Standards in counselling for the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals

Manual by the Advice Centre Network of the Advice Centre on “Radicalisation” at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)

2nd extended version

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Introduction

The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) has been providing information on the phenomenon of "Islamist/jihadist radicalisation" since 1 January 2012, as well as offering nationwide counselling for the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals. The Advice Centre on Radicalisation at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF), which was specially set up for this purpose, has a telephone helpline for answering enquiries and, after an initial telephone discussion, refers these enquiries to a responsible advice centre from its nationwide network of advice centres where necessary. This national network, which is the only of its kind in Europe, was launched eight years ago with the first civil society advice centres as so-called "local partners".

From April 2016 to August 2017, an initial evaluation took place, which comprised the Advice Centre on Radicalisation and four additional civil society entities within the advice centre network. Following on from the evaluation in 2017, the joint network development of counselling standards in the field of social environment counselling took place. A total of 14 advice centres participated in this, of which two were located in public authorities (advice centres on radicalisation at the BAMF and "Salam" State Youth Welfare Office in Rhineland-Palatinate), as well as the further twelve advice centres in civil society structures. In 2018 and 2019, the network collaborated to further develop the standards which are given here.

Counsellors from 14 advice centres were involved in this process, of which three were based at public authorities (advice centres on radicalisation at the BAMF and "Salam" State Youth Welfare Office in Rhineland-Palatinate, "konex" in Baden-Wuerttemberg), as well as eleven advice centres in civil society structures. The standard classification (see page 8) developed within the framework of the evaluation of the (BAMF (Uhlmann 2017) served as the basis for the first edition of the manual published in 2018. It was discussed and further developed with the network counsellors for this manual.

The joint field of work of **counselling for the social environment** of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals aims to achieve disengagement from extremist actions and beliefs. This may take place "indirectly" via close people from the social environment or in "direct" work with radicalised Islamist individuals. The term "social environment" comprises family members, friends and reference people from the professional environment, school, child and youth welfare organisations, social assistance, leisure clubs etc. In contrast with this, the term "network" on the one hand denotes the cooperation of the advice centres with one another and, on the other hand, the case-dependent cooperation of an advice centre with other institutions, such as school, youth welfare or specific expert organisations, e.g. addiction or debt advice or other independent entities.

The teams at all advice centres have a multiprofessional approach and work in an interdisciplinary manner. The German national network of advice centres is thus characterised by a high level of diversity and particular quality. Beyond the network of advice centres, each of the individual advice centres has its own **local and regional networks** which they can use for case-specific discussion and cooperation needs. This manual is intended to provide public information about the expert basis of the counselling service for those in the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals within the network of the BAMF advice centres and internal reflection of the counselling practice and thus continuous quality assurance. **Target groups of the manual** are thus the interested (professional) public and counsellors in the subject area.

In addition to universal and action standards, this manual also includes guideline standards. These standards define certain tasks and responsibilities, assign them to the relevant network partners and explain/clarify process pathways. Guideline standards set tasks and responsibilities for network actors and regulate, for example, cooperation between the advice centre and security authorities in relevant case matters. These guideline standards are not taken into consideration in this manual as it focuses on the direct counselling practice.

The manual presents an application-related compilation of **standards developed and consolidated together in the network** in the field of counselling for the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals. The standards set out in this manual have been defined in a practically-oriented manner as part of an intensive process. In this regard, a commonly-used standardisation procedure was used for identification and differentiation of the standards in order to reflect on these and delimit them from mere routines. This procedure is set out below.

Methods

According to the world's first national standardisation organisation, founded in 1901, the **British Standards Institution**, standards consist of "the distilled wisdom of people with expertise in their subject matter and who know the needs of the organizations they represent (...)" (The British Standards Institution 2017; see Uhlmann 2017). They are identified, consolidated and defined under the instruction of a moderating entity in a cooperative process by subject matter experts (ibid.). For this purpose, three rounds of interviews were carried out at the advice centres in the period between June 2017 and February 2020 with a total of 36 individual and group discussions with the counsellors from the individual advice centres. Further, four workshops were held within the framework of the regular network meetings: "Ethical principles of counselling", "Counselling methods", "Joint approaches and challenges in the social environment counselling of so-called 'cults' and (potentially) Islamist individuals" and "Joint approaches and challenges in the social environment counselling of extreme right-wing and radicalised Islamist individuals". The BAMF supported the process of standard consolidation by its specialist and network expertise, as well as via a peer review of the drafts of the manual which were prepared.

Shared terminology

The terms "radicalisation" and "deradicalisation" experience some fundamental criticism both from counselling practice and from scientific accompanying research due to their variety of contradictory meanings, their potential for stigmatisation and the individuality of personal change processes. They cannot be defined conclusively since they are a **complex social phenomena**. In order to nevertheless achieve a largely shared understanding of the meaning of the content of these terms used in practical work, the following working definitions were jointly developed for and by the network of the BAMF Advice Centre: the long-term goal of counselling for the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals is their deradicalisation.

Radicalisation

is a complex, mostly non-linear, individual, often but not exclusively group-related process of acquiring extremist ways of thinking and acting. It is often associated with an increased willingness to endorse, support and/or use undemocratic means up to the use of violence to achieve political, social and/or religious goals.

The term **"extremist"** is understood to mean ideologised thought processes and actions which are contrary to universal human rights, the top value principles of democracy and the fundamental principles of the constitution. These relate to the inviolable democratic basis of the Federal Republic of Germany, which is set out in the Basic Law and summarised with the term free basic democratic order. Extremist ways of thinking and actions may contain reference to violence but this is not an essential component. In **extremism prevention**, the internal psychological dimension of the extremism is significant. Extremism has a complex structure, it relates to the ways of thinking and behaviour, combines the situational circumstances and group dynamics and reflects the structure of individual needs.

Deradicalisation

is a complex, individual, non-linear process as part of which a radicalised individual or radicalising person abandons their belief in and commitment to extremist ways of thinking and actions and, insofar as there is a connection with violence, abandons the endorsement of violence to achieve their goals, potentially critically reflects on their ways of thinking and actions and/or ideologised world view and as a result credibly distances themselves from this world view. The radicalising person is an active subject in this process and is not a passive object.

The achievement of this goal is dependent on **sustainable processes which are beneficial for the personal development** of the individual in question. This includes the individual's engagement with biographical events which may have influenced the radicalisation process, as well as critical reflection on scene contacts with regard to the individual's future and the radicalised Islamist individual's search for social contacts outside the scene, as well as questioning extremist narratives within a safe space. Having a stable social environment with no extremist influences can provide a useful framework condition for this.

A necessary prerequisite for sustainable disengagement from an environment with an extremist orientation is the willingness of the radicalised individual to engage in a **process of self-reflection** with regard to their own actions and their own beliefs. These processes take place in the individual's emotional life and can only be encouraged and supported externally. Goals relating to the respective process are always individual and should be considered in the context of the social environment of the radicalised individual.

A necessary prerequisite both for developing a counselling relationship and for developing cooperation relationships between actors in the action field is **mutual trust.** This requires professional structures for education and can only develop with framework conditions with a long-term orientation and a shared understanding of the principles of "good-quality counselling". This manual sets out these principles and also contributes to transparency with regard to the nationwide counselling services.

Standard classification

A standard

is a work practice and/or work attitude based, reflected and explained with a particular subject matter, a particular context and a particular intention, the implementation of which is based on a knowledge base which legitimises it and/or a value base which justifies it.

The development of standards in the action field of counselling for the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals takes the phenomenon of radicalisation and the individual radicalisation processes of affected individuals (object) into consideration, as well as the factors which influence them (context).

The intention is to stabilise the respective social environment via counselling and thus enable and/or support them in having a deradicalising effect on the respective radicalised Islamist individuals (intention).

Action standards

substantiate the goals, processes and methods of counselling.

Universal standards

describe the framing and the principles behind the counselling service.

Meso standards

relate to the general goals, strategies and approaches which are shared by the advice centres.

- Counselling setting: Nature, scope and goals of the counselling
- Design of the working relationships in counselling
- Situation analysis and resource clarification
- Development of possible solutions
- Forms of counselling
- Counselling process map

Micro standards

relate to the methods used in the case work according to the approaches of the respective advice centre and their application.

Counselling approaches:

- situational
- informative
- social
- education-oriented
- religious
- biography-oriented
- cognitive behaviour-related
- psychotherapeutic

Macro standards

comprise the fundamental ethical standards according to which the respective actors work and their self-perception.

- Self-perception of the advice centres
- Attitudes of the counsellors
- Counselling principles

Basic standards

describe the general principles upon which the specific counselling work is based.

- Public information of the service
- Guarantee of the service
- Low threshold of the service
- Approaches of the service
- Up-to-dateness of the service
- Quality assurance

Figure 1: Standard classification

Source: Evaluation of the Advice Centre on Radicalisation, Uhlmann 2017.

Standards

In the development of standards in the action field of counselling for the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals, the phenomenon of radicalisation and the individual radicalisation processes of affected individuals are taken into consideration, as well as the factors which influence them (context). The intention is to stabilise the respective social environment via counselling and thus enable and/or support them in having a deradicalising effect on the respective radicalised Islamist individuals (intention).

The following standards describe values shared by the network which form the basis of the counselling practice and set out fundamental work practices.

A standard

a work practice and/or work attitude based, reflected and explained with a particular subject matter, a particular context and a particular intention, the implementation of which is based on a knowledge base which legitimises it and/or a value base which justifies it.

Universal standards

Universal standards are divided up into **macro standards** (fundamental ethical standards/respective self-perception) and **basic standards** (general principles of the work).

Universal standards
describe the framing and the principles behind the counselling service.

Macro standards

The functions of macro standards are ensuring the value orientation in counselling work using the definition of professional ethical and political standards, as well as reconnection to a functional theory according to which the advice centre works.

The ethical standards which the field of work are based on are derived from universal human rights, the Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany, the free democratic basic constitution and the Child and Youth Services Act.
The self-perception of the actors which results from these standards guides actions in all counselling.

Macro standards
comprise the fundamental ethical standards according to which the respective actors work and their self-perception.

Self-perception of the advice centres

- "Our work is about dedication to a democratic society."
- "Our counselling work is trusting relationship work."
- "Our counselling provides encouragement for disengagement from an extremist environment."
- "*Deradicalisation*" can only be carried out by the affected individual themselves. The corresponding process takes time. Professional counselling, an appropriate trust relationship and a stable social environment are the most important prerequisites for success."

Attitudes of the counsellors

- "Our counselling in the field of work of *deradicalisation* is based on the needs of the people receiving counselling and is characterised by respect, appreciation and recognition of the equality of all people."
- "Our counselling differentiates between freedom of opinion and freedom of belief and extremism with an Islamist/jihadist basis. We provide information and clarification on this."
- "Our counselling respects the independent responsibility of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals and the people receiving counselling. It is based on the greatest possible level of investigating and understanding the respective individual situation."
- "Our counselling supports people in problematic and conflict development processes and situations to develop their own solutions which are based on the needs and living environment of the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals and the people receiving counselling."
- "Our counselling is confidential and the counsellors are subject to a confidentiality obligation in their employment contract."
- "Our counselling is open in terms of the processes and is based on the resources of the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals and people receiving counselling."
- "Our counselling helps people to help themselves and supports the development of self-efficacy of the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals and their social environment."
- "Our counselling is based on an attitude of critical self-reflection with regard to our actions."
- "Our counselling provides orientation and also sets clear boundaries. These boundaries reflect our values and standards for living together."

Counselling principles

Voluntariness

A counselling relationship based on coercion or the exertion of pressure is associated with the risk that the behaviour of someone receiving counselling may change superficially but that this change is not based on insight but on desires for change taken on from others (e.g. from the counsellors). A possible consequence of involuntary counselling may be an internal defensive attitude against the counselling. In these cases, it is difficult for the counsellors to clearly identify the individual's motivation. In a constellation of this kind, counselling can often only have limited effects or none of the intended effects.

