädagogik are therefore aimed at realizing the following together with and for people who make use of heilpedagogic services:

- » consequent participation in all social and political contexts,
  - » individual self-determination in the interplay between freedom, care and the assumption of responsibility,
  - » qualification and (self-)empowerment of the affected persons (empowerment),
  - » the consistent orientation of learning, education and assistance processes etc. towards human rights,
  - » assumption of representation and assistance, if necessary, to assert existing rights
- as well as
- » strengthening solidarity and human rights education in society.

Heilpedagogues raise awareness in society to recognize and remove barriers to participation. They encourage members of society to deal with foreignness and processes of exclusion in a reflective and constructive way, to reduce fears of contact and to enable affirmative interpersonal dialogue. In this way, they help to professionally and competently shape an inclusive community.

## II.3 Professional ethics

Heilpädagogic ethics involve a reflective and individually appropriated attitude towards oneself and others that is based on fundamental anthropological assumptions. This includes, for example, the personal status of all people, their vulnerability, their given ability to learn and develop and the inescapable uniqueness of each person.

Heilpädagogik has significant roots in empirical, critical-materialist, systemic-constructivist and humanities theories, from which the professional ethical foundations have also developed. Heilpädagogik is based on the assumption that each person is a person regardless of any conditions and does not have to become one first. The uniqueness of each person, their indivisible dignity, their right to respect and reverence are central premises of heilpädagogic thinking and action: Everyone should be able to exercise and realize all human rights and fundamental freedoms as a matter of course, regardless of their possible impairments.

In dialogue with all involved parties, heilpädagogues expand and review their understanding of different living environments. In this way, they find out what serves the will and well-being of the person concerned and is beneficial in the respective situation. Together with all parties involved, they clarify which of the possibly competing claims need to be taken into account.

This approach goes hand in hand with an attitude of responsibility and openness towards other people – even if they are alienating, irritating or push one to one's own limits. It also requires us to be sensitive to the vulnerability of our counterparts, including through our own professional actions or institutional and organizational structures.

Heilpädagogues are aware that their actions can miss or misjudge the other person, and that they can define a certain identity for them. As a result, the leitmotifs of solidarity and participation are contrasted with the hierarchical one-sidedness of charitable paternalism and consistently taken into account<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. Adamczak, Bini (2019): *Solidarisch lässt sich am besten in Gesellschaft sein. Ein Essay*. In: Medico International (ed.): *Welt in Aufruhr. Rundschreiben 04/2019*. Frankfurt am Main, p. 48.

conceptually and methodologically. Against this background, heilpedagogic actions imply responsibility for consistently strengthening potential, autonomy and participation.

These principles are based on an understanding of ethics that includes responsibility on a situational relationship and place of contact as well as an orientation of one's own actions towards compatibility with conditions that secure the future for all.

# III Heilpädagogic actions and heilpädagogic competences

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The right to a self-determined life in social relationships requires that people of all age groups are accompanied and supported in maintaining and acquiring appropriate skills and resources so that they can recognize choices, make decisions and shape their own actions according to their own chosen life plans, motives and goals.

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Depending on the assignment, the heilpädagogic areas of practice focus on developmental support, education, counselling, assistance and support for people of all ages with physical, cognitive or mental impairments, impending disabilities or impairments and with mental or dementia-related illnesses, as well as children and adolescents whose development, upbringing and education are impaired by a wide variety of factors.

## III.1 Heilpädagogic actions: Starting point and perspectives

Heilpädagogic actions are based on the bio-psycho-social model and focus on the person entitled to benefits and their environment. The decisive factor here is a broader understanding of disability, which focuses not on the impairment of the person, but on the interactions with attitudinal and environmental barriers. Professionalism in heilpädagogik involves recognizing impairments and the resulting, sometimes complex, disabilities as a reality of life and working together to find ways to shape a successful life.

According to this, terms such as "disability" and "behavioural problems" are attributions. They are not a characteristic of individuals, but the result of a complex interaction between personal factors and environmental factors. "Disability" or "behavioural problems" are terms used to describe an impaired relationship between the person described as "disabled" or "having behavioural prob-

lems" and their social and spatial environment. According to Kobi,<sup>8</sup> disability is always relative and relational. Thus, there is no objective fact of "disability".

What is described as disability in an individual case, is a pragmatic-legal determination with the purpose to give disadvantaged people the necessary access to help. This labelling-resource dilemma also remains in the current social legislation and presents heilpädagogues with an ambivalent situation: Only those who are labelled as "disabled" or "at risk of disability" may have a legal right to support and thus access to financial, material and human resources. Heilpädagogik with a socio-political orientation and a commitment to inclusion establishes and pursues settings and educational processes that do not require the labelling of individuals as a basis for the approval of services. Diagnostics, indication, implementation and evaluation of concepts and methods of upbringing, education, counselling, support and assistance, which are also intended to counteract disabling factors preventively, are essential components of heilpädagogik.

Heilpädagogic actions are characterized by a fundamental orientation on interdisciplinarity and multi-professionality and takes place in 1:1 or group settings. They integrate different approaches and concepts at different levels, geared to the respective people, situations and systems. They can be applied to individuals or groups as well as to organizations or social spaces. Heilpädagogic actions require a high degree of (self-)reflection. Supervision, mediation, counselling and coaching ensure the quality of heilpädagogic work. The wishes and choices of those affected are the guiding principle in all areas.

