

The Relationship of WisdomThinking® to Systemics and to Solution-oriented Approaches

Whether WisdomThinking® with its concern orientation belongs to the systemic methods or not depends to a large extent on how broadly the term systemics is understood. Because systemics has different roots and definitions and there are again and again discussions (e.g. on the scientific annual conferences of the DGSF) whether there is a core stock of systemic convictions or whether systemics is a methodology in the development flow and each border setting in right and wrong would not be unsystemic itself.

What is very similar to systemics in the case of concern orientation is that the work is not based on external knowledge, but that the client is the expert of his life world (attitude of the consultant's non-knowledge). In this respect, both approaches build on constructivist and resource-oriented ideas. The fact that the consultant can bring in his knowledge as an offer and a question in order to accelerate the process (e.g. as a so-called "reality waiter" - G. Schmidt) has also been introduced in systemics in the meantime (balancing between the danger of suggestion and the avoidance of agonizing question loops, which initially cost systemics a lot of sympathy outside of therapy, e.g. in organizational consulting). Similarly, input is not sought from an inward view (the client's psyche) but from an outward view (the social context in which the client stands), i.e., multiple influence by the surrounding and the associated feedbacks are asked for.

In the consideration of the surrounding, however, there are also differences at least to the narrower concepts of systemics (for example Luhmann), which strongly emphasize the system boundary, even consider it constitutive (system-environment difference). According to this, the system and its boundaries are defined by its specific rule logic, which in all social systems is supposed to be communication (albeit with an almost boundless concept of communication), even if further functionally differentiated by the object of communication (e.g. money, values, power). However, for the systemics the psyche of the acting person for example is regarded as environment to the social system.

WisdomThinking® with the concern orientation does not negate the functional logics of the systems and the resulting boundaries, but considers them as artifacts of the consideration (if a business enterprise is not considered as a social system with the rule logic money-communication, but as a social organism, where besides money many other topics shape the communication and it is thus not only about communication, other boundary considerations arise). WisdomThinking® on the other hand considers everything that acts in a field of action as forces, whether system part or not. This includes system effects, but does not exclude other effects.

Systemics has been reproached, especially by organizational practitioners, for not contributing much to finding solutions, but working in endless communication loops with pleasure in paradoxes. This has improved compared to the beginnings of systemics, but the hot discussion about hybrid professional and process consulting models (e.g. complementary consulting) indicates that the topic is still smoldering. Here WisdomThinking® with its strong action orientation brings an alternative approach into the world of process consulting. Concern-oriented, one can easily work on a matter level while taking other levels (relationship, culture, etc.) into account or vice versa. This enables a new marriage of professional and process work without ignoring the insights of constructivism.

Solution-focused systemic consulting, like the concern orientation of WisdomThinking®, works with a strong focus and with mobilizing the client's resources. However, WisdomThinking® does not focus on a solution (let alone a problem like large parts of systemics), but always on a (possible) action (hence the alternative name **action-systemic**® for WisdomThinking®). This results in a very fundamental difference: solution orientation ultimately still works according to the principle of goal orientation, even if the goal comes from one's own imagination of a solution, and tries to "pull" from there. This can certainly have its great strengths, for example in the therapeutic contexts from which this approach comes. But for organizational consulting, especially in the business world, with its already mostly overshooting fixation on goals, this is similar to trying to treat a poisoning with the same poison. In this case, concern orientation, which completely dispenses with goal fixation and relies on navigation driven by field forces, offers a decidedly different approach.