Respect

Counselling without respect is not counselling because a counselling process requires equal partners. The respectful attitude of the counsellors promotes the trust which is fundamentally required for the counselling relationship. This enables the person receiving counselling to open up and encourages them to accept the counselling. A respectful attitude sees people as people outside the context of any potential, for example, anti-democratic attitudes or other beliefs which contradict the self-perception of the advice centres.

Empathy

Every person and therefore every case is individual. Processes and starting points of counselling processes depend on the people and circumstances which are involved. The counsellors must be able to empathise with the realities in which other people live and comprehend and understand the developments which have led to the current problem situation, including the perspective of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals. In counselling for the social environment, empathy means being able to step into the shoes of everyone who is involved, "translate" what everyone is saying and make them understood. For counsellors, empathetic ability requires a high level of self-reflection and also asks the counsellors: "what does the person receiving counselling trigger in me?"

Authenticity

The principle of authenticity relates to the credibility and personal sincerity of the counsellors and is a prerequisite for building a sustainable counselling relationship. Every counsellor has their own personality which they contribute to the counselling and therefore shapes the approach and relationship development with the people receiving counselling in an individual manner.

Transparency

The counselling only starts once the person receiving counselling has received information about all possibilities and limitations of the counselling and consents to the counselling service. For both parties, the focus of the counselling is the positive development of the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual. As a consequence, the counsellors act in a biased manner throughout the entire course of the counselling with the intention of supporting the disengagement process of the radicalised individual. This priority may repress the interests of other affected individuals, e.g. the people receiving counselling or family members, or not ensure absolute transparency in all steps with all the people involved.

Commitment

In the context of a counselling relationship, liability means that all the agreements which were made are complied with. In principle, the counsellor and/or the person providing cover for them should be available for the person receiving counselling promptly when needed and scheduled appointments are to be attended. This also applies with regard to agreements with child and youth welfare organisations, schools, associations, public authorities etc. with which the counsellors work in lots of cases in order to process the individual case in a holistic and sustainable manner.

Basic standards

The functions of basic standards are the public information of the service, the guarantee of a low threshold for accessing the service and the up-to-dateness of the service, plus quality assurance.

Basic standards
describe the general principles upon which the specific counselling work is based.

Counselling

- Counselling is free of charge.
- Counselling is provided in multiple languages.
- Information about the counselling service can be accessed via the website, email, helpline and/or brochures.
- The advice centres are located centrally and are easy to reach on public transport.
- The counselling may also take place in the living environment of the people receiving counselling.

The counsellors

- The counsellors work in a needs-based and case-based manner.
- The counsellors have good knowledge of the phenomenon of extremism with an Islamist basis.
- The counsellors research knowledge from external sources (literature, internet and locally) in order to gain a better understanding of specific cases.
- The counsellors keep up to date with current developments in the phenomenon of radicalisation in a targeted manner.
- The counsellors have freedom in terms of time and space with their work within a framework which varies depending on the advice centre.

The counsellor teams

- The counsellors work in multiprofessional teams which consist of different disciplines and professional fields.
- The counsellor teams are multilingual.
- The counsellor teams provide peer case advice (intervision).
- The counsellor teams participate in team supervisions with a recognised supervisor.

Quality assurance at the advice centres

- The counsellors regularly attend further training sessions which are relevant to their field of work.
- The counsellors regularly participate in training sessions (internal within the entity, BAMF network).
- The counsellors are involved in various forums as part of a nationwide expert exchange.
- The counsellors regularly participate in Round Table meetings at the Advice Centre on Radicalisation for nationwide exchange on trends in the phenomenon, developments in the field and cross-advice centre peer case advice.
- The counsellors actively contribute to the issue-led dialogue between researchers and practitioners.

Multiprofessional counselling

Counselling for the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals takes place with multiprofessional teams which meet the complex needs of the people receiving counselling. The following academic disciplines form part of the teams in the advice centre network:

Educational Sciences: pedagogical, sociological and psychological understanding of the theory and practice of education and training

Social Education: preventive empowerment and support of an individual for autonomously and independently dealing with general life situations in society

Social Work: intervening practical way of solving, easing and preventing social problems

Islamic Studies: understanding of the religion of Islam and the cultures and societies shaped by Islam in the past and in the present day

Religious Studies: comparative empirical, historical and systematic research into all religions

Arabic Studies: study of the Arabic language, Arabic literature, culture, history and current politics and economics

Turkology: study of the language, history, culture and religion of the Turkic people

Political Studies: research of political philosophies, systems and processes in a national/an international context

Journalism: researching media mass communication processes

Social Sciences/Sociology: researching the phenomena of people living together in society

Legal Studies/Law: engagement with the principles of law and its application, as well as the study of specific legal provisions

Criminology: legal, psychiatric, sociological and ethnological research of the manifestations of criminality

Psychology: empirical science of the internal and external factors of the human experience and human behaviour

Social Psychology: sociological and psychological assessment of the individual in group processes

Ethnology/Cultural and Social Anthropology: investigation of people as a social being in societal contexts

Theology: engagement with religious content, teachings and texts from a specific belief perspective

Peace and Conflict Research: research into inner-state and international political conflicts and wars, as well as peace-making measures

Migration and Diversity Research: analysis of the opportunities and challenges of migration and diversity at a societal level

Counsellors have the following additional qualifications:

Psychotherapy: curative, intervening treatment of emotional suffering or physical conditions with a psychological cause

Psychosocial counselling: preventive support in various areas of life by means of the development of specific competencies

Systemic counselling: development of independent solution strategies encouraged via (self-)reflection and the activation of resources and competencies

Applied Media Studies (Media Management): design and implementation of media content

Pastoral Care: personal spiritual monitoring and support of an individual, in particular in life crises, by someone of the same faith

A case

Counselling for the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals is needs-oriented and case-based. In order to ensure the effectiveness of the counselling, it is necessary to take into consideration the nature, goal and scope of the matter relating to the individual receiving counselling. The advice centre network has developed the following definitions in this regard:

A **first consultation** is a non-personal, general clarification discussion, for example about Salafism or radicalisation. The aim of the discussion is satisfying an abstract need for insight.

A **one-off counselling appointment** is person-related or group-related without further processing because either

a) the counselling matter was processed sufficiently via the discussion according to the assessment of both parties.

b) there is potential radicalisation activity but no further desire for counselling and also no indication of danger to the individual and/or danger to others.

c) the counselling with regard to the simple reporting of a security-related constellation took place.

d) based on the information provided at the appointment, no radicalisation tendencies in the field of extremism with Islamist motivations were identified.

A **clearing process** is person-related and concentrates on potential radicalisation activities and/or radicalisation activities which are still to be confirmed. The situation is subject to a further assessment with regard to the potential radicalisation activities. Then the findings which are acquired can be used to conclude the one-off counselling appointment and/or determine that there is no need for further processing or continuation as a case.

A **case** is a person-related setting which is evaluated as a radicalisation event and/or for which a concrete risk of radicalisation is identified and for which there is need for current or future processing. A need for processing entails the introduction and implementation of one or more measures (counselling, intervention, involvement of the security authorities).

Action standards

The counselling service for the **social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals** is aimed at family members and other people who have a close relationship with the affected individual. This may be friends, neighbours, school, employers, associations or the youth welfare office. The central aspect of counselling is a **behavioural change which is perceived as problematic** in a person who is involved in Islamist radicalisation. Wherever there is no suspicion in this regard, the behavioural change is not expressed in Islamist radicalisation. The counselling is intended to empower the social environment and be effective against radicalisation processes to slow them down and stop them, i.e. trigger disengagement and enable deradicalisation consequently.

Counselling is **a process which is designed as a dialogue**. It is key for the counselling process that the people receiving counselling are perceived as experts in their own life and relationship systems and thus their own problem situations and the development of solution approaches are viewed as such. The people receiving counselling are supported in dealing with the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual in problem, conflict or crisis situations. Depending on the course of the counselling process, we work together with the people receiving counselling to define short-term, medium-term and long-term goals, support tasks and process (new) developments and conflicts which arise.

The action standards are subdivided into **meso standards** (general goals, strategies and procedures of the counselling) and **micro standards** (methods of the counselling).

Action standards
substantiate the goals, processes and methods of the counselling.

Meso standards

Counselling practice at the advice centres has developed key goals, action strategies and procedures in a shared quality development process. The result is a model counselling procedure consisting of six steps: "**Work steps in the counselling process**" (see page 24 and 25). The advice centre network shows the fundamental work steps in the counselling process of the social environment of a (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual (Evaluation, Uhlmann 2017). It serves to represent the work steps as an overview in an ideal type and there are no rigid procedures. Recurring feedback loops with the people receiving counselling and, where applicable, other relevant actors (e.g. school, public authority) and continuous process reviews and adaptation of the strategies and methods which are used are characteristic of the entire counselling process.

Meso standards
relate to the general goals, strategies and approaches which are shared by the advice centres.

The following are key for the quality of counselling processes: the counselling setting, the agreements which are made on the nature, scope and goals of the counselling, the relationship design between the individuals receiving counselling and providing counselling, the situation analysis and resource clarification and the development of possible solutions.

The **counselling setting** can be influenced by the following criteria:

- Individual or group setting (couple, family, social environment)
- Counselling from an advice centre or multiple institutions (advice centres, public authorities)
- Duration and frequency of counselling discussions
- Counselling location (advice centre, public or private spaces)

The person or people receiving counselling determine(s) the **nature, scope and goals of the counselling**, which takes place on a voluntary basis and can be cancelled at any time, in a joint process with the counsellor.

The individual(s) receiving counselling and providing counselling design(s) the **relationship which is appropriate for the counselling framework** and the counselling subject matter together. Counselling is carried out in personal and social responsibility by specifically-trained counsellors and is based on universal human rights, fundamental rights, legislation and the jointly consolidated counselling standards. The counselling activities requires the counsellors to have personal, social and professional integrity and action competencies. For this purpose, scientific expertise and competencies in the field of counselling methods are of particular importance. The personal relationship between the persons receiving and providing counselling is characterised by interest, authenticity and trust. The counsellors give particular consideration to gender-specific, generation-specific, religion-specific and culture-specific aspects.

1 The **situation analysis** is a key component of the counselling process. It supports self-reflective and emancipatory processes and engages with the emotions which are released in connection with this. It uncovers biographical experiences, primarily in relation to breaks, conflicts, power relations, dependencies and wishes, needs and requirements of the person receiving counselling themselves, as well as and in particular of the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual. In this case, the person from the social environment receiving counselling takes on a representative function. This intensive phase promotes holistic awareness of the personal, interpersonal and societal situation with all its requirements, problems and conflicts.

2 The **resource clarification** is also an important part of the counselling. In this process, individual and social resources of the (potentially) radicalised individual and their social environment are identified. Knowledge of existing resources forms the basis for needs-based, individual and effective counselling. The clarification of resources is also a pre-requisite for formulating clear target agreements. The focus is on promoting individual and social competencies. The resource clarification of the (potentially) Islamist radicalised individual is based on the questions: "Which existing skills (e.g. willingness to learn and help, creativity, interests or professional qualification) can be used", "Which difficulties have already been successfully overcome?", "Who can provide support?". The resource clarification in the social environment focuses on the questions: "What do the members of the system want to contribute and what are they able to contribute?".