The methods and concepts mentioned in the following chapters are only listed as examples and do not claim to be exhaustive.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Kobi, Emil E. (2004): *Grundfragen der Heilpädagogik*. Berlin: BHP Berufs- und Fachverband.

## III.2 Heilpädagogic diagnostics

Professional actions of heilpädagogik require cause and reason, i.e. an indication which legitimizes a certain approach.

In heilpädagogic diagnostics, the aim is to jointly develop an understanding of the factors influencing the individual biography of the persons concerned. The holistic, multidimensional view of heilpädagogues opens the door to recognizing "others" in their uniqueness, with their history and their life's achievements. Heilpädagogik assumes that a person's actions can only be interpreted on the basis of their biography and the disabling factors in their life circumstances. In rehistoricizing syndrome analysis, for example, connections between a social development situation that has been changed by unfavourable initial conditions and the current situation in the present are considered and become the starting point for a well-founded selection of heilpädagogic methods.<sup>9</sup>

The following diagnostic procedures are part of a comprehensive heilpädagogic diagnostic process that initiates and accompanies the professional action process as initial and follow-up diagnostics. Its methodical forms are e.g.:

- » case history, exploration,
- » rehistoricization,
- » behavioural monitoring and analysis (including behavioural and developmental inventories),
- » analysis of competences and resources,
- » biographical work,
- » psycho-diagnostic procedures, (tests on performance, development and personality, projective procedures),
- » analysis of impairing factors.

The elements of heilpädagogic diagnostics contribute to a needs assessment based on the *International Classification of Functions* (ICF). The aim of heilpädagogic diagnostics is to perceive the individual as comprehensively as possible.

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. Jantzen, Wolfgang (1999): *Rehistorisierung. Zu Theorie und Praxis verstehender Diagnostik bei geistig behinderten Menschen*, at <http://bidok.uibk.ac.at/library/beh6-99-rehistorisierung.html> (accessed on Jan 24, 2021).

For example, it draws attention to their resources, risk and stress factors and their need for assistance. Their actions in different social contexts are identified and key experiences and events in the course of their life are discussed. This also includes the experience of disadvantage and exclusion and the experience of one's own inadequacy. The aim of heilpedagogic diagnostics is to explain the biographical imprints, subjective motives and goals and thus come closer to understanding the person with their own history. Heilpedagogic diagnostics is therefore more comprehensive and more differentiated than ICF.

Heilpedagogues aim to understand the socially unacceptable and disruptive behaviour of their counterparts as a subjective solution to existing problems, as a sign of a search for meaning and an expression of basic needs for belonging, respect and recognition, and to meet these needs. They are aware that supposed deficits are always defined in relation to social norms. On this basis, individual action strategies can be developed for everyday purposes and crisis situations with the aim of reducing impairments.

### III.3 Person- and group-related actions

Person- and group-related heilpedagogic actions are realized in authentic meetings which form relationships, make way for new experiences and further trust. These relationship experiences enable development and encourage people to take on challenges and tasks.

Within the framework of dialogical communication and interaction between all involved parties, heilpedagogues develop an educational program with and for those involved, in which those affected become self-active and self-responsible partners in action. At the same time, encouragement for self-acceptance, in particular under difficult requirements and conditions, is an important issue. The aim is to create a development-promoting environment in which any disruptive variables for development are identified and minimized together.

Person- and group-related heilpädagogic actions are intersubjective actions, particularly in transitional situations. The focus is on negotiating social roles, meanings, identities and norms under "difficult conditions"<sup>10</sup>.

Heilpädagogic actions are e.g. characterized by the following conceptual and methodical elements:

- » heilpädagogic developmental support
- » basal stimulation and communication
- » perceptual and sensory-integrative support
- » heilpädagogic mentoring during play / heilpädagogic play therapy / psychodrama
- » heilpädagogic speech concepts
- » supportive communication and TEACCH
- » validation
- » rhythm and music
- » handicrafts and design
- » psychomotorics
- » animal-assisted pedagogy / heilpädagogic riding and vaulting
- » experience-pedagogic concepts

Heilpädagogues may be confronted with the expectation of supporting those affected in such a way that they meet general social expectations as quickly as possible in terms of performance and readiness. However, heilpädagogik generally does not achieve linear effects, as it is always developed in reciprocal relationships or is professionally shaped in these relationships. Heilpädagogic interventions can be planned, nevertheless, they are always process-oriented and basically open-ended. Therefore, heilpädagogic actions always have the character of a venture and involve the danger of possible failure. In order to avoid the danger of degrading the other person to the object of their own actions and their own or society's demands, heilpädagogues are prepared to remain in a self-critical and open dialog with those involved.

Methodical elements of the following general, systemic and psychosocial approaches are also aspects of heilpädagogic practice:

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. Moor, Paul (1965): *Heilpädagogik. Ein pädagogisches Lehrbuch*. Bern: Huber, pp. 16 ff.



- » family education and counselling / parent counselling
- » Marte Meo, video hometraining (VHT)
- » trauma-pedagogic approaches
- » milieu-therapeutic approaches
- » group work
- » education and counselling for parents with impairments
- » heilpädagogic family support

In all fields of action, the aim is to help people individually and in groups to develop the courage to test and develop their abilities and to experience themselves as actors in their own development.

