

Letters to the editor

Dear Vivian,

You won't see our Groups mentioned in Exeter University prospectus, and on the timetable they go quietly under the euphemism 'seminar groups', - but in fact the 'Group' is the focal point of the Counselling Course here, the most agonising and rewarding hour and a half of the week. It is run by our course tutor who is a Tavistock trained psychoanalyst and who does not hesitate to interpret at a deep psychological level, if she feels it to be appropriate and helpful. Although the group is frequently supportive to its individual members, (and follows the Rogerian unstructured pattern, with a non-directive leader) as in Perls' Gestalt Therapy, 'Helpers' are discouraged. The belief being that confrontation and skilfully applied frustration are necessary for personal growth.

We also had a term of psychodrama with Marcia Karp (who I believe has written for *Self & Society*) and who trained with Moreno. In fact I am going on a weekend course with her at her farm near Barnstaple this coming weekend (3-4 April).

And next term we are going to experience an open encounter group of the sensitivity-training kind, based presumably on the sort of non-verbal communication exercises described by Schutz in his book 'Joy'. (Similar perhaps to the Encounter Groups run by Southampton University's Extra-Mural Department, under the title 'Without Words'.)

We are now two-thirds of the way through the course, and I can safely say that I have grown in self-awareness. Having begun to recognise my own defences, repressions and projections, - the whole gamut of habitual reactions to other people at the 'role-playing' level, - I am in a much better position to understand my clients, and truly empathise with them, and possibly be of some use to them!

Love,

Ann Dennett

Devon

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Ghost in the Machine

Should I forget the stars and sky
To look more closely at the ground I tread
And drive all fancies from my head?

Where do 'I' live and which the home
Is rightly mine to call my own -
That of the body doomed to die?
That of the spirit free to roam?

I cannot tell, I do not care
To contemplate such dull inanities
As limit me
To Here and There.

The earth I tread is fantasy enough,
A lattice-work of particles,
Held each in close embrace by gravity,
Which should it fail would let me fall
Into a frightful ambiguity
Of Time and Space,
Having no being but my Thought.

Peter Scourse