3 The **development of possible solutions** is a key goal of counselling. The individual receiving counselling is encouraged and empowered to develop potential solutions independently, supported by the previous analysis of their personal situation, and to process and implement these potential solutions as action strategies in cooperation with the counsellor. The counsellors encourage decision-making and responsible actions by individuals and groups in individual, partnership, family, social and cultural contexts. Action plans are developed together which correspond to the needs, interests and abilities of the individual and/or the group. Success in the achievement and/or implementation of goals is reflected upon on an ongoing basis and adapted to the situation accordingly. The aim of the counselling process has been achieved if the radicalised individual can independently make autonomous decisions and has removed themselves from extremist environments and attitudes. The aim for the person receiving counselling from the social environment has been achieved when individual possible solutions and strategies have been developed to understand radicalisation processes and ideally provide monitoring and support for disengagement and deradicalisation processes. This may take multiple weeks, months or years.

Forms of counselling

Interaction between people receiving and providing counselling may take place in various forms. Multiple actors in the social environment may be involved in one case. The counselling can address people who are involved separately as well as together. The following counselling forms are used in counselling for the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals by multiprofessional teams at the advice centres:

General counselling

Basic counselling is a strongly content-oriented and analytical discussion with counsellors which can be used by all people from the social environment of a (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual. This form of counselling is based on specific events and requirements. The counsellors place the information received from the people receiving counselling in context, e.g. which mosques and (virtual) meeting places has the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual visited, and clarifies whether this is indeed a "case" for the advice centre (see "A case", p. 14). Basic counselling may be a first consultation by telephone or in person and lead to a different form of counselling or cover multiple counselling appointments. Where necessary, it may be taken over by other expert centres.

System-oriented counselling

System-oriented counselling involves the social environment (systems) of the person/people receiving counselling and/or the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual. This is generally the family context in a more specific manner and, in a broader manner, the friendship group, neighbourhood, associations, school or occupation. The primary goal of system-oriented counselling is strengthening the resources and competencies of the people receiving counselling and the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual in order to spark long-term, critical, self-reflective processes and potential disengagement, plus ideally to promote deradicalisation. The development of pragmatic solution strategies and engagement with ideological concepts and joint reflection on these are focal points. The counsellors support reflective processes and provide people with help to help themselves (empowerment). In this regard, the people receiving counselling see themselves as being effective at solving their problems. System-oriented counselling is a solution-oriented process which can last from a few weeks up to multiple years at regular intervals.

System-oriented counselling for the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals is divided up into various forms of counselling depending on the target group:

1. In **family counselling**, (grand)parents and siblings or other relatives receive specific information about dealing with behavioural changes which are seen as problematic in the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual. (Grand) parents are strengthened in their role and the healthy development of the child is supported. In this regard, special focus is placed on dealing with family problems, including in the form of individual counselling for the child. In connection with this, counsellors can also take on a moderation role between individual members of the family. Furthermore, discussion prompts and guided dialogue exercises may help to take on different positions and perspectives to be able to view existing conflicts from another side. The goal of family counselling is to create/restore positive relationships between (grand)parents and children to disrupt the radicalisation process with intervention measures.

If spouses or life partners become radicalised, conflicts arise in lots of everyday matters in the couple's life and, where applicable, the family's life: Dispute about politics, loss of friendships, strict upbringing of children, change in diet, withdrawal from public spaces, violence, changes of beliefs about sexuality etc. When solving these conflicts, counsellors can adopt a moderation role. The goal of couples counselling is to create/restore positive relationships between spouses and life partners to slow down radicalisation processes and ideally encourage and support disengagement and deradicalisation processes.

2. **Peer counselling** relates to friends of the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual. People of the same age observe changes in a person who is becoming radicalised at a very early stage and are important actors in their social environment. In peer counselling, counsellors work together on the possible causes of the radicalisation and potential positive influences in the peer group. It is important for the counselling to have a respectful and perceptive approach to the needs of the peers in order to not overwhelm or endanger them.

3. **Counselling in a professional and leisure context** takes place with employers, neighbours, coaches at sport and cultural associations, music teachers, education workers at leisure organisations etc. with which the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual has (voluntary) contact. Existing trusting relationships can be further strengthened in the counselling process and emotional stabilisation of the affected individual in their social environment can be achieved.

4. For **counselling in a school context** possible signs of radicalisation may be relevant: rejection of sport classes, distribution of Islamist/anti-Semitic narratives, provocative or conflicting religious proclamations, missionisation attempts in the playground, rejection of authority and refusal to attend school. This poses a challenge to all schools. In counselling for teachers, school social workers, education workers and school management, practical strategies for dealing with conflict situations can be developed to reduce the pressure in everyday school life and have a positive effect on the affected pupils.

5. **Institutional and public authority counselling** takes place when public interests and laws apply: Can support services from youth welfare or social assistance be used? Is there any risk to a child's welfare? Are there any concrete indications of danger to an individual or third parties and/or are criminal laws being breached? In the latter points, cooperation with security authorities is essential. In lots of other cases, the cooperation of advice centres and public authorities, expert discussion and mutual support are in the interest of the social environment and the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual. The professional actors share their assessments according to data protection and employment law requirements and agree on procedures and measures in network meetings.

Coaching

With coaching, counsellors support close reference people of the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual, e.g. the parents or life partners, in a longer-term, more intensive process. Before the coaching starts, the conflict situation is analysed and reflected upon with the help of various methods, e.g. biography work (see p. 30). Subsequently, the conflict relationships between the affected individuals are processed to improve their interactions with one another. The counsellors are critical conversation partners during the coaching process who provide support in the development of possible solutions and desired behavioural changes. The aim of the coaching is for the person receiving counselling to autonomously and independently develop individual strategies for dealing with the problem, as well as practically implementing a positive relationship design with the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual.

Case management

Close relatives of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals can be exposed to high levels of stress due to the conflict situation which may appear to be impossible to solve. The psychologically extremely challenging situation can lead to further problems in everyday life, e.g. inability to work and associated money worries, family disputes, separation, health worries, social exclusion and loss of their home. In case management, the goal is initially to stabilise the person receiving counselling again in their live in order to enable them psychologically and physically, as part of the second step, to have a positive effect on the (potentially) radicalised Islamist relative. Case management comes from social work and builds upon the individually-tailored help provided for people in difficult life situations. A key element of this is actively involving the affected individuals in the process of defining goals, planning and implementation. Like other forms of counselling, case management also contributes to increasing the responsibility of the person receiving counselling but still provides greater support via general coordination and cooperation of organisations, services, public authorities and responsibilities. Depending on the case and the legal options, case management counsellors inform the actors which are involved, guide access to important services and review the changes in the counselling process on a continuous basis.

Work steps in the counselling process

Counselling for the social environment of a (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual (Fig. 2)

Processes, goals and strategies of counselling are shown in the following diagram for example purposes. The diagram builds upon the model created in the context of the evaluation of the Advice Centre on Radicalisation (Uhlmann 2017, p. 42 et seq.).

1st step

Initial contact with the person seeking help

This contact may take place in different ways at the advice centres:

- The people seeking help come to the advice centre.
- With a referral from an institution (e.g. Advice Centre on Radicalisation at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)), the advice centre gets in touch with the affected individuals.

Objectives

- Information about the service and the legal framework of the advice centre
- Creation of transparency regarding the counselling service and the fundamental standards according to which the counselling is provided and the relevant legal obligations to which counsellors are subject
- Prevent danger to the general public and risk to the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual

Strategies

- Analysis of the risk situation (danger to the individual and third parties)
- Developing relationship with people seeking help

Methods

- Information provision
- Provision of legal information
- Social counselling

2nd step

Problem and task clarification

The clarification of the problem situation(s) and the task begins during the initial contact and, after the arrangement of a further counselling appointment, continues within the framework of a meeting in person or telephone appointment. This depends on the case constellation, the needs of the people receiving counselling and the available personnel and temporal resources.

Objectives

- Investigating and understanding the situation
- Analysis of the available information which is viewed as an indication of (potentially) Islamist radicalisation by the people receiving counselling
- Clarification of the expectations of the people receiving counselling

Strategies

- Situation analysis and resource clarification

Methods

- Information provision
- Provision of legal information
- Social counselling
- Systemic counselling
- Historical/political and democratic education work
- Religion-sensitive counselling
- Theological and religious education counselling

In the event of new findings/developments, adapt/change problem and task clarification

3rd step

Target identification and strategy development

The definition of the issue at hand provides the basis for counselling. This leads to the identification of the goals and the strategy development to achieve the goals. Both are defined together with the people receiving the counselling.

Action options are collected for the various actors. These are intended to strengthen them in engaging with the person who is becoming radicalised. Furthermore deescalating communication methods are discussed.

Objectives

- Joint definition of short-term, medium-term and long-term goals
- Development of support and help services for the people receiving counselling
- Action safety for the people receiving counselling
- Stabilisation of the social environment of the person being radicalised

Strategies

- Developing robust relationships with people receiving counselling
- Analyses of the social environment and identification of relevant people and services
- Peer case advice
- Anonymised case conference

Methods

- Social counselling
- Systemic counselling
- Historical/political and democratic education work
- Religion-sensitive counselling
- Theological and religious education counselling
- Mediation and conflict moderation
- Cognitive communication and behaviour modification

In the event of new findings/developments, adapt/change target identification and strategy development

4th step

Planning: Counselling form, setting and methods

In the following, suitable methods are selected from various counselling forms, settings and methods depending on the case, goals and problem situations.

Objectives

- Selection and development of a case-adapted counselling service
- Ensuring the coherence of the planned measures

Strategies

- Reliance on the expertise and experience in the multiprofessional team
- Reliance on the expertise and experience of the people receiving counselling
- Reliance on the expertise and experience of others, e.g. family advice centres, therapists etc.
- Peer case advice
- Anonymised case conference

Methods

- Social counselling
- Systemic counselling
- Historical/political and democratic education work
- Religion-sensitive counselling
- Theological and religious education counselling
- Mediation and conflict moderation
- Cognitive communication and behaviour modification

In the event of new findings/developments, adapt/change target identification and strategy development

5th step

Using the individual counselling service

Following the selection of the counselling form, setting and methods, implementation in line with the strategy which has been developed and the identified short-term and long-term goals takes place in cooperation with the respective relevant partners (people receiving counselling, expert centres, public authorities and other network actors).

Objectives

- Emotional stabilisation of the people receiving counselling
- Emotional stabilisation of the radicalised person
- Encouragement of critical thought and self-reflection processes
- Disengagement of the radicalised person from the radicalising environment
- Where applicable, disengagement of the radicalised person from violence

Strategies

- Deradicalisation dimensions:
- affective: The emotional/personal level engages with emotional attachments, interactions, conflicts and emotional pressures, needs and wishes of the affected person. Here, critical experiences which may have influenced the radicalisation, are covered here.
- pragmatic: This dimension engages with the questions of everyday life, e.g. school, education, job, finances and living situation. This includes critical reflection of scene contacts in relation to their own future and looking for social contacts outside the scene.
- ideological: Stimulating critical thinking, questioning extremist narratives, providing new impulses
- Where applicable, making direct contact with the radicalised person
- Relationship with the radicalised person: restoring/creating robust relationships between the radicalised person and people receiving counselling
- Anonymised case conference

Methods

- See 4.
- Biography work
- Social group work
- Moderated sessions for families and relatives

In the event of new findings/developments, adapt/change counselling form, setting, methods

6th step

Reflection on the impact

The people receiving counselling report their observations on the behaviour of the radicalised person and their perception regarding potential signs of deradicalisation processes and/or further radicalisation. The counsellors structure and guide the reflection in order to be able to carry out further adjustments to the counselling where applicable for any changes in problem situations, goals and strategies with the person receiving counselling and the social environment.