### III.4 Institution- and organization-related actions

Institutional and organizational heilpädagogik aims to provide flexible, needs-based educational and support services that are close to home and oriented towards the social environment. Heilpädagogic actions are here characterized by the following conceptual and methodical elements:

- » counselling (personal, systemic or organizational counselling, counselling within change management processes)
- » conception and concept development (e.g. concepts for child protection and protection against violence)
- » project management
- » networking
- » evaluation, development, assurance and control of the measures carried out within organizational conditions
- » documentation and presentation of the results, data and findings

Heilpädagogen work on the continuous development of social and heilpädagogic institutions and organizations. This enables them to identify barriers and formulate the need for change in terms of continuous improvement processes. As part of change management, they initiate the necessary change processes to develop and establish inclusive and participatory cultures, structures and practices in institutions.

Heilpädagogues take on management tasks and support the professional development of the team of employees, provide guidance, counsel and moderate team discussions. They provide constructive support to people with disabilities, family members or teams of employees, taking into account the relevant life or professional biographies.

Heilpädagogues adapt concepts and objectives to changing social and individual developments and ensure compliance with human rights and ethical standards. They critically assess claim, mission statement, sponsor philosophy, organizational culture and everyday reality and make themselves and others aware of contradictions.

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Since there are nevertheless a large number of so-called complex facilities and special forms of housing for people with disabilities, heilpädagogik is consistently committed to modifying these with regard to social environment-oriented designs in line with the UNCRPD. The aim of the required deinstitutionalization is to provide services close to the community. This way, people who are affected by disadvantage and exclusion can decide for themselves where, how and with whom they live – so that they have adequate privacy and/or can structure their daily lives in a self-determined way and find the right support services for this.<sup>11</sup>

### III.5 Social environment-oriented actions

Avoiding exclusion and enabling participation is not primarily a heilpädagogic objective, but a duty for society as a whole.

Heilpädagogues act in and with the social environment. They take into account and use the resources of the social environment and help to shape living environments that take into account the basic human need for belonging and participation and enable the development of their personality. Heilpädagogic actions are here characterized by the following conceptual and methodical elements:

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<sup>11</sup> See Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte: *Rechte von Menschen mit Behinderungen. Wohnen*, at <https://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/monitoring-stelle-un-brk/themen/deinstitutionalisierung/> (accessed on Feb 2, 2021).

- » networking
- » participation planning and personal future planning
- » project management

Within the care and case management, heilpedagogues coordinate the networking of different organizations and support systems. They support people with impairments and experiences of disability in building networks and circles of support in which mutual trust can grow and cultural differences can be overcome.

With regard to the social environment, heilpedagogues are concerned with shaping living environments and creating arrangements that foster the conditions for the development of the personality and the development and discovery of new resources and talents and are designed in such a way that transitions towards new developmental phases can be managed and experienced positively.

### III.6 Socio-political actions

The profession's change of perspective towards a human rights-based approach presents heilpädagogik with the task of participating in the realization of conditions and provisions for the equal and full participation of excluded people in all areas of social, societal and cultural life, as well as overcoming all forms of discrimination and social exclusion. Political action means respecting, protecting and realizing human rights, and doing so effectively, i.e. in such a way that people actually experience change in their everyday lives. Heilpedagogues influence socio-political and socio-legal developments, position themselves – if necessary critically – regarding changes and, if necessary, initiate them themselves. They are involved in political discourse relating to the social disadvantage of groups of people and work to prevent and reduce discrimination (Art. 8 UNCRPD). They strengthen the legal position of people with disabilities by advocating for the recognition of all people as legal subjects with the fundamental capacity to make decisions and take action (Art. 3 and 12 UNCRPD). They are committed to the rights and protection of children in accordance with the UNCRC and to respecting children's rights as fundamental rights.

Heilpädagogues promote the establishment of peer counselling services, support self-advocacy processes and the political participation of people with disabilities and children and young people. They are committed to inclusive municipal and regional social, youth welfare and psychiatric planning that actively involves the groups of people affected (participatory planning).

### III.7 Competences

The following paragraphs outline the competences of heilpädagogues. The reference point is competence level 6 in accordance with the *German Qualifications Framework* (Deutscher Qualifikationsrahmen, DQR). Competences at levels 7 and 8 are described accordingly in the subject qualification framework of the universities.

Due to further training or university degrees, heilpädagogues have the following competences: They

- » critically analyse and evaluate heilpädagogic theories, concepts and methods at the interface of their related disciplines and use them on a professional basis.
- » justify their professional actions by taking philosophical, (professional) ethical and ideological aspects and taking into account legal requirements. In ethical conflict situations, they apply ethical judgment procedures and thus remain capable of making decisions and taking action.
- » shape and maintain heilpädagogic relationships professionally, even under difficult conditions, taking into account personal social and cultural systems. Heilpädagogues recognize and weigh up the concerns and interests of the affected parties, groups or relationship systems in relation to inclusive structures and processes.
- » have the in-depth ability to perceive people in their heterogeneity, to understand their needs and (assistance) requirements, to make heilpädagogic diagnoses and, building on this, to derive and initiate educational and/or training processes with the aim of participation.
- » have a broad and integrated knowledge of how to develop, implement and evaluate professional heilpädagogic concepts, taking into account current

scientific theories and concepts. Networks are formed, worked in and with, and inclusive social environments are developed.

- » take responsibility for leadership and management tasks, accompany personnel development processes and implement inclusive processes in organizations.
- » can analyse the structural, process and outcome quality of heilpedagogic processes and evaluate these using defined test criteria with suitable methods of self-evaluation or external evaluation.
- » are aware of the importance of continuous self-reflexion and lifelong learning. Supervision and further training as a support method are recognized and used.

