

have so many warm memories of our group.

We shared our emotional lives and vital aspects of our existence. Yes, people learned some about gestalt; more importantly, we learned to give ourselves permission to disclose our humanity and share our energy. At the beginning of the group fourteen of us were not as affectionless as the people that I had seen in the London public, and there was distance, reserve, and anxiety with us. I think that we became a community because people are hungry for contact and because we created a structure where it was permissible and acceptable to be authentically revealing. Our ground rules of not interpreting and analysing each other helped establish a more trusting environment. No expectancies, no demands, just come and be; and share your process, if you like. Group confidence developed early, I think, because we laughed a lot. Also when one member expressed some anger and resentment about the absence of the co-leader, he was acknowledged, affirmed and accepted in a non-defensive manner. We grew closer because he was honest enough to express his anger, have it accepted, resolve it, and then be open to the group. Right then, the group learned that they could probably give expression to any of their feelings and that the group process would be enriched. We shared our differences in an atmosphere of understanding compassion. What more can be asked in human interaction? It is this kind of meaningful communion that keeps me doing groups. Being part of the growth movement gives me an opportunity to participate in a community of meaningful interaction all over the world. I am now remembering the mantra that my teacher gave me, 'With love touch the heart of thy brother. With love touch the heart of thy sister.'

Brian Wright

Smoking and Personal Growth

After studying psychologies, pioneering counselling and encounter with young 'addicts', 'criminals' and the 'mentally ill', being involved in the growth movement, and spending much of my life in spiritual disciplines, notably Arica, in the past few years, I was very struck by a comment from an ex-addict friend. He said it was all very well, but how come I still smoked? My immediate reaction was that I had to have some vice, and really I knew I could give it up any time. It was only after I stopped being a smoker that I could see the point of his comment.

It is a sensitive point with psychological and spiritual work that the gap between the practice of the discipline and the expectations of 'ordinary life' may be large enough for it to appear that different languages are spoken. The gap may represent the work one needs to do on oneself, and indeed it has been appropriate for those on a path of self-development to separate themselves from ordinary life. But now is a time when, for the earth to survive, the whole of humanity has to wake up, and in as much as humanity is within us need it to develop our individual potential. If any discipline 'works' it must connect to ordinary life, ordinary problems. We have developed a method for witnessing oneself as a smoker and going beyond; and this is a permanent solution to smoking.

The Smoking Habit

Smoking is a desperate problem for some, and for all it is incontrovertibly destructive. A free choice to smoke is a choice to join with the processes of decay and death. When you have truly experienced life, you don't want to die, even in part.

in the body, smoking causes immediate toxification of the brain, adrenals, lungs and circulatory system. The brain stimulation/sedation, the whipping of adrenal activity, and the attempts of the circulatory and eliminative systems to balance toxification are addictive cycles. Carcinogenic and irritant chemicals may cause severe permanent damage to lungs and mucus membranes, heart and circulation, adrenals and glandular system, and nervous and sensory systems. Death may result.

On the emotional level, bodily imbalance is felt in stress, instability, irritability, depression, exhaustion and dependency. There is a short-term 'high' due to limbic system stimulation. Social patterns of smoking support the illusions of calming, sharpening the wits, and so on. The fast drop in energy can appear useful in states of agitation, but there are better ways.

On the mental level, smoking may have a short term stimulating effect on analysis, but a long term inhibition of mental and sensory abilities. Dependency is associated with relatively fixed belief systems, made up of prejudices, conventions, ego-trips, theories, disillusionments, despairs. Such a system ties up and distorts mental progresses. It is deeply associated with the whole belief structure which is the personality's limitation of the inner self.

In terms of higher states of consciousness, spiritual perception, smoking is a direct inhibitor. Higher states require higher, more balanced and centred internal energy, and so are less available to someone who opens the larger door of smoking and allows the energy out.

The Role of Consciousness

We are told this information frequently - the T.V. ads tell us we'll lose our non-smoking lovers. But knowing the facts is just a part of changing the habit.