Objectives

- Long-term and sustainable stabilisation of the person being radicalised

Strategies

- Reflection on the counselling processes with the people receiving counselling
- Assessment of target achievement and, where necessary, changes to the goals with the people receiving counselling

Methods

- Peer case advice
- Anonymised case conference
- Case documentation
- Monitoring the process

There is no effect, there is no change: adapt/change the counselling form/setting/methods

Figure 2: Work steps in the counselling process

Micro standards

The counselling methods set out below are to be viewed against the backdrop of the self-image of the respective advice centre and its genesis. The overview of the micro standards cannot be understood as a coherent system but as an expression of a range of procedures which are based on various approaches from considered practical experience. This means that not all of the counselling methods which are mentioned are used by every advice centre. The decision to use certain counselling methods is always dependent on the case and goal.

Micro standards
relate to the methods used in the case work according to the approaches of the advice centre and their application.

The advice centres work with various theoretical approaches, which can sometimes also be combined:

The **psychoanalytical theory** is based on the assumption that the development of personality and the behaviour of an individual is determined by constant subconscious conflicts in the psyche. Problematic behaviours can be traced back to early lack of psychological processing and are discovered through a process of unobstructed recount of childhood memories and dreams in order to access the subconscious and find out to what extent it is triggering unwanted behaviour. This can be used to develop a healthier way of dealing with previously suppressed feelings and as a way to strengthen inner resources and problem-solving skills.

The **cognitive theory** engages with internal psychological processes and is based on the assumption that the human mind, like a computer, collects impulses, passes them on and processes them in the brain. This processing is described as an intermediary psychological process in cognitive psychology. With logical thinking or learning processes, the brain creates new connections and saves them. The strength to change is thus about how you think about events and situations, react to them and then consequently engage with them.

The **humanistic theory** is based on an individual perspective and places emphasis of the subjective experience of individual people. The individuals are studied in their entirety and this follows the goal of individual self-realisation. Free will and choice are key factors. Listening is above the perception of individuals. The focal point is on researching the personality of individuals, with the focus being on one's own self-image, feeling of self-worth and images of an ideal self.

with the various forms of counselling (see p. 21 and 22), the counsellors have multiple methods available to them, which are either used exclusively in a concrete setting or can complement each other. The methods can be differentiated in terms of situational, informative, social, education-oriented, religious, biography-oriented, cognitive behavioural and psychotherapy services.

Counselling methods

Initial counselling appointment via the telephone helpline using the example of the Advice Centre on Radicalisation at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF):

the initial telephone counselling serves to clarify the situation of the person seeking counselling in their interaction with the suspected radicalised individual. In this regard, a key goal is the initial assessment of potential radicalisation tendencies or extremist influences in the behaviours and thoughts of the suspected radicalised individual.

Since direct counselling for people looking to distance themselves is rare, it is generally about evaluating the third-party assessments made by the person seeking counselling. They generally talk about a situation which they perceive as a conflict situation:

The traditional sender-recipient communication model gains complexity in the context of counselling for the social environment. The third-party report is only indirectly linked with the self-report of the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual; it cannot be entirely separated from them but is shaped by the person's own thoughts and feelings. The counsellors distinguish between "self-reports" and "third-party reports":

- Feelings of the people seeking help (senders)
- Needs of the people seeking help (senders)
- Thoughts, attitudes, ideological security and cognitive distortion of the people seeking help (senders)
- Facts about the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual (biography, chronology of radicalisation, observed behaviours and thoughts)
- Critical comments about the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual (expression of own attitude against the behaviour of the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual)

In order for this to succeed, the counsellors on the telephone helpline tailor their work to the requirements of the people seeking help and use various methods in connection with this. Primarily, the techniques of psychological exploration serve as the basis for discussion. The questions are based on the social environment, the situation, cognition, emotion and motivation. Suggestive questions are to be excluded particularly carefully.

The counsellor has a respectful and empathetic approach so that the question of subjective experiences can be taken further when providing counselling to relatives in particular.

Since the counselling is intended to focus on the initial assessment of the potential radicalisation tendencies, it is particularly important to separate the facts from the assessment comments. In this regard, a more precise impression of the situation can be generated via targeted questioning, scaling, challenging and even confrontation with potential consequences of incorrect assignment, e.g. distinguishing between religious symbols and signs of potential radicalisation.

A decision on the next steps is made using the information that has been obtained: if the present behavioural descriptions seem vague, non-specific and general, more contact is required accordingly. Carrying out an initial assessment requires specific specialist skills and sound experience as well as knowledge provided by multiprofessional teams.

The assessment is communicated using various methods which result from the atmosphere of the respective counselling discussion.

The overall process of initial telephone counselling can thus be formally divided up into the following sections:

- Brief introduction of the service
- Information about confidentiality obligation
- Formulation of the counselling subject matter
- Assessment
- Feedback of assessment
- Discussion of next steps

Communication

Communication methods focus primarily on process-oriented (self-)reflection by the person receiving counselling. **Active listening** takes place non-verbally via open body language, eye contact and approving, understanding or encouraging nodding by the counsellors. They demonstrate that they understand the person who is speaking, both in terms of content and emotion, via verbal comments such as "I understand". The speech flow is not interrupted wherever possible; the counsellors wait through any pauses or use special **question techniques**, e.g. open questions such as "Could you explain... again in more detail?" in order to obtain a holistic understanding of the problem situation. Process-oriented and solution-oriented questions are primarily used to identify the motives and feelings of the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual. In this context, questions are asked about feelings and opinions and a change of perspective is encouraged: "What would your child say about that?". In addition, the counsellors use additional **conversation techniques** to ensure that they have correctly understood what has been said and whether the speaker is, deliberately or unintentionally, withholding specific information. Methods for this include paraphrasing (briefly summarising the content which has been heard in your own words), mirroring/verbalisation (recognising and expressing the emotions of the conversation partner from facial expressions and gestures), visualisation (visual depiction of facts) and encouragement (assurance of interest and time). The counsellors listen to the opinions of the person receiving counselling without evaluating them. They expand their perception by incorporating other positions of people who are not present. This encourages a change of perspective and reflection on the self-perception and third-party perception of the person receiving counselling: "How do others perceive me?", "How do I see myself?". Reframing of conflicts with a change of language is also helpful, e.g. "My child annoys me all the time!" changes to "My child would like attention!". If the attention is solely directed at the problematic behaviour of the child, it is advisable to ask about potential in the social environment to encourage new ways of viewing the issue and behaviours: "What is particularly good for your child and who can offer it?". If the person receiving counselling is particularly resistant, "worsening scenarios" can be designed.

Information provision

General counselling provides people receiving counselling with space to ask specific questions of counsellors with expert knowledge. The counsellors are educated in various disciplines, e.g. Islamic studies, social work, social education, educational sciences, psychology etc. (see p. 16), and capable of providing comprehensive advice on radicalisation and extremism. The advice centres are part of a network of support services and expert centres and can refer to them when needed.

Provision of legal information

In every first consultation, the counsellors provide the person receiving counselling with information about the legal situation. According to Section 203 Criminal Code, certain professional groups are subject to the criminal code obligation to exercise discretion. This includes, for example, state-recognised social workers, social education workers and psychologists but not experts in Islamic studies, political studies and social scientists. The people receiving counselling are informed that the counsellors at the advice centres will discuss the case in peer case advice sessions and case supervisions, anonymously where possible, and document this. For reasons of significant public interest, the advice centres may also process personal data of affected individuals who demonstrate an affiliation to religion or world view (according to Section 22 (1) No. 1 lit. d Federal Data Protection Act.

In some cases, there is legal authority or an obligation to disclose sensitive information. If the counsellors find out about ongoing crimes in a counselling appointment (crime is being carried out but has not yet ended, e.g. membership in a terrorist organisation) or potential crimes in the future (plans for a crime, e.g. preparation of serious anti-state violence or formation of a terrorist organisation, murder, hostage taking, theft, extortion, arson etc.), they are subject to a reporting obligation (Section 138 Criminal Code). The counsellors are also subject to a testimony obligation (Section 48 Criminal Code) in investigations and main proceedings if invited by a judge or public prosecutor. In cases of the protection of child and youth welfare, Section 8b (1) Social Security Code VIII and Section 4 Law on Cooperation and Information in Child Protection Cases in particular are applicable. Counsellors may obtain professional advice and support in order to protect children and young people. In this regard, counsellors are authorised to use pseudonymised data to obtain advice from an "experienced expert in this field". The passing on of personal data to the youth welfare office only takes place if there is no other option to avert danger.

Social counselling

General social counselling helps people receiving counselling to deal with challenges in their everyday lives and in the assertion of individual rights in a pragmatic and solution-oriented manner. This social work and/or social education counselling work comprises a very wide range of issues, from everyday issues, difficult life situations or even support in measures to support livelihoods. The goal of social counselling is to make low-threshold help and support services accessible to people receiving counselling in a well-suited manner.

Historical/political and democratic education work

Historical education work can be described as "learning from history". Knowledge transfer via historical developments and connections enables people receiving counselling to classify historical events and processes and to form a critical judgment. Awareness of history and understanding of contemporary complex connections as a result of historical processes forms the basis of historical/political education. Here too, tolerance (ambiguity) and critical thinking are taught and strengthened. In particular, knowledge and skills relating to politics are developed. The fundamental questions and complex issues relating to society as a whole are discussed and reflected upon in their diversity and with their contradictions.

Following this, the focus of democratic education work is social participation and political involvement. Equality and individual freedom to make decisions characterised education goals in democratic societies. However, implementation requires independent thinking and actions, plus the ability to participate in democratic processes in an autonomous manner. The people receiving counselling can collect experiences of self-efficacy in democratic education work and process and reflect upon democratic processes critically.

Religion-sensitive counselling

Religion sensitivity is a counselling skill which focuses on religion as a core topic of the counselling session. This method is not confession-oriented and requires an open attitude to focus on religious questions and interests of the people receiving counselling. Unlike the culture-sensitive approach which can also take place in counselling, it is not about interpretational sovereignty and religious education but about creating a space to ask questions about god and the world. Personal expectations and experiences, spirit and values, as well as dealing with religion and religious plurality, are dealt with. The goal of religion-sensitive counselling is critical engagement with one's own religion and, where applicable, extremist ideology, as well as the promotion of open religious practice which does not restrict oneself or others.

Theological and religious education counselling

As the "teachings of god", theology is based upon religious beliefs. Theologists who work as counsellors in the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals act as points of contact for religious questions and may act as role models. This confession-oriented counselling has a transcendency basis and enables, for example in pastoral care, personal spiritual guidance and support for people in specific life crises. This form of practical theology directly engages the people receiving counselling in a discussion, provides support with joint prayer, soothes and encourages with words from the Koran or bible, provides social support and can trigger disengagement processes.

Religious education counselling is also confession-based and designs religious education and socialisation from the perspective of a faith community. In counselling processes, religion education workers use theological and pedagogical skills in discussions about questions of faith.

Biography work

Biographical methods engage with individual life paths and experiences of the people receiving counselling and the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual. Personality development is encouraged using descriptive and reflective elements. In (family) biographical work, the relatives can learn in the counselling setting to allow new perspectives and step into the shoes of the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual. This requires a great deal of self-reflection and empathy. The relatives and/or the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals reflect in this regard on emotions and resources and at the same time learn methods for dealing with them. The main focus is on dealing with the individual radicalisation process in which memories are connected to their causes and reflected on together.

Systemic counselling

Systemic counselling understands the person receiving counselling as an expert in their own life and/or the social system with which they are connected. The origin family with their respective rules, roles, language and interaction patterns is of particular importance. From a systemic perspective, problems, disruptions or conflicts do not develop in isolation but always in interaction with the social sphere and the environment. Thus, behaviour cannot be understood or changed without the social system. Systemic counselling focuses on the strengths of the person receiving counselling. The aim is to strengthen the resources and skills of the affected people and their social environment in order to solve life problems in a self-organised and autonomous manner. In this regard, the counsellors use self-reflection methods which can irritate the perceived reality by facilitating new perspectives on situations and relationships.

