

the promotion of the client's responsibility for his fellow men
the development of educereational concepts for teaching and therapy
based on the ideas of Norman Liberaman's idea of Living Learning.

WESPE also offers professional training in:

1. 'Co-Counselling and Conflict Organisation in Education',
2. 'Transactional Analysis' and
3. 'Gestalt-Therapy'.

WESPE is at present related to the following institutions:

The Fritz Perls Institut (Prof. Dr. Hilarion Petzold), Germany.
The Faculteit voor mens en gemeenschap (Drs. Richan van Egdom), Belgium.
The P.E.E.R. Institute Perth (Paul Ritter, Ph.D.), Australia.
The A.S. Neill Trust (Ray Hemmings), England.

We hope that the work of WESPE will provide one possible answer to the question of how we can give more freedom to our children, this means our own children and the children in us.

Joan Gilbert

A Traumatic Experience

I run Encounter Groups in the North East on Tyneside and have done so for two years. For four years I have been also going to Encounter Groups, Re-evaluation Counselling groups, Clinical Theology Seminars and Group Dynamic courses, to find out about me, *to grow* to learn all I could about Humanistic Psychology. I am a teacher and trained School Counsellor.

Suddenly I have to go into hospital for a Hysterectomy operation.

Everything I have learned and believed in, and now teach, is contrary to what happens in a hospital ward. Every time I cried in pain, the curtains were quickly drawn round my bed so as 'not to upset the other patients'. Usually I was left alone, unless eventually I asked for another pain killing injection. A quick stab of the needle, and then solitude again. Gratitude for the easing of the pain, but oh, such longing to hold a hand, or feel a hug, or an arm of comfort around my shoulders, if only for a minute . . .

And then one day I did 'The Unforgivable Thing'. They tried Pheno-barbitone that night, but I was very sick in the morning. Then I had to have an Enema. After sitting alone on a commode for half an hour and nothing happening, I started to cry. The curtains were drawn round me, I was put back into bed, but I *couldn't* stop crying. I *needed* to *really* howl for a long time.

A kindly staff nurse finally came and patted my hand and said, unthinkingly, in all good faith, but knowing nothing about me, 'Would you like me to ring your Mother dear?'

I haven't seen my parents for two years. Rejected as a child, in favour of my younger sister, they finally turned me out of their house after three days, when I left my husband eight years ago with three children, the aged 7 years, 8½ years and 10 years. I walked the streets, homeless, with only £1 left in my purse, looking for somewhere for us to live.

Something snapped in me. I screamed 'I hate her. I hate her. I hate her.' (Meaning my mother). Within seconds I was being rushed down the ward, being told angrily by the nurses to stop making a noise, to stop being so inconsiderate, to stop crying.

I was put in the furthest side ward, dumped on a bed and the door slammed angrily on me. Finally the kindly staff nurse came - bless her - and I grabbed her hand and said 'You're not cross with me are you?' 'No dear, of course not, 'she replied,' but I have to put you under sedation'. She gave me a big injection in my thigh and left.

Half an hour later the enema started to work. There were no bells to ring for help in this room, and I shouted, but nobody heard. I staggered to the toilet and then fainted clear out in the corridor.

Soon the Doctor came. I heard him say - I was quiet now - 'keep her under sedation for at least two days'. So I was, and put in another side ward on my own, where there was a bell you could ring for help.

The peace of the room helped - the drugs stopped me crying. I was angry to be under sedation, but there was no other alternative it seemed.

When I was told I could leave the hospital, the coloured Doctor asked if I felt I needed further help? 'What kind of help do you mean?' I asked. 'Psychiatric help,' he replied.

Aghast, I explained, or attempted to explain, about me - about Encounter Groups of which he'd never heard, about the groups I run, my Open Evenings every Sunday, the massage I do, the Counselling I give. Finally he said he felt I could 'cope', and I was allowed to leave the hospital.

Now I am at home - off all pills - and getting better. But what can I Do? What can we do to help change this situation in hospitals? I saw women desperately biting their lips, and clenching their hands so as not to cry. We must be brave and keep a stiff upper lip, says our British Culture and conditioning. I saw women longing for their hands to be held, their brows stroked, needing desperately to be cuddled. But we must not touch each other, says our British Culture, and our professional eithics. It might be misunderstood.

How can we change this situation? Two and a half weeks in hospital neatly undid all the new values I have been learning over the past four years. To how many other people does this also happen?

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