Furthermore, heilpedagogues have personal skills which comprehensively form the foundation of heilpedagogic actions. Their professional relationship management is characterized by empathy, sensitivity, tolerance and resilience and thus ensures appropriate proximity-distance regulation. In the context of their professional role and self-image, their capacity for self-determination, co-determination and solidarity, their civil courage and their ability to represent professional and political interests become clear. Their professional actions are determined by their ability to manage themselves and their time, their critical faculties and their ability to reflect on themselves and others.

## III.8 Summary Heilpädagogic actions

In summary, heilpädagogic actions mean

- » to focus on the person with their disabling conditions and biography in heilpädagogic diagnostics,
- » to develop appropriate action plans with all those involved, which can be flexibly modified and adapted in specific situations,
- » to create relationships and encounters that build trust and encourage people to actively shape their own lives in a relationship-oriented and self-determined way,
- » to help shape change processes in line with the UN CRC and the UNCRPD in organizations as well as deinstitutionalization processes,
- » to demand social structures that ensure the provision of sufficient resources and the greatest possible accessibility.

Heilpädagogues initiate (social) policy change processes and support their implementation so that heilpädagogik can be guaranteed and secured at this high level in the future.

# IV Heilpädagogic fields of action

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Thanks to their many-faceted competences, heilpädagogues work in the most diverse fields of action. Heilpädagogic actions often take place in an interdisciplinary context and are defined and legitimized by specific legal foundations.<sup>12</sup> Heilpädagogic fields of action can be presented in a systematic way in relation to activities or places. They relate to specific heilpädagogic activities as well as to management, research and teaching activities and work at an official and political level. In the same way, it will become increasingly important that institutional decision-makers who are tasked with conceptualizing and managing work with people with disabilities can draw on values and professional qualifications that correspond to a modern understanding of heilpädagogik. In line with the UN CRPD, people with disabilities must also be given greater support as experts in their professionalization and participatory research approaches must be consistently implemented.

The following list of fields of action does not claim to be exhaustive. For more detailed information, please refer to the position papers of the BHP<sup>13</sup>.

## IV.1 Heilpädagogic work with children and adolescents

All children must receive protection, support, education and participation – regardless of their origin or religious affiliation. All children and young people should be supported in their development and given the opportunity to actively participate in social life<sup>14</sup>.

The assistance set out in the German Social Code VIII – Child and Youth Welfare – (SGB VIII) forms the basis of the heilpädagogic services for individual

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<sup>12</sup> All statements regarding the legal foundations refer to the time of adoption of this professional outline.

<sup>13</sup> See *position papers of the BHP* at <https://bhponline.de/bhp-positionspapiere> (accessed on May 4, 2021).

<sup>14</sup> See the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* at <https://www.bmfsfj.de/bmfsfj/themen/kinder-und-jugend/kinderrechte/vn-kinderrechtskonvention/vn-kinderrechtskonvention-86544> (accessed on Nov 7, 2020).

children, groups of children and adolescents, as well as for parents, teachers and educators. Section 35a SGB VIII – Integration assistance for mentally disabled children and young people – is a key benefit here.

Heilpädagogic services for children with disabilities or children at risk of impairment of pre-school age (previously still regulated in SGB IX) are also an important field of activity for heilpädagogues.

The following areas are the key fields of action for heilpädagogues regarding pedagogic offers for children and adolescents:

- » educational assistance, educational counselling
- » heilpädagogic living
- » day care centres
- » early intervention and early support

## IV.2 Heilpädagogic work in schools

Heilpädagogues are employed as educational specialists under the respective state school law as non-teaching educational specialists or as heilpädagogues in the teaching profession, especially in private schools, for example in

- » school kindergartens and pre-school facilities,
- » Special needs schools/centres (e.g. with a focus on mental development, emotional and social development, physical and motor development),
- » integrative schools, inclusive schools, open all-day schools,
- » regular schools (e.g. entry classes, special classes),
- » and in the affiliated specialist services and after-school care centres of the schools.

Heilpädagogues are getting involved and working towards a change in schools to create an inclusive education system, as called for in Article 24 of the UN CRPD and Article 23 of the UN CRC.



## IV.3 Mentoring, assistance and support of adults with disabilities

The fields of activity for heilpedagogues in integration assistance are diverse and complex and are based on the definition of disability in §2 SGBIX. In general, heilpedagogic work is tailored to the person and their individual situation. It aims to achieve equal opportunities regarding participation and involvement for individuals. This involves support in everyday life, whether in the home environment, at work, in shaping social relationships and planning one's own life or coping with (health) crises.

Heilpedagogues offer, among other things, person-centered complex services, supporting or therapeutic services for individuals or groups as well as specialist and counselling services. The field of action of support for adults with disabilities includes qualified assistance in the following areas:

- » living as well as support and advice in everyday life and leisure activities
- » health, healthcare and prevention
- » family or assisted parenthood
- » work, professional education and vocational development
- » lifelong learning and educational offers
- » support until the end of life

Heilpedagogues are committed to enable and support equal participation and a largely self-determined way of living. They want to break down parallel environments by, for example, helping people to participate in society, creating inclusive neighbourhoods or opening up access to the labour market for people with disabilities.

## IV.4 Mentoring, assistance and support of people with mental illnesses

The right to heilpädagogic services for children, adolescents and adults in psychiatric fields of work, including forensic psychiatry, is embedded in the German Social Code Book IX (Rehabilitation and Participation of Disabled People) and in the German Social Code Book V (Statutory Health Insurance), depending on the specific structure. Individual heilpädagogic mentoring also encompasses tasks such as dealing with family members, specialist physicians, case managers and the people in these areas. Support takes place in the following areas:

- » living,
- » work as well as
- » with the help of psychosocial counselling
- » and with therapeutic offers.