Mediation and conflict moderation

In mediation, counsellors support at least two parties in independently and constructively resolving a conflict. The counsellors take on the role of an impartial third party and guide the individuals through a five-stage process responsibly: 1. Task clarification, 2. Topic collection/status quo, 3. Positions and interests, 4. Agreement on one of the solution options which has been gathered and 5. Implementation. The goal of the discussion is an agreement of both parties which is open in terms of the result at the beginning of the process and corresponds to the interests of both parties (win-win). All people involved in the process are bound to maintain confidentiality. The counsellors ask questions which clarify facts and derive requirements. If necessary, the counsellors even out the power gap between the conflict parties in the moderation role. In this regard, the counsellors do not make any decisions, do not provide any recommendations and do not make any suggestions for potential conflict resolution. This method of mediation is used primarily in parent/child conflicts.

Cognitive communication and behaviour training

In communication and behaviour training, the people receiving counselling initially reflect on their individual potential and the psychosocial situation of the (potentially) radicalised Islamist individual and then design methods and techniques for having discussions in order to become more effective when dealing with them and to be able to cope with problems and conflicts more constructively. In this regard, on the one hand, "old patterns" need to be identified and changed and, on the other hand, renewed or more intensive positive contact with the affected individual needs to be created. In this regard, it is primarily important to demonstrate interest in the feelings and needs of the other person, e.g. "What do you find so fascinating about Islam then?", promote joint activities, e.g. "Will you take me with you to the mosque at some point?" and show concern about the relationship, e.g. "Why do you not tell me things any more?". Primarily biographical work and role plays are key methods in training communication and behavioural changes.

Social group work

In social group work, people receiving counselling in the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals experience an increase in and expansion of their social skills via social education-supported group processes. This counselling method improves relationship abilities in order to be able to deal with problems and conflicts more effectively. The group is used as a tool to promote the personal development of the group members and overcome deficits in practising social roles.

Moderated sessions for families and relatives

The accompanied meeting of relatives, primarily parents, of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals provides a safe space in which people in similar crisis situations can talk about problems and worries. This can provide relief for the participants, provide them with new encouragement and lead to long-term emotional stabilisation.

Case studies

The following case studies are fictional and highly-simplified portrayals. They serve the purpose of making the procedures involved in counselling processes understandable as an example. The focus is on the joint standards of counselling for the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals in the nationwide advice centre network by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF).

Case study A

Macro standards

Self-perception of the advice centres and attitude of the counsellors Counselling principles: Voluntary participation, respect, empathy, authenticity, transparency, accountability.

Meso standards

Counselling setting, nature/scope/goals of the counselling, relationship design, counselling process diagram: Situation analysis and resource clarification, development of possible solutions, forms of counselling

Micro standards

Counselling approaches and methods

1st step

An employee at the youth welfare office contacts the advice centre.

A 14-year-old pupil is behaving unusually: he is trying to convert his fellow pupils to Salafism in the playground. The school management contacted the youth welfare office. The office now contacts the advice centre.

The counsellors clarify a potential risk with the youth welfare office employee. An initial assessment shows: There is no danger to the individual or others.

The counsellors provide the employee at the youth welfare office with information about the advice centre's services: options, responsibilities, legal situation and counselling limitations.

In the first consultation, it becomes clear that a partnership between the youth welfare office, school leaders, advice centre and ideally the parents of the (potentially) radicalised Islamist young person is necessary.

2nd step

Understanding the situation and task clarification.

A few days later, there is a meeting at the school between the youth welfare office, advice centre, school leaders and the parents of the (potentially) radicalised Islamist young person. The school leaders were able to persuade the parents to participate in this meeting in the interest of their son.

The school leaders explain the development of the pupil which it sees as being problematic. The parents mention similar changes and problematic behaviour.

On the basis of what has been said, the counsellors provide information on the phenomenon of Islamist extremism. As a result, the changes and the problematic behaviour can be better understood and classified accordingly for everyone involved.

This is a case. All the actors involved consent to jointly-agreed counselling and contribute to the process.

3rd step

The joint goal is to change the problematic behaviour of the 14-year-old.

The next steps of the collaboration between the relevant actors are significant. Everyone wants to support the disengagement process and actively contribute to ideally encouraging deradicalisation processes in the form of (re) integration into family and school.

For this purpose, comprehensive situation and resource analyses should take place to define solution-oriented measures with corresponding role distribution.

The goal of the counselling is safe contact between the social environment and the young person in everyday life. The ability and confidence of important reference people from the social environment of the young person to take action are ensured/restored.

The development of support services for the young person and his parents is an important goal of the inter-institutional cooperation.

Back to step 2: Clarify the role of the peers of the 14-year-old pupil.

4th step

Planning

Regular discussion between the actors who are involved

Coordination by the advice centre

Counselling processes:

- Relationship development
- Parent counselling
- Class teacher counselling
- Setting: Family
- Form: Coaching
- Methods
  - Communication and discussion techniques
  - Information provision
  - Provision of legal information
  - Social counselling
  - Religion-sensitive counselling
- **Adaptation of the methods:** The youth welfare office offers the family additional social education family measures.
- More intensive counselling of class teacher by counsellor.
- School management and class teacher tailor learning support to the pupil's needs.

Higher need for critical reflection on religious beliefs. Questioning of Salafist views.

Additional issues in the family are becoming visible. Further measures are necessary to stabilise family life.

Negative development of school performance.

Involve more actors.
Repeat resource clarification and clarify the role of the peers.

5th step

Implementation

Cooperation and accountability of the actors who are involved

Coordination by the advice centre

Regular counselling appointments with the class teacher

More intensive counselling process with the parents as they can be most effective in influencing their son

- The parents initially do not trust the counselling.
- After a few weeks, they accept the offer of counselling.
- The methodical counselling process enables reflection processes, takes pressure of those who are involved and creates/restores confidence to act.

6th step

Behavioural change: Disengagement?

An interim evaluation takes place after four months. The meeting of the actors involved, i.e. the parents, counsellors, school management, class teacher and the youth welfare office employee, takes place shortly before the grade conference at the end of the school year.

Everyone who is involved is present.

Religion is still a very important topic for the young person. The parents and class teacher confirm this perception. However, the discussions have changed. The young person is asking more questions than he is able to provide answers for. That may be a positive sign. The parents and class teacher are supported in answering these questions by the advice centre or can decide to bring in a direct reference person specifically for engagement with questions of world view.

The young person's poor grades mean that he may not move up into the next class.

Who could deal with a potential relapse? Peers could play a positive role here.

Basic standards

Access to counselling: free, oriented to the living environment, accessible at a low threshold. Needs-based and case-based counselling. Multiprofessional counselling.

Figure 3: Case study A

Case study B

Macro standards

Self-perception of the advice centres and attitude of the counsellors Counselling principles: Voluntary participation, respect, empathy, authenticity, transparency, accountability.

Meso standards

Counselling setting, nature/scope/goals of the counselling, relationship design, counselling process diagram: Situation analysis and resource clarification, development of possible solutions, forms of counselling

Micro standards

Counselling approaches and methods

1st step

A father contacts the advice centre.

His 19-year-old son is active in the Salafist scene. Violence is suspected to play a role.

The counsellors clarify the safety situation with the father and, due to the information provided by the father, come to the conclusion that the individual or others are in danger. After receiving legal information from the counsellors, the father reports his observations to the police.

The counsellors remain in contact with the father and inform him about the counselling service and the legal prerequisites associated with this. The cooperation with the security authorities should be transparent and have a positive effect on the counselling process.

The father is under a great deal of emotional pressure and would like to use the advice centres' counselling service.

2nd step

Understanding the situation and task clarification.

The counsellors clarify the problem situation(s) together with the father.

For understanding the situation, the father talks about his son and his environment in the counselling session.

The counsellors follow up on the development of the son, possible meeting places and group dynamics in the suspected Salafist environment.

The counsellors provide the father with information about Islamist extremism so the father can better understand the (new) living environment of his son.

After an initial situation analysis and clarifying counselling discussions, a resource analysis takes place. What resources does the son have? Which people could have a positive effect on him in his social environment?

3rd step

The joint goal is changing the problematic behaviour of the 19-year-old.

By establishing a professional working relationship between the father receiving counselling and the counsellors, a realistic and differentiated image of various problem situations and possible radicalisation and protection factors can be developed. Contact with the biological mother is not possible. The relationship between the stepmother and the 19-year-old young person is problematic. The father recognises that his son feels neglected by the new life partner/stepmother. The father wishes to strengthen his role as an important reference person and spend more time with his son.

Further counselling goals were defined by the person receiving counselling, the father and the counsellors. The intention is to improve communication between father and son. The counselling provides the father with a more sensitive way of engaging with his son and the father learns to address his son's needs. The father is aware that this relates to complex processes and events in the social environment and that (positive) changes take time.

4th step

Planning

Regular counselling appointments with the father

Regular counselling appointments at the advice centre

Counselling goal: Restoration of a robust relationship between father and son

The case and the counselling process are dealt with in the advice centre team (peer case advice). Then planning is carried out for the counselling process in a case-dependent, needs-dependent and resource-dependent manner:

Counselling process for father

- Relationship development
- Setting: Individual counselling
- Form: Coaching
- Methods
  - Communication and discussion techniques
  - Information provision
  - Provision of legal information
  - Religion-sensitive counselling
  - Mediation and conflict moderation
  - Biography work
  - Cognitive behaviour modification
- **Adaptation of the methods:** Provision of legal information and clarification of the legal situation.

5th step

Implementation

Intensive counselling process with the father takes place.

- The working relationship between the counsellors and father is respectful and professional.
- A methodical counselling process enables reflection processes, relieves pressure and creates/restores confidence to act.
- The reflection processes of the father lead, for example, to the finding that there were lots of warning signs and cries for help from his son even before the radicalisation.

The relationship between father and son improves during the counselling process. The son accepts the father's relationship offer and opens up. When the son fails an exam during his professional education, he ceases contact with his father. The father immediately contacts the advice centre, he suspects that his son has entered the Salafist scene and may wish to go to Syria.

The father contacts the police and reports his suspicion.

Shortly after this, his son is arrested by the police at the airport whilst trying to leave the country.

According to the father, the individual and others are potentially in danger.

6th step

Behavioural change: Disengagement?

The reflection of the counselling process with the father and the counsellors shows: the father is relieved that his son has not succeeded in leaving the country. He can visit his son in prison and talk to him. It is important to the father that his son accepts the counselling service and critically reflects on his "irrational action".

In a further step, the case and counselling process are dealt with, documented, then evaluated and subject to efficacy monitoring in peer case advice sessions and anonymised case conferences.

Disengagement of the son from the Salafist scene (before his attempted emigration) was not achieved.

The counselling goal of improved communication between father and son was achieved, as was the restoration of robust family relationships.

The son who is in prison accepts counselling from the advice centre after talking to his father.

Basic standards

Access to counselling: free, oriented to the living environment, accessible at a low threshold. Needs-based and case-based counselling. Multiprofessional counselling.

Figure 4: Case study B

Overview of the advice centre network of the Advice Centre on Radicalisation at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)

* Note: konex exit counselling was not part of the development of standards for counselling for the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals. konex has been part of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) advice centre network since 2019 and provides counselling in the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals in Baden-Wuerttemberg.

