

they habitually use at other times, examples being mother-figure, misery, little boy, total independence and extreme vulnerability. Note whether a person's role appears to be considered appropriate at that particular time by the other people present.

The group itself can be watched as a process of development and possible decay, as a pattern of interactions, as a way of accomplishing a task or in terms of individual authority and responsibility. It can be viewed in relation to other groups (including the outside world) and in relation to any sub-groups that are formed, either formally or informally.

If you want to be bored, then that's O.K. But, if not, try taking a look at what *is* happening.

Jeffrey Britton

Primal Therapy - A Gay Viewpoint

The relationship between gays and the practitioners of various psychotherapies has been a strained one for as long as most of us can remember. Most psychologists insist that homosexuality is at least a character disorder, an apparent manifestation of a neurotic personality. Others condemn what we gays warmly regard as 'love between men' as a terrible perversion bordering on the psychotic acting out of child molesters and rapists.

In the 1960's with change sweeping across America's social and political structure, particularly among youth, psychology witnessed the birth of the 'human potential movement'. Encounter groups, massage therapies, existential and experiential approaches, and the many distinctly radical therapies which resulted, served notice on the Freudian psychoanalysis that their days of lucrative memory-picking were numbered. The headshrinkers gave way to the 'consciousness-expanders'; first, through drugs like marijuana and the hallucinogens, later through yoga, gestalt psychology, primal therapy, and psychodrama to mention just a few. A significant number of psychologists had finally indicated a willingness to discard the scientific facade of elitism and deal with the more immediate problem of getting turned-off people in touch with their feelings. These therapies, although still emphasising individual responsibility for mental health, did not overlook the oppressive social system which we in America have spawned with all its distorted values and subsequent neuroses.

Gay people surely know the nature of oppression and since with us the oppression is greater, the subsequent neuroses are likely to be greater than with straights. Nevertheless, nobody likes being neurotic and few psychologists can tell us a sure-fire way to wipe out neurosis. One man, however, claims to have 'the cure for neurosis' through a technique known as primal therapy. Arthur Janov is one of the radical therapists who advocates social change but on one issue he is an arch-conservative. You guessed it. If you want to find the way out of neurotic problems through primal

therapy, you can forget about loving someone of your own sex, at least in any physical way. The basis of Janov's aversion to homosexuality is like most - illogical but adamant. It involves that old wives' tale about a man only loving a woman because their anatomies dictate the appropriateness thereof. We know all the ergos that follow this illustrious maxim of sex for procreation only.

So why am I bothering to write about primal therapy if this guy puts down homosexuality? Simply because primal therapy, aside from its anti-gay bias, has much to offer people in terms of freeing blocked areas of feeling and working through neurosis by experiencing old hurts. Unfortunately, Janov has simultaneously developed a good technique and alienated gays from its therapeutic value. Such has been the case in psychology for many years and how tragic is this state of affairs! So many gays are depressed, anxious unable to cope with so much of life's bullshit; yet, they are reluctant to approach any aspect of psychology for it often means the disowning of a most integral part of the personality. The result is many avoid therapy altogether and look for relief in drugs, political movements, bars, indiscriminate and compulsive sex, etc., etc., The real feelings are always avoided - they are too threatening and painful for most people to cope with alone. The pain is cut off but so is the road to freedom.

What is primal therapy? I'll give you a quick rundown but you may want to read either *The Primal Scream* or *The Primal Revolution* for the complete new cure, it is based quite clearly on the 'character-armour' theory of Wilhelm Reich, one of the earliest radical therapists (so much so that his last days were spent in federal prison). Pain, by Janov's definition, is the feeling of frustration or split when the organism wants to do one thing and is told to do something else either by parents or some other authority figure. All the times we were told to smile for grandma when we really wanted to spit in her face, or to stop crying when all we wanted was to be picked up and cuddled - these incidents of secondary pain add up to a primal pain - a terrifying realization that each of us is alone and that mommy or daddy can not be depended upon for help and comfort. Another type of primal pain is the realization of the child that he is not loved for what he is and must change in order to obtain love from parents. Rather than feel the full devastation of these pains, we cut them off and become neurotic. By going back and feeling these pains again through therapy, one can reduce this neurotic state and become what Janov calls 'real'.

Personally, I feel there is no 'cure' for neurosis. At best we can eliminate certain neurotic behavior by systematically relocating the real need which involves feeling the real pain. This takes time and is part of a growth process as opposed to the miracle cure nature of Janov's therapy. Primal therapy is clearly one approach but for gays this must be conducted by gay therapists or by those therapists who believe in self-acceptance rather than aversive conditioning as the need of most people, especially gays. Liberated gays have finally realized the need for special therapeutic programmes and growth centres. Identity House and the Ninth Street Centre in New York and the Eromin Centre in Philadelphia hold forth the promise of more quality living, feeling, and relating for homosexuals. It's been a long time coming!

To Dr. Janov, I say thank you for a beneficial technique but I cannot forgive you

easily for doing your part in widening the gulf between therapy and gays. Personally, you have assaulted an integral part of my personality without showing just cause. I have several other bones to pick with you that show your own inconsistency and hypocrisy. While you call for a cooperative socialist society where material wants will diminish, is your public aware that your charge for therapy at the Primal Institute was recently doubled from 3,000 dollars to 6,000 dollars. Is that what you mean by becoming a 'real' person working toward a 'real' world? You claim to have 'cured' homosexuals but in most accounts the people did not develop heterosexual desires or behaviour, they simply became non-sexual. Is that your idea of progress or freedom?

Do us a favor! Help gay people discover and accept themselves; then with that discovery the changes will come naturally as each of us sees fit. I am certainly not against a gay person discovering his heterosexual drive if that develops in therapy or for straights coming to terms with latent homosexual feelings. But do not attempt to obliterate homosexuality. For many of us it is a viable and rich way of life. Besides, it has been around for centuries. Although time may not be a criterion of what is natural, it is indicative of what is enduring, particularly in the face of constant oppression.

Brenda Warren

How I found Me

I do not hesitate to write these words. The message is real. For during the last nine months, for the first time in the twenty eight years of my life, I have begun to experience the pain, and the joy, of being alive.

I am now aware that for most of my life, I have somehow separated myself from those around me. I have locked myself away, and assumed a self that has stood in for me. I became good, clever, and successful - yet, at the same time I was very lonely, very unhappy, and desperately empty.

As the years went by, I passed my examinations, I played hockey for the best teams, I climbed mountains in my spare time, and finally went to College, yet in spite of this, I had a growing emptiness I couldn't explain.

Finally, after two years as a teacher in a Secondary School, I could succeed no more. I entered a mental hospital.

The emptiness was unbearable, and it seemed that I did not know how to fill it. I did not know what I was looking for, and after twelve months in the hospital, I was still searching. A succession of drugs, and E.C.T. treatment, numbed me still further, and in the end, patched together with them, I faced the outside once more.