## IV.5 Mentoring and support of the elderly

In the areas of medical rehabilitation and care for the elderly, there are regulations for heilpädagogic services according to state laws. The regulations within SGB XI (Social long-term care insurance) and XII (Social assistance) also provide information on the entitlements of elderly people in need of care and the benefits provided in the area of care for the elderly, as provided in

- » retirement and nursing homes,
- » neighbourhood centres or
- » multi-generation houses.

## IV.6 Summary and outlook

In summary, it can be said that heilpädagogik (see chapter 3) in the various fields of work (see chapter 4) is based on the specific competences described for different areas of competence and at different levels in the subject-related<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> See Ständige Konferenz von Ausbildungsstätten für Heilpädagogik in Deutschland (STK): *Referenzrahmen für die Ausbildung an Fachschulen/Fachakademien für Heilpädagogik* at [http://www.stk-heilpaedagogik.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Heilp%C3%A4dagogische\\_Kompetenzen\\_2015.pdf](http://www.stk-heilpaedagogik.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Heilp%C3%A4dagogische_Kompetenzen_2015.pdf) (accessed on Feb 24, 2021) and *Fachbereichstag Heilpädagogik (FBT HP): Fachqualifikationsrahmen Heilpädagogik*, at <https://fbt-hp.de/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/FQR-Heilp%C3%A4dagogik-2015-11-16.pdf> (accessed on Feb 24, 2021).

qualification frameworks. In the future, heilpedagogic expertise will also be in demand for work with public service providers in the context of individual needs assessment or in institutions that make or prepare socio-political decisions. A high level of specialist heilpedagogic knowledge is required, as well as counselling, moderation, mediation and methodological skills, which heilpedagogues also have.

The following applies to all of the above fields of activity: Due to social change and the associated heterogeneity of life situations, new fields of work are constantly emerging, for example in the area of early education or working with refugees. New tasks will also arise in the fields of social work as a result of the requirements of the UNCRPD, in which exclusion risks due to experiences of disability must be taken into account as a cross-cutting category in all areas. This applies in particular to the entire healthcare sector, which – as stated in Art. 25 of the UNCRPD – must be inclusive. Clinics must also be prepared to deal with the problems that patients may face as a result of migration. Demographic change is also influencing the increase in older patients and/or patients with dementia, to whose needs the healthcare sector must be able to respond in a differentiated manner.

# V Research and teaching

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Both research and teaching are an important and future-proof field of activity for heilpädagogik as a discipline and as a profession. Heilpädagogik will continue to be professionally involved in research as well as conceptually and methodologically, particularly with regard to the development and expansion of participation and social space-oriented structures.

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The low-barrier or barrier-free further development of educational (training) programs is therefore an essential task for heilpedagogues. They deal with the trans-disciplinary aspects, evaluate them and develop them further. Heilpädagogik in the field of research and teaching recognizes the necessary dynamic processes and understands the knowledge gained as guidelines for action to be adapted to the needs and requirements in the sense of participation and empowerment of people at risk of exclusion.

On the one hand, participatory research plays a special role in safeguarding and improving the quality of life and opportunities for participation of people with disabilities. Research programs and projects focus on invisible and particularly disadvantaged groups of people through heilpedagogic research. People with disabilities and impairments must be involved in the planning process with appropriate structural and financial resources and in the implementation process through appropriate forms and methods.

On the other hand, heilpedagogues – for example in committees for the development of educational plans and curricula – are also committed to identifying risks of exclusion and structures that promote violence and to enabling access to education through research and teaching processes. In this way, the claims arising from the UNCRPD can be implemented appropriately: Article 4 (General obligations) calls for, among other things, participatory research and appropriate training of professionals, and Article 8 (Awareness-raising) calls for the implementation of effective measures to raise awareness of the rights and dignity of persons with so-called disabilities.

# VI Courses of education for heilpedagogues

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The occupational group of heilpedagogues comprises people who have either completed a technical college degree in heilpädagogik or have completed a heilpedagogic course at a university of applied sciences or a university. The different levels of training with the various possibilities of permeability are experienced as a benefit for the discipline, profession and practice, as the theory-practice and practice-theory transfer is constructively stimulated by diversity.

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Heilpedagogic training at technical colleges was established at the beginning of the 1960s. At the start of the 1970s, the first independent study courses for heilpädagogik were established at universities of applied sciences. Analogous to the training of social workers and social pedagogues, first heilpedagogues (grad.) were trained, followed later by certified heilpedagogues and currently Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in heilpädagogik.

## VI.1 Technical colleges for heilpädagogik

Training at technical colleges is regulated in the KMK framework agreement on technical colleges from 2002. Technical colleges are institutions of advanced vocational training. The courses build on initial vocational training and work experience. They lead to a state tertiary vocational qualification in accordance with state law in various organizational forms of teaching (full-time or part-time). In the *German Qualifications Framework* (Deutscher Qualifikationsrahmen, DQR), the education is assigned to level 6.

Admission to training is granted to those who have completed initial pedagogic training (usually as a state-approved educator or state-approved heilpedagogic nurse or a qualification recognized as equivalent) and have at least one year of professional experience in corresponding institutions. Technical colleges qualify

students to take on management tasks and support their readiness for professional independence.