The advice centres of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) network

Advice Centre on Radicalisation

Nationwide contact point and coordination centre

Frankenstraße 210
90461 Nuremberg

BERATUNGSSTELLE RADIKALISIERUNG

Counselling helpline: 0911 943 43 43
(Monday to Friday: 9 am to 3 pm)
beratung@bamf.bund.de
www.beratungsstelle-radikalisierung.de

Service:

- Information and initial counselling for people seeking help via the nationwide telephone helpline
- Specialist counselling and further education for experts and multipliers
- Setting up a nationwide network of qualified advice centres
- Referral to local network advice centres
- Further education and coordination of the network advice centres
- Planning and establishing coordination processes within the national and state advice centre network at public authority and civil society level
- Implementation of model projects

Counselling in the following languages: German, English, Turkish, Russian (plus: interpreter pool)
Public authority: Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)
Nationwide counselling

PROvention

Prevention and advice centre against religious extremism

Elisabethstr. 44
24143 Kiel

PROvention

Counselling helpline: +0431 73 94926
(Monday to Friday: 10 am to 5 pm)
provention@tgsh.de
http://provention.tgsh.de

Service:

- Counselling for the social environment of at-risk and (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals
- Disengagement and exit counselling
- Specialist counselling and further education for experts and multipliers
- Workshops for young people

Counselling in the following languages: German, English, French, Turkish, Arabic, Farsi, Sorani, Russian
Entity: Türkische Gemeinde in Schleswig-Holstein e. V. (TGSH)
Counselling in Schleswig-Holstein

Bidaya

Prevention of religious extremism

Siegfried-Marcus-Str. 45
17192 Waren (Müritz)

FACHSTELLE Bidaya PRÄVENTION VON RELIGIÖS BEGRÜNDETEM EXTREMISMUS

Counselling helpline: 03991 67 38 587 or 0160 80 45 287
(Monday to Friday: 8 am to 4 pm)
bidaya.mv@cjd.de
www.bidaya-mv.de

Service:

- Counselling for the social environment of at-risk and (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals
- Disengagement and exit counselling
- Specialist counselling and further education for experts and multipliers

Counselling in the following languages: German, English, Turkish, Persian, Serbo-Croatian
Entity: Christliches Jugenddorfwerk Deutschland e. V. (CJD North)
Counselling in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

Legato. Systemic counselling

Advice centre for religious radicalisation

22767 Hamburg

Legato Systemische Ausstiegsberatung

Counselling helpline: 040 38 90 29 52
beratung@legato-hamburg.de
https://legato-hamburg.de

Service:

- Counselling for the social environment of at-risk and (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals
- Disengagement and exit counselling
- Specialist counselling and further education for experts and multipliers
- Discussion groups for parents and affected individuals

Counselling in the following languages: German, English, Turkish, Arabic, Dari, Farsi, Sorani
Entity: Vereinigung Pestalozzi gGmbH und Ambulante Maßnahmen Altona e. V.
Counselling in Hamburg

kitab advice centre

Counselling network for families, professionals and affected individuals for dealing with religious extremism

Bornstr. 14-15
28195 Bremen

Counselling helpline: 0177 69 12 905
kitab@vaja-bremen.de
https://vaja-bremen.de/teams/kitab

Service:

- Counselling for the social environment of at-risk and (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals
- Disengagement and exit counselling
- Specialist counselling and further education for experts and multipliers

Counselling in the following languages: German, English, Turkish, Arabic, French
Entity: Verein zur Förderung akzeptierender Jugendarbeit e. V. (VAJA)
Counselling in Bremen and Bremerhaven

HAYAT Advice Centre

Advice Centre on Deradicalisation

Ebertystr. 46
10249 Berlin

Counselling helpline Berlin: 0157 71 35 99 63
or 030 23 48 93 35
(Monday to Friday: 11 am to 3 pm)
Counselling helpline Bonn: +0157 725 44937
or 0228 976 670 00
(Monday to Friday: 11 am to 3 pm)
info@hayat-deutschland.de
www.hayat-deutschland.de

Service:

- Counselling for the social environment of at-risk and (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals
- Disengagement and exit counselling
- Discussion groups for parents

Counselling in the following languages: German, English, Turkish, Farsi, Dari
Entity: ZDK Gesellschaft Demokratische Kultur gGmbH
Nationwide counselling with focal points in Berlin, Bonn and the area surrounding Bonn

Advice Centre Berlin

Bergmannstraße 5
Building 2, 3rd floor
10961 Berlin

Counselling helpline: 030 23 911 300
berlin@violence-prevention-network.de
www.beratungsstelle-berlin.de

Service:

- Counselling for the social environment of at-risk and (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals
- Disengagement and exit counselling
- Advice, support and special training for young people at risk of becoming radicalised prior to delinquency
- Specialist counselling and further education for experts and multipliers
- Workshops for young people

Counselling in the following languages: German, English, Turkish, Arabic
Entity: Violence Prevention Network gGmbH
Counselling in Berlin

Advice Centre Hesse

Ways out of extremism

Leipziger Straße 67
60487 Frankfurt am Main

Counselling helpline: 069 272 999 97
hessen@violence-prevention-network.de
www.beratungsstelle-hessen.de

North Hessen Branch Office
Werner-Hilpert Straße 21
34117 Kassel

Offenbach Branch Office
Schloßstraße 20-22
63065 Offenbach am Main

Service:

- Counselling for the social environment of at-risk and (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals
- Disengagement and exit counselling
- Student workshops on interfaith and intercultural responsibility
- Political education for promoting tolerance and democratic behaviour

Counselling in the following languages: German, English, French, Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic, Sorani, Spanish
Entity: Violence Prevention Network gGmbH
Counselling in Hessen

Grenzgänger

Counselling for people seeking help on the topic of religious extremism

Kortumstraße 106–108
44787 Bochum

Counselling helpline: 0234 687 266 64
info@grenzgaenger.nrw
www.grenzgaenger.nrw

Service:

- Counselling for the social environment of at-risk and (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals
- Disengagement and exit counselling
- Specialist counselling and further education for experts and multipliers

Counselling in the following languages: German, English, French, Turkish, Arabic, Sorani, Russian (plus: interpreter pool)
Entity: IFAK e. V. – Verein für multikulturelle Kinder- und Jugendhilfe - Migrationsarbeit
Counselling in North Rhine-Westphalia

beRATen

Advice Centre for the Prevention of Neo-Salafist Radicalisation

Herschelstraße 32
30159 Hannover

Counselling helpline: +0511 700520 40
(Monday to Friday: 9 am to 3 pm)
info@beraten-niedersachsen.de
www.beraten-niedersachsen.de

Service:

- Counselling for the social environment of at-risk and (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals
- Specialist counselling and further education for experts and multipliers

Counselling in the following languages: German, English, Turkish, Farsi
Entity: Verein für jugend- und familienpädagogische Beratung Niedersachsen – beRATen e. V.
Counselling in Lower Saxony

APRO Saxony

Contact and information centre

Contact and information: 0173 961 76 43
kontakt@aussteigerprogramm-sachsen.de
www.aussteigerprogramm-sachsen.de

Service:

- Clearing house
- Counselling for the social environment of at-risk and (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals
- Disengagement and exit counselling

Counselling in the following languages: German, English, Arabic, Russian (plus: interpreter pool)
Entity: Saxony State Prevention Council
Counselling in Saxony

Salam

Advice Centre on Radicalisation

Schießgartenstr. 6
55116 Mainz

Counselling helpline: 0800 72 52 610
salam@lsjv.rlp.de
https://lsjv.rlp.de/de/unsere-aufgaben/kinder-jugend-und-familie/projekte-gegen-extremismus/salam/

Service:

- Counselling for the social environment of at-risk and (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals
- Disengagement and exit counselling
- Specialist counselling and further education for experts and multipliers

Counselling in the following languages: German, English, Arabic (additional access to external interpreters)
Entity: Rhineland-Palatinate State Office for Social Matters, Youth Affairs and Care
Counselling in Rhineland-Palatinate

konex* exit counselling

Centre of Excellence against Extremism

Willy-Brandt-Str.41
70173 Stuttgart

Islamism counselling helpline: 0711 279 4555
beratung@bamf.bund.de
onex@im.bwl.de
www.konex-bw.de

Service:

- Counselling of radicalised and at-risk people in the field of religious and political extremism and their direct environment
- Specialist counselling and information for professionals
- Training services by the Deradicalisation State Education Centre which is assigned to konex

Counselling in the following languages: German, English, Turkish, Kurdish (Kurmanci, Bahdinani), Arabic
Entity: Ministry for Internal Affairs, Digitalisation and Migration in Baden-Wuerttemberg
Counselling in Baden-Wuerttemberg

** Note: konex exit counselling was not part of the development of standards for counselling for the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals. konex has been part of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) advice centre network since 2019 and provides counselling for the social environment of (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals in Baden-Wuerttemberg.*

Advice Centre Bavaria

Schillerstraße 27
80336 Munich

Counselling helpline: 089 416 11 77 10
bayern@violence-prevention-network.de
www.beratungsstelle-bayern.de

Service:

- Counselling for the social environment of at-risk and (potentially) radicalised Islamist individuals
- Disengagement and exit counselling
- Advice, support and special training for young people at risk of becoming radicalised prior to delinquency

Counselling in the following languages: German, English, Turkish, Farsi, Dari
Entity: Violence Prevention Network gGmbH
Counselling in Bavaria

Annex. Practical insight into associated phenomena

On behalf of the Research Centre of the BAMF and the advice centre network of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) for the development of joint standards in counselling for the social environment of (potentially) Islamist radicalised individuals, a practitioner workshop took place in January and March 2020. The aim of these events was a discussion on counselling services and approaches in the related phenomena of right-wing extremism and so-called "cults". On the basis of the workshops entitled "**Interactions between authoritarianism and education - findings and approaches from exit work in the phenomenon of right-wing extremism in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern**" (JUMP, Waren/Müritz) and "**Freedom of religion versus child welfare**" (cult info, Essen), the counsellors discussed possible joint approaches and challenges in social environment counselling of ideological and religious extremism. In the following, the encouragement of the introduced phenomena will be briefly defined and the results of the practitioner exchange will be shown.

Right-wing extremism. Social environment-oriented exit work

JUMP in sponsorship of CJD North, member of the Democracy and Tolerance Counselling Network in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, www.jump-mv.de

Workshop stimulus: Interactions between authoritarianism and education - findings and approaches from exit work in the phenomenon of right-wing extremism in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

Christliches Jugenddorfwerk Deutschland e. V. (CJD) is the entity behind the service "Exit work in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern". A multidisciplinary team from the fields of educational science, sociology, political studies, Scandinavian studies and Nordic history deals with counselling and exit assistance for affected individuals, their environment and interested specialists.

The protection of human dignity defined in the Basic Law, primarily when it goes the distance to behavioural and thought patterns which are degrading and breach the rights of other people, forms the work basis of the exit assistance provided by JUMP. Here, the counselling is primarily based on Article 2 of the Basic Law –on the free development of the personality. This means that (young) people can be given the right to revise incorrect decisions and look for new perspectives. This development opportunity will be monitored and supported in the framework of the JUMP service.

The counselling is voluntary, free of charge and subject to a confidentiality obligation.

The JUMP counsellors provide **exit assistance** as a holistic strategy when dealing with the phenomenon of right-wing extremism. In addition, JUMP provides individuals and teams (including specialists, public authority employees) with further advice and education who are confronted in life and/or work circumstances with extreme right-wing-affiliated people and/or people with an extreme-right-wing view and require support and wish to increase their safety in dealing with these individuals and expand their scope of action. JUMP provides support in the development of strategies for dealing with specific situations, prepares for discussion situations and develops corresponding discussion strategies. In addition, approaches can be developed to create moments of irritation (moments of doubt about belonging to a scene and ideology) with the relevant people and also to use these. Personal features which refer to the start of the exit process include: changed appearance, a different way of dealing with friends, new discussion topics and other questions, specific comments about doubts and internal dilemmas.

The personal desire to exit is key to counselling for those who leave. This may take the form of an explicitly expressed committment to exiting or another internal irritation and/or doubt about an extreme right-wing orientation.

