

Biographical timeline

Biographical timeline for:																									
Age					5					10					15					20				25	
Year																									
Family																									
Migration																									
Habitation																									
School / Educa- tion																									
Occupation																									
Spare time / Interests																									
Health																									
Legal aspects																									
Treatment / Help																									
How did I feel? K L																									

Instruction – Biographical timeline

Aim

- Visualisation of the individual history of the client

Scope of application in connection with the “Intense-Assessment“

- All subjects of the central questions of the intense assessment (= different biographical aspects) are synchronously shown; coherence of events become apparent

Handling

The biographical timeline provides points for discussion – however, it has to be linked to the aim of the career guidance. The biographical timeline helps to associate constructed identity with real life contexts. Thus, negative points can be put into perspective.

The biographical timeline is a diagnostic tool that should **not** structure the career guidance for a longer period of time.

- Use of a sheet of paper
- The biographical timeline is designed together with the client
- Recording of happenings by means of a vertical line
- Recording of periods with a bar → line and bar are inscribed below the respective columns of age and year
- An exact recording is important to avoid misinterpretations; for instance, gaps between single employment contracts should illustrate actual gaps that correspond to unemployment
- Facts that are not exactly known are marked with an interrogation point where they are supposed to be
- A torn-off bar indicates that an event is still lasting
- After the creation of the biographical timeline, the client can do assessments: what were good times, what were bad times (inscribing of K L in the row: how did I feel)?

Interpretation

Answering the following questions serves to assist in the interpretation:

- Which event of a subject area influences another subject area (e.g. subject “family” – death of mother and almost simultaneous occurrence of a depression, recorded in the subject area “health”)?
- Where did remarkable points of inflexion occur in the biography?
- Can a situation in the biography of the client be found that is similar to the present situation and how was it handled? And: what is the difference to the current situation?
- Are there gaps in the biographical timeline, meaning happenings that did not occur (e.g. lack of relationships)?
- What remained continuously the same although everything was happening at once in other biographical aspects (e.g. continuity of the school career despite dramatic developments within the family)?
- What was successful (e.g. continuities, completions)?

Literature

Pantucek, P. (2005). Soziale Diagnostik. Verfahren für die Praxis Sozialer Arbeit. Fachhochschule St. Pölten (Hrsg.). Wien, Köln, Weimar: Böhlau Verlag.

Materials/book can be downloaded at: www.pantucek.com (12-03-2007)