Technical colleges for heilpädagogik are places of transformative adult learning. Successful educational processes integrate life experience, professional practice, scientific knowledge and methodological skills and encourage a self-reflective examination of one's own person, emotional orientation systems and preferred patterns of action in different life contexts.

Heilpedagogues act in the context of complex social and mental systems. Training to becoming a heilpedagogue involves preparation for uncertain, contingent situations and the unknown demands of everyday practice, not all of which can be anticipated. As part of the training, the lecturers work with the students to explore how opportunities that remain open in the fields of work can be used for further development and scope for action. The aim is to learn an active attitude of confidence in the interplay between resignation and optimism. On this basis, opportunities and limitations are recognized and accepted. Heilpedagogues deal with situations that cannot be changed.

Technical colleges for heilpädagogik acquire skills for self-organized, creative action under uncertainty, as described in the reference framework for training at technical colleges for heilpädagogik (2015). This way, future heilpedagogues learn to analyse problems using the specialist knowledge, methods and skills they have acquired and to solve them in a self-organized and competent manner. This requires a high degree of self-reflection and self-organization skills, which are supported by mental hygiene and supervision services.

## VI.2 Universities of applied sciences and universities

Heilpedagogic courses at universities of applied sciences and universities are offered at many locations and in different organizational forms as a Bachelor's or Master's degree full-time or part-time, as a distance learning course or in attendance, part-time, job-integrated or as a dual course of study. On average, Bachelor's degree courses take six or seven, in individual cases eight semesters, and students graduate with the title Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in heilpädagogik.

For students who have already graduated as heilpädagogues from a technical college, certain universities offer the opportunity to complete a shortened Bachelor's degree.

The Master's degree courses generally comprise three to four semesters (rarely only two semesters) and are designed as consecutive or continuing education programs. They graduate with the academic title Master of Arts (M.A.) in heilpädagogik.

Postgraduate Master's degree courses open up further opportunities for permeability and the dovetailing of vocational and academic education. With a technical college degree, professional experience and an aptitude test to demonstrate the necessary skills in scientific work and research, it is possible to apply for enrolment in a continuing education Master's degree in many federal states.

A Master's degree generally opens up the possibility of a doctorate.

With regard to the UNCRPD, heilpädagogik views itself as a human rights profession and contributes to the realization of equitable participation opportunities for people with disabilities in teaching, research and practice. Heilpädagogik as a discipline and profession reflects self-critically on its actions and is constantly evolving.

The universities contribute to the development of analytical and reflective skills with regard to contradictions, conditional structures and potential threats to participation. Heilpädagogic diagnostics and the pedagogical-didactic structuring of educational processes are combined with human rights-based and community-oriented concepts that provide for the involvement of all participants. The aim is to uncover risks of exclusion and attitudinal barriers to participation and to counteract socially constructed disenfranchisement.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> See mutual statement of the Berufs- und Fachverband Heilpädagogik (BHP) e. V., the Ständige Konferenz von Ausbildungsstätten für Heilpädagogik in Deutschland (STK) and the Fachbereichstag Heilpädagogik (FBT HP): *Heilpädagogische Professionalität und Fachlichkeit für ein inklusives Gemeinwesen* at [https://bhponline.de/download/BHP%20Informationen/BHP%20Stellungnahmen,%20BHP%20Position/Stellungnahme-BHP-BFT-StK\\_2016.pdf](https://bhponline.de/download/BHP%20Informationen/BHP%20Stellungnahmen,%20BHP%20Position/Stellungnahme-BHP-BFT-StK_2016.pdf).

In 2017, the *Fachbereichstag Heilpädagogik* (FBT HP) adopted the *Fachqualifikationsrahmen Heilpädagogik* (FQRHP)<sup>17</sup> on the basis of the *Qualifikationsrahmen für Deutsche Hochschulabschlüsse* (Qualifications Framework for German Higher Education Qualifications, HQR) and the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQRL 2008). The FQF HP describes specific professional competencies for each of the higher education qualification levels (Bachelor's, Master's and doctorate).

Inclusion and participation-oriented research focuses on the societal, economic and social conditions, prerequisites and processes of successful self-determination and participation of people with disabilities, but also on the disabling conditions for inclusion and participation. Universities of applied sciences are in contact with those in the field, take up requests from practice, help design innovative models for practice and participate in practical advice and the further training of specialists.<sup>18</sup>

## VI.3 Further education

Heilpedagogic actions are professional actions based on lifelong learning. Specialist knowledge, exchange of experience, reflection and new experiences deepen and expand personal and professional competence and thus ensure the quality of heilpädagogik.

The Berufs- und Fachverband Heilpädagogik (BHP) e. V. offers nationwide further training for heilpedagogues via the association's own *Europäische Akademie für Heilpädagogik* (EAH), which takes place in person or online. The EAH picks up on developments from the fields of heilpädagogik and implements them in professionally sound further education series and individual events that take place both in a personal and digital setting. The further education courses are based on heilpedagogic training or heilpedagogic studies as well as knowledge and experi-

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**17** Fachbereichstag Heilpädagogik (FBT HP): *Fachqualifikationsrahmen Heilpädagogik* (FQR HP) at <https://fbt-hp.de/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/FQR-Heilp%C3%A4dagogik-2015-11-16.pdf>.