For an exit, **refraining from the use of violence** is a necessary prerequisite. In addition, the change in external recognition features, the processing of deeds from extreme right-wing motivation and, in connection with this, disengagement from extreme right-wing attitudes are important elements of exiting. In order to achieve these exit goals, JUMP offers a trusting discussion atmosphere, support for the development of (new) self-determined life circumstances with regard to accommodation, school, education and work, as well as opportunities to deal with the past in the right-wing scene and collect new experiences.

Education and counselling in the social environment is carried out by JUMP, in addition to an offer of direct relative counselling, as indirect disengagement support locally. For this purpose, modular training sequences are also offered in which dealings with people who have an affinity with extreme right-wing views and people from extreme right-wing contexts, everyday racism and extreme right-wing belief patterns, as well as entry and exit processes, are covered. In this context, working with the social environment is viewed as a valuable component of professional counselling but not as a replacement for exit assistance, i.e. direct work with the person from extreme right-wing connections.

In addition to the **social space-oriented approach**, the JUMP concept (see Institute for District Development, Social Space-Oriented Work and Counselling at the Faculty for Education Studies at the University of Duisburg-Essen) has also taken into consideration findings in attachment research since 2017. Backdrops to this may be taken from the work of Hopf et al. (see Hopf/Rieker/Sanden-Marcus/Schmidt 1995, see also Hopf 2012), as well as the current publication of Renz-Polster ("Erziehung prägt Gesinnung", 2019). Engagement with one's childhood and experienced education styles is a prerequisite to be able to understand "authoritarian temptations" (see Heitmeyer 2018) and orientations in youth and adult phases more comprehensively.

Evolutionary and neurobiological, developmental, psychological and systemic findings flow together in the **attachment-sensitive approach of exit assistance of JUMP** . The attachment theory points to the meaning of viable relationships, the role of connection people, the consequences of loss and influences of traumatic experiences. A further factor for the safe attachment of the child with important reference people is the social context (environment, social space and living environment) in which children develop.

The individual interaction experiences between children and their caregiver with regard to the development of an attachment in the first six months of their life can take on different manifestations in their quality. The attachment theory is based on four different types which each person can carry in them based on their own development in different manifestations.

Attachment types

1. **Avoidance of insecurity:** Fear of rejection and coldness in terms of feelings is created by parent behaviour here in which no closeness was given in stress situations. They react to stress with distraction, e.g. with games which are repetitive and lack imagination. They demonstrate a slightly increased stress level.

2. **Secure attachments** are shown by children who have experienced reliable and sensitive reference people as a secure basis (from which exploration/play/learning can be started) and a secure home (which you can retreat to in case of stress). They can deal with stress in a flexible manner and engage quickly in play and learning (exploration) fully again.

3. **Insecure/ambivalent** traits appear to be contradictory from the outside. However, the people are, instead, reacting to the inconsistent, unpredictable behaviour of their attachment figures. They seek to "pin down" their partner for closeness, e.g. by clinging, and also experience feelings of aggression at the same time as they never know when the closeness will be withdrawn again. As such, they rarely engage in exploration but ensure that someone is always there with them. They show an increased level of stress at all times.

An attachment theory perspective in counselling, and

4. **Insecure/disorganised:** Here, people have experienced major trauma from caregivers and have not yet been able to process it. The parents are then the only, even if just hypothetical, option for stress reduction and simultaneously the trigger of maximum stress levels (aversion/appetence conflict) as a result of physical and/or psychological violence. This stage is often preceded by other insecure stages (so avoidance or ambivalence). Controlling behaviour is to be expected as the last organised strategy (e. g. caring or aggressive) before the "collapse of behaviour" which cannot be predicted because the triggers are not known. Based on trauma research, attack, flight and freezing are to be expected here. The prevailing feelings are loss of control, overpowering and helplessness. These people are constantly subject to high stress levels which limit their entire behaviour.

even more strongly in monitoring, helps to understand situations better and appropriately, to respond to, for example, avoiding, ambivalent or disorganised behaviour. Attachment experiences in childhood do not determine the further development. Rather, the further influences during a childhood play an important role. The importance of a relationship thus affects the entire lifespan as changes are possible through new experiences in new relationships. There is therefore always the option of changing attachment patterns in moderation and/or increasing sensitivity. Subsequent socialisation processes thus come to light in counselling and support processes. The following methodological approaches can serve this purpose:

Attachment pattern-related sensitivity: Counsellors must be aware of their own attachment style and/or their attachment types in order to correctly assess signals given by the other party, which potentially has other attachment patterns, and appropriately respond to the people receiving counselling. Where necessary, in counselling, counsellors also use so-called "**priming**", which aims to create positive experiences, including on the level of the body's openness. This can happen, depending on the setting, in the form of synchronisation exercises (e.g. movement synchronisation when walking or via a card game) or also simply by providing a hot drink (ideally not coffee).

Transformation of negative feelings into positive output clarifies what counselling situations and, to an even greater extent, support situations are all about: they are all about ensuring that, at the end of the session/the conversation, stress situations have been regulated wherever possible. The signal is: You can talk to us at a later stage too if you are experiencing stress. The counsellors need to be very calm to achieve this. An **image of deep inner peace** helps to remind the person providing counselling of a situation to find relaxation. In order to do this, they develop an image which is as clear as possible and which they can quickly think about in a situation which is tending to become stressful in a counselling context. Breathing exercises may also help.

The point of **symbolic interaction** relates to the person receiving counselling and is key for increasing sensitivity. Interactions at a real level can be practised in counselling at a symbolic level (in play, in discussion). Practically speaking, regular hand puppet games with children verifiably have an effect on secure attachments until they reach adolescence. The older and wiser hand puppet (therefore generally grandfather or grandmother), guided by the intervening accompanying person, is a sensitive conversation partner in stress situations which arise in the game and, as such, the child can learn via their own puppet how a secure attachment feels. This is gradually transferred into real interactions. Puppet games are not considered appropriate for young people and adults. Staged games and theatre are alternatives that have been used to

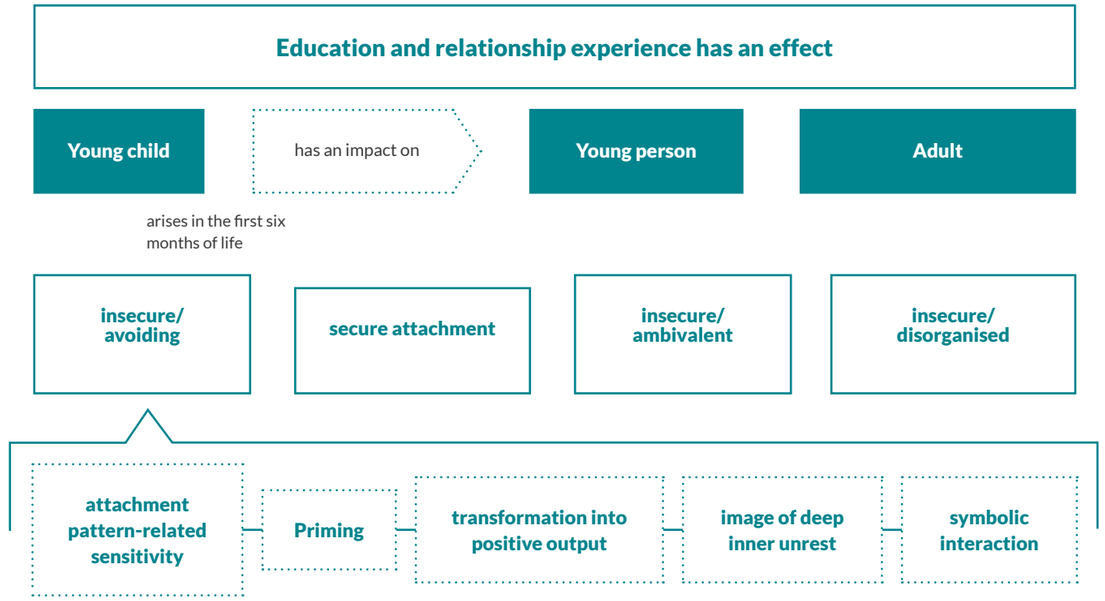

Figure 5: "Relationship in an extreme case" (JUMP)

date. Furthermore, with JUMP, age-appropriate formats are designed (e.g. so-called "pen and paper formats" in which the participants take on fictional roles with character and/or personality values which are set out in writing and experience an adventure in adaptable settings which is primarily shared via the verbal storytelling of the person managing the game and can be challenged with a pen, paper and dice).

As a result of the practitioner exchange, it can be concluded that the attachment theory perspective can be useful in counselling processes in order to better understand and be able to explain problem situations. In this regard, it is important that unsecure attachments and/or pathological attachment issues do not automatically lead to extremist views on their own but extreme ideologies can appeal to insecurities in the human psyche. Further, attachment issues can lead to specific psychological personality disorders and the role of psychological issues and conditions is important in both counselling contexts of extreme right-wing and radicalised Islamist individuals. The counselling works on the family structures and education models of the people receiving counselling.
This can be implemented with biographical and attachment theory methods. This comparison shows that particular methods and approaches can be transferred to counselling.

This intensive counselling phase is one of the three pillars of counselling in addition to the ideological (disengagement) pillar and social (reintegration) pillar. The role of the father as a reference or attachment person shows similarities in both counselling fields. Physically or emotionally absent fathers are often seen in the biographies of extremist young people. Often it can also be a specific authoritarian father role which may lead to problematic developments in children. This also relates to authoritarian education styles by mothers which are carried out on their daughters. In this way, the mother may be seen as an offender by her children and thus as an insecure basis. This tends to lead to an insecure attachment. The goal of counselling is to enable subsequent socialisation processes, develop secure attachments and/or increase sensitivity and primarily work with parents on their relationships and connections in order to, in an ideal world, develop viable and thus more sensitive relationships with their children.

Family law conflicts in the context of religious and world view communities

Beratungsstelle Sekten-Info Nordrhein-Westfalen e. V.,
www.sekten-info-nrw.de

Workshop stimulus: So-called "cults". Freedom of religion versus child welfare

The association **Sekten-Info Nordrhein-Westfalen e. V.** has made it its goal to provide new, religious and ideological communities and "psycho groups" with information and counselling. The association was set up in 1984 and belongs to the Deutscher Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband.

Currently, Sekten-Info NRW is the entity behind a specialised advice centre with a multidisciplinary team. This includes a psychologist (systemic therapist for children and young people), an education worker (child protection officer), a theologist and a lawyer.

The protection of human dignity which is set out in the Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany, the right to free development of one's personality and the family protection guaranteed there (Article 1, 2 and 6 Basic Law) form the working basis of Sekten-Info NRW.

The counselling is voluntary, free of charge, solution-oriented and subject to a confidentiality obligation. Another principle of the counselling is the obligation to neutrality in terms of world view (Article 4 Basic Law).

Sekten-Info NRW helps people whose relationships, values and understandings of reality have been shattered by a new religious community and support them in designing their own self-determined life paths. The **entire family** is often touched by the effects of membership of a problematic faith community. The new beliefs and the lifestyle changes influenced by this may lead to a variety of conflicts. In this regard, the protection of children and young people is a high priority.

The publication "Freedom of religion versus child welfare" by Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kinder- und Jugendschutz Nordrhein-Westfalen e. V. and Sekten-Info Nordrhein-Westfalen e. V. provides an orientation aid when engaging with this particular topic. Possible issues and risks for children in the context of a possessive education which is shaped by religion or world view and legal options are clarified. The paper was published in cooperation with Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kinder- und Jugendschutz Nordrhein-Westfalen e. V. (AJS NRW) in 2018.