Most approaches to change are piecemeal. The hypnotist gives you a replacement will, the group therapist offers an analysis of beliefs and feelings, the guru offers a flash of spiritual energy. None work with reference to the whole person. In order to bring the whole person to a realisation, like laying aside smoking for ever, the work must be directed to raising the level of the whole person. The principles are the same for any growth. This must be done without pain, with awareness and in freedom, not for our moral principles, but because this is the only way for genuine change.

Higher level resolution is brought about through awareness of a connecting *function* which allows the *active* element of a situation to interact with the *attractive* element

and bring about a unification in the *result*. Thus a bee is attracted to a flower may be fertilisation, taking the plant on to its next level, the seed. Thus humanistic psychology is the result of the higher level unification of 'conflicting' psychologies through the function of a perception of the 'experiencing person'.

We see people at the conflict state 'I am a smoker/I dislike smoking', and we offer the functions for unification at a higher level, e.g. the perception of self as a totality ('I am more than just a smoker') seeing smoking as an activity at various levels ('smoking affects my body, emotions, mind and spirit'), seeing that the self can go beyond smoking ('smoking is a habit I can witness and step above'). The smoker is *active*, the workshop *attractive*, receiving the method is the *function*, and a person free of smoking is the *result*.

The Method

One angle of the method is to encourage people to express their beliefs as associations to a simple set of questions. *Seeing* the belief is realising it is not in reality, that it came from outdated and inaccurate word-views, that it affects behaviour in a range of situations, that it can be subsumed in a more inclusive system (every belief can be subsumed in one of the 9 domains, represented by the spectrum of white light, an Arica development), and that it is not the self, and the self can go beyond it. When such principles are used by a group the process is enormously accelerated until seeing beliefs becomes a normal everyday activity.

Another angle is the tuning in to internal perceptions. A variety of awareness exercises coupled with relaxation, breathing and meditative calming of the mind, allows for regulation of body processes, and clearer perception of imbalances caused by smoking.

Emotional attunement comes through in the way these exercises are done, and also in 'objective theatre'. Here our own cigarette games are played with humour, detachment and close observation (the 'smoking is bad' game, the 'picking up the girl' game the 'liberated woman' game, the 'one of the lads' game, etc.)

The group works with high energy and humour that comes from raising consciousness. The trainers' transmission of this 'spiritual' energy requires that they are in a state of witness, in order to see beliefs, allow people to experience internal states, create and communicate objective theatre, and not least, to be able to communicate facts and experience free of personal distortion.

The facts include what happens to people when they smoke, which I have touched on here, the experience of nicotine withdrawal and how to minimise discomfort, and how to build up a health habit rather than over eating, over exerting, nail biting. . .

When someone sees his beliefs, therefore he can accept facts, tunes in to his body, expresses and clears his emotional life, and feels the energy of his spiritual self, his life

changes rapidly. We don't say 'stop smoking' because this reinforces a dialectic. Anyway it is unnecessary. Anyone whose consciousness is raised gradually becomes aware that smoking is killing him, making him unhappy, deluding him and draining his energy. So he gets to a point where he stops, and the readjustment is a growth, made in knowledge, rather than an ordeal made in suffering.

In Conclusion

The only way of bringing words to land is to try them in practice. The method is purely gustatory - you have to taste, smell, see, chew, swallow, digest, incorporate and eliminate, and what I hope to have achieved is whetting your appetite.

Our experience in workshops is that, providing you are not in terror of being poisoned, the taste is good and the effect is like a dose of salts, or a juicy steak, whichever feels better.

Humanistic Psychology has been a unification, and the movement carries the energy of that unification. But to go further, we need to see that our wholeness does not become compromise. We need continuously to be reaching to the ultimate spiritual perception and the intimate physical reality, pulling them together, transmitting them, and expressing them in ourselves, our interactions, our work.

For further information contact: Centre for Habit Re-education 18b Berkley Place, Wimbledon, London SW19.