**18** See Fachbereichstag Heilpädagogik (FBT HP): *Forschung an Hochschulen für Angewandte Wissenschaften* at <https://fbt-hp.de/forschung/forschung-an-fachhochschulen/> and: *Forschungsethik* at <https://fbt-hp.de/forschung/forschungsethik/>.



ence from everyday professional life and practice. The EAH educational events aim to interweave discipline, profession, practice and person to expand and deepen heilpädagogic skills and heilpädagogic professionalism in response to current social, professional, legal and political issues.

Based on the German Qualifications Framework, the BHP assumes the equivalence of technical college and Bachelor's degrees. The higher education laws of several federal states provide for the possibility of a continuing education master's degree for graduates of technical colleges if they have successfully passed an entrance examination. The BHP therefore supports a Master's degree program in which Bachelor's graduates in heilpädagogik and graduates from technical colleges can study together as a heterogeneous learning community and thus benefit from each other and learn from each other's strengths and experiences.

The BHP calls on universities to develop further Master's degree courses and to open them up to colleagues with a degree in heilpädagogik.

# VII Berufs- und Fachverband Heilpädagogik (BHP) e. V.

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Since 1967, there has been a professional representation for heilpedagogues in Germany.

At the beginning of the 1980s, the association founded as the BHD (Berufsverband der Heilpädagogen in Deutschland) merged into an association of socio-educational professional organizations. In 1985, the BHP e. V. was founded as an independent, professional and occupational representation of heilpedagogues.

A further differentiation was adopted by the general meeting in 2006: The orientation of the association as a professional representation and as a professional organization is also reflected in the name of the association as the professional association for heilpedagogues – Fachverband für Heilpädagogik (BHP) e. V.

In 2021, around 4,750 members (individuals and institutions) are organized in the BHP e. V. They are supported by competent and reliable contact persons in the volunteer board as well as other volunteer committee members and employees of the federal office in Berlin, who see themselves as service providers and thus strengthen the association. According to its statutes, the BHP is non-partisan and not ideologically bound.

The core mission of the BHP is representing the professional interests of its members and promoting and developing heilpedagogues in practice, teaching and research. The BHP's statutes also specify the following tasks of the association:

- » promoting, developing and shaping the exchange of information and experience among heilpedagogues,
- » in the spirit of lifelong learning by offering members specialist conferences and further training measures to expand their skills and ensure the quality of their work,

- » to seek, develop and strengthen cooperation with stakeholders in social, political, trade union and socio-political areas against the background of the association's objectives,
- » to promote the anchoring of heilpädagogik in Europe and thus strengthen the profession, including as a founding member of the *International Society of Professional Heilpedagogic Organisations* (IGhB),
- » being a service provider for members,
- » strengthening the connection between science and practice by cooperating with training facilities.

These objectives are based on the fact that heilpedagogues are committed to the participation and self-determination of the people they work with.

The work of the BHP e. V. is organized in two essential areas:

- » voluntary work and
- » full-time employment.

Both of these areas have provided the BHP with stability throughout the association's development and are a key component of its successful work.

The association relies on the expertise and competence of colleagues in the fields of heilpädagogik in its work with the state and federal specialist groups and the Federal Advisory Board in order to ensure the quality of heilpedagogic work in the fields of activity, but also to react to developments and set standards. The Federal Advisory Board advises the Executive Board, which also works on a voluntary basis, on all issues relating to the fields of heilpädagogik.

Volunteers and full-time employees are responsible for the major challenges of professional and specialist association work for and with members in areas such as socio-political issues, collective bargaining and digitalization processes in close, collegial exchange with each other and in cooperation with relevant stakeholders from science, society and politics.

Berlin, November 2022

# VIII Appendix: History of heilpädagogik

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Since the beginning of the 18th century, there have been increasing systemic approaches of educationally shaped assistance for persons with disabilities. These approaches were first directed to children and adolescents who were "deaf-mute", blind or physically disabled. At the beginning of the 19th century, first systematic approaches of pedagogic work with so-called moronic and neglected children have been reported.

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*J. H. Pestalozzi* (1746–1827) and his work – he took care of "poor, neglected and disabled" children – are the common historic root of special education and social pedagogy.

The pedagogy of the nursing and educational institution "Levana" (around 1856–1866) in Baden near Vienna, Austria, is considered the cradle of heilpädagogik. The theory and practice of this Austrian educational institution has attracted the attention of specialists for more than 100 years. Selected interpretations show Levana's pedagogy as a socially critical and radically democratic heilpädagogik, as a timeless pedagogy for children with intellectual disabilities and as an early example of inclusive education in a school for all. The management team at the time, *Jan Daniel Georgens* (1823–1886), *Heinrich Marianus Deinhardt* (1821–1880) and, for practical implementation, above all the poet *Jeanne Marie von Goyette* (1817–1895), defined "heilpädagogik as a whole" as a branch of general education and as an "intermediate field between medicine and education"<sup>19</sup>. The book "Die Heilpädagogik" (Leipzig 1861/63) by Georgens and Deinhardt, the directors of the institutions at the time, can be described as the origin of heilpädagogik as a science that emerged from practice.

In the 19th century, an independent heilpedagogic specialist discipline was merely at its beginnings. At the start of the 20th century, the first college for

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<sup>19</sup> Internationales Archiv für Heilpädagogik e. V., Müncheberg-Trebnitz (<https://archiv-heilpaedagogik.de/>).

special education was founded in Budapest, Hungary. In 1931, the first professorship for heilpädagogik was given to *Heinrich Hanselmann* (1885–1960) at the University of Zurich. The further development of heilpädagogik as a pedagogical discipline was mainly shaped by the Swiss theory of heilpädagogik (particularly *Paul Moor*, 1899–1977). The first specialized textbooks were also based on this theory. This development also played an important role in the build-up and expansion of heilpädagogik after World War II (see below), so that other representatives of Swiss heilpädagogik (such as *Emil E. Kobi*, *Urs Haeblerlin* and *Eduard Montalta*, *Mimi Scheiblauber*) had and still have an important influence on it.