Belief in religious patterns of understanding and interpreting the world still continues to be very important in the lives of many people. Currently, beliefs are becoming increasingly differentiated. Whilst faith was previously often embedded in a traditional church/institutional context, there is now a wide variety of religious or world view beliefs. In addition to the major world religions, of which there are many different varieties, there are numerous small groups with a very wide range of beliefs. **Religious plurality** constitutes an enrichment in many cases but can become a challenge when it comes to educating children and when the education methods shaped by the religion or world view do not align with legal value decisions. There are, for example, parents who refuse conventional medical treatment for their children for reasons of faith, who vehemently refuse to send their children to school, as the course proceedings against the faith community "Zwölf Stämme" most recently showed, or give physical punishment to their children for religious reasons.
Such conflicts require a solution in two relationships right away: in disputes between the parents in matters of religious child education, which often become visible in the context of custody proceedings, and in state interventions in the religious education rights of the parents. The "**welfare of the child**" is at the heart of a family court decision. The experts involved in the family court proceedings have to review whether and to what extent the influences of a religious and/or world view group on the education provided by the parents may impair of even endanger the welfare of the child.

The potential dangers may be present but do not necessarily have to be. In individual cases, **education methods motivated by religion or world view** may have serious consequences for the children. If discussing potential dangers arising from religious and world view communities is considered a taboo, significant boundary violations concerning children may possibly be tolerated. Wherever children's rights are breached under the guise of parents' rights and freedom of belief, effective protection must be guaranteed and intervention must take place both in terms of family law and criminal law where applicable.

The "**Law to Ban Violence in Education**" sets out a child's right to a non-violent education. Physical punishments, emotional injuries and other degrading measures are not permitted according to Section 1631 (2) Civil Code. With this regulation, the legislative authority declared an absolute ban on violence and physical punishment for parents. Any kind of physical punishment is not permitted, even if it does not reach the intensity of abuse. This is because physical punishment is always associated with humiliation for the child. It is not of significance whether the physical punishment has religious motivations. In this regard, physical punishment of children, as practised in some strict Christian fundamentalist communities for example, can also not be justified by faith and/or Old Testament bible understanding. If the parents breach the ban on violence, this should initially lead to pedagogical support services working with the parents according to the legislative authority. However, this does not rule out additional sanctions. The behaviour of the parents may, where appropriate, be punishable as personal injury pursuant to Sections 223 et seq. Criminal Code. Further, family law measures pursuant to Sections 1666, 1666a Civil Code also come into consideration.

"**Child welfare**" is the key term and standard in family law and refers to the well-being of a child and comprehensive protection of its development. Physical, mental and psychological well-being are part of child welfare. However, there is no legal definition as to what exactly "child welfare" means. This is because individual aspects which influence each child's life and development are to be taken into consideration. The circumstances which vary from case to case must be able to be considered flexibly. If there were a strict legal regulation, it would often not be possible to base the decision on the respective child's specific needs. Therefore, this is an undefined legal term which is to be specified in each individual case. In this regard, as well as legal requirements, findings from other specialist disciplines (e.g. pedagogy, psychology, medicine) are to be taken into consideration. It is often possible to get close to child welfare in an individual case with the cooperation of various specialist perspectives. The circumstances which vary from case to case must therefore be considered flexibly. However, there are some recognised aspects of child welfare which apply across the board.

This includes, for example:

- the maintenance of the physical integrity of the child and the child's health,
- development into an independent person, but particularly the ability to coexist with the community,
- an education which corresponds to the child's affinities and helps them to design their life path independently,
- a consistent living environment,
- viable attachments with the parents and other reference people and
- the child's will, which gains significant importance as the child grows up.

Membership of a faith community in itself does not mean that the parents are not suitable for providing an education in general. Even membership of a very conflictual group (so-called cults) is not sufficient in itself to deem parents incapable of educating their children or even to pose a risk to child welfare. Rather, the membership may negatively affect the child's education; however, it may not affect the child at all. Therefore, careful checks must be carried out in each individual case to determine whether the parents are capable of educating their child. In particular, the extent to which the education principles of the community are applied by the parents and which specific effects this has on child welfare must be verifiably demonstrated. Freedom of belief (Article 4 Basic Law) protects the parents against automatically being deemed unsuitable to educate their child due to their faith. The state must remain neutral from a religious and world view perspective. However, this does not apply the other way around to mean a ban on state assessments of child welfare endangerment due to education principles shaped by religion or world view.

Forms of **possible negative impacts on child welfare** in the context of religious and world view communities may exist in the event of:

- Cessation of social contact,
- Impairment of physical integrity,
- Refusal of medical care,
- Neglect,
- Excessive religious and/or world view influences,
- Impairment of psychological development and
- Loyalty conflicts.

These **features of possible negative effects on child welfare** are to be understood as an orientation aid. They do not replace a conscientious review of the individual case, i.e. the specific circumstances of the individual case must be investigated and assessed. The individual impairments can often not be viewed in isolation from one another. For example, in the event of physical punishment of the child with religious motivations, not only the physical well-being but also the psychological development of the child are being regularly affected.

The Sekten-Info NRW advice centre also engages with the Salafist field in the context of their work. The results with regard to potential negative effects on child welfare can also be found in the publication "Freedom of religion versus child welfare" and were covered in the practitioner exchange. The religious/world view trend of **Salafism** is currently in the public eye to a significant extent. Like with Christian fundamentalist groups but also all other conflictual groups, risk to a child's welfare cannot necessarily be derived just from the fact that children and young people grow up in this scene. Nevertheless, there are also conflict points here which may have a negative effect and must be assessed in each individual case.

In order to determine a potential risk to child welfare, the question of which branch of Salafism a family belongs to is of importance. The **behaviour of jihadist parents** is certainly to be classified as placing the child's welfare at risk if they, for example, decide to travel to the Middle East with their children to join a terror organisation there. However, with Salafist parents in Germany, there are indications of an impairment of the psychological development of a child due to the parents' lifestyle. If, for example, the parents engage to a significant extent with internet propaganda by the so-called Islamic State and view videos which glorify violence, the children are also (in)directly confronted with this. This may, on the one hand, trigger anxiety in the children or, on the other hand, lead to emotional dullness when it comes to acts of violence.

The **strict Salafist beliefs** may also create anxieties. The Salafist world view is shaped by a significant amount of black and white thinking. Life in this world, which is seen as being of low importance, is set against a state of bliss in paradise which you can only achieve by leading a life which is agreeable to god in the Salafist sense. If someone does not meet these strict standards, they are subject to eternal damnation and suffer agony. This negative view of life in this world can lead to a child failing to **develop a positive relationship with its environment** and to a child becoming socially isolated. As such, development into an independent individual capable of living in society is made significantly more difficult.

Salafist education takes place within a very conservative framework. It is characterised by compliance with and/or following lots of orders and bans, e.g. respect and obedience towards elders or the teaching of traditional gender roles. If children are taught to always follow the strict rules of a Salafist lifestyle, this may reduce the **child's autonomy** and prevent normative socialisation processes for a free and democratic society. If children do not follow these rules, they may experience feelings of guilt and anxiety about how the otherworldly punishment will be dished out. The hierarchical structure of the families and the associated gender-specific education could lead to a lack of self-confidence, particularly for young girls. Salafists separate themselves strongly from all "**unbelievers**". No personal attachments are developed with people who have been written off in this manner. If children in Salafist families are taught this kind of separation, this can make them outsiders and prevent them from developing personalities which make them capable of living in society.

The practitioner exchange enabled counsellors from the field of counselling radicalised Islamist individuals to gain an interesting insight into the 35 years of experience of Sekten-Info NRW. The case-related, needs-based and resource-strengthening procedure in counselling and work in multiprofessional counsellor teams can be defined as important similarities between both counselling fields. The expert centre Liberi centred on growing up in Salafist families by PROvention supports experts on a nationwide basis in assessing potential risks to child welfare. Primarily in work with Islamic State returnees and their children in Germany, questions arise about child welfare and the legal options relatives have if they consider child welfare to be at risk.

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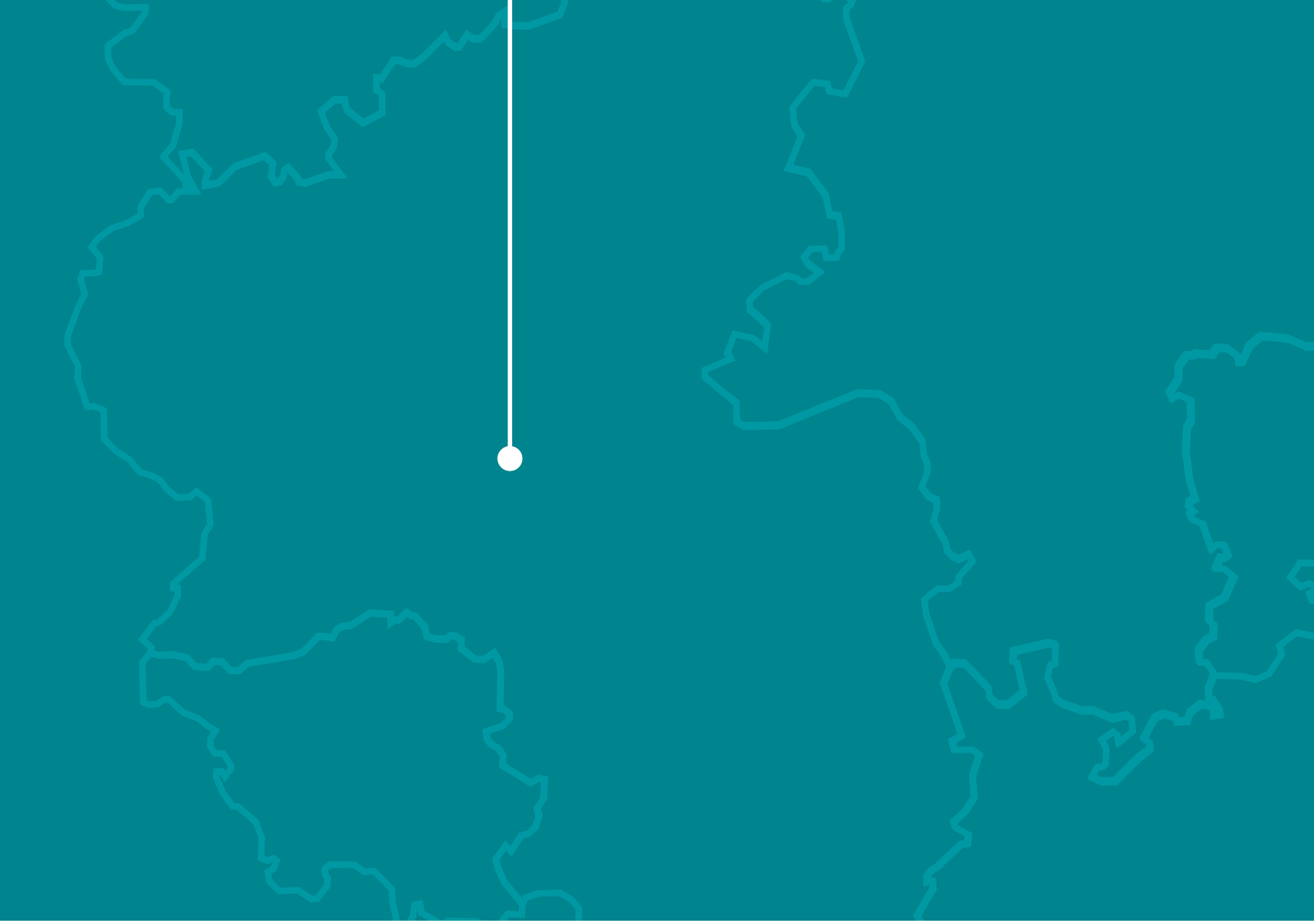
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