The Jewish-Christian tradition plays a thoroughly ambivalent role in the history of heilpädagogik: On the one hand, an image of humanity based on the belief in the inalienable – since divinely bestowed – dignity of each individual was and is formative for heilpädagogik as a discipline and the motivation for many institutions founded in the 19th and early 20th century. On the other hand, there are also problematic views in the Jewish-Christian tradition that attribute illness and disability to individual transgressions ("sins"), which have also found their way into scientific heilpädagogik.<sup>20</sup> This shows that the history of heilpädagogik cannot be read as a linear history of progress, but is also characterized by ruptures and ideological errors.

In 1963, *Friedrich Meinertz* founded the Heilpädagogisches Ausbildungs- und Forschungsinstitut (heilpädagogic training and research institute) at the Heckscher-Klinik in Munich, the first training centre in West Germany, which was quickly followed by other foundations. In East Germany, the term rehabilitation pedagogy was used. This described a comprehensive science which included medical, pedagogical, social and environmental aspects. The basic concept was based on the ideological maxims of Marxism-Leninism.

Heilpädagogik, especially in the first half of the 20th century, had to assert itself in the field of tension between medicine, theology, psychology and education. A large number of institutions for persons with disabilities outside the school

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<sup>20</sup> For the Caritas scholar *Linus Bopp*, "all human misery and suffering of a psychological, moral and spiritual nature (...) can be traced back to original and original sin", and he saw it as the "life task" of people with disabilities to suffer "on behalf of others and (...) the Church as a whole". (*Bopp, Linus* (1958): *Heilerziehung aus dem Glauben, zugleich eine theologische Einführung in die Pädagogik überhaupt*, Freiburg i. Br., p. 3).

sector were also influenced by church or religion (diaconal or charitable). Heilpädagogik has therefore had to prove itself as a science of action that is rooted in the educational sciences and always focuses on the genuinely pedagogic aspects of its thinking and actions.

The school as socialization in the framework of the educational system led to the fact that a part of heilpädagogik, namely scholastic heilpädagogik, which is since the end of the 19th century in theory and practice strongly concentrated on schools, whereas there has always been the practice of heilpädagogik outside of schools. In general, however, the term heilpädagogik refers to areas of practice both in and outside of schools.

The history of heilpädagogik in the 20th century shows that the success of care and protection was not always ensured in the past. Heilpädagogik (but above all special education) in Germany experienced a devastating confrontation with and utilization by the racial-biological ideology during the Nazi era. Preferential-utilitarian, eugenic and racist tendencies which had already been latently present in society culminated to planned actions of enforced sterilisations, selection and mass murder of people with disabilities and mental illnesses under the Nazi regime. The critical treatment, including the direct or indirect involvement or complicity of heilpädagogic professionals and organizations of the time, only began in the 1970s. It was also not until the 1950s and 1960s that the structural and personal violence towards children, young people and adults in youth welfare institutions, such as the so-called disability welfare services in the post-war decades, was dealt with. The BHP is committed to continuing to critically reflect on and reappraise the history of heilpädagogik and the treatment of people with disabilities. The Internationales Archiv für Heilpädagogik provides a direct opportunity for members of the BHP and interested heilpädagogues to study and research the history of heilpädagogik.

After the Second World War, heilpädagogik in Germany had to laboriously reconnect with the tradition of pedagogic assistance for people with disabilities. First, this rebuilding was strongly concentrated on schools (expansion of a structured system of special education); in addition, the expansion of further special educational environments was increasingly supported (early training and early counsel-

ling, heilpädagogic kindergartens, work and living areas, family counselling). One of the ways in which heilpädagogik established scientific references was by leading representatives continuing their education in the training and study institutions in Switzerland and making the ideas of a primarily humanities-oriented heilpädagogik the basis for a wide range of organizational and specialist school foundations.

At the same time, the anti-psychiatry movement and the so-called cripple movement from the 1970s onwards led to an increasingly critical view of the living environments and living conditions of people with disabilities, which also fundamentally changed the understanding of disability. In recent decades – starting with the implementation of the normalization principle in the 1970s, through the processes of deinstitutionalization, empowerment and integration to the current concretization of inclusion – much has been achieved in the area of living conditions for people with disabilities.

However, inclusion as a task for society as a whole requires further-reaching change processes. The BHP therefore expressly supports and promotes the implementation of the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (UNCRPD) to achieve the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in social life, as set out in particular in Article 16 (Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse), Article 24 (Education), Article 25 (Health), Article 26 (Habilitation and rehabilitation), Article 27 (Work and employment), Article 28 (Adequate standard of living and social protection), Article 29 (Participation in political and public life) and Article 30 (Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport) of the UNCRPD. Heilpedagogues actively contribute to creating inclusive structures, as demanded.

Heilpädagogik will continue to be professionally involved in research as well as conceptually and methodologically, particularly with regard to the development and expansion of participation and social space-oriented structures. Participatory research will also play a special role here. In the coming years, this and the critical analysis and reappraisal of the specialist and scientific history of heilpädagogik will form the central basis for continuing its history.

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