

# CONFERENCE NEWS

**AHPP CONFERENCE 1991**  
**5 to 7 April**  
**GAUNTS HOUSE - DORSET**

## **The Therapeutic Relationship**

Judy Ryde and the AHPP Board organised a superb conference with more than a hundred participants. It struck a good balance between looking at different models of the Therapeutic Relationship and sheer fun.

The weekend was heralded in with an impressive talk by Petruska Clarkson. She expounded the theme of her paper 'A Multiplicity of Psychotherapeutic Relationships' which appeared in the *British Journal of Psychotherapy* in 1990. She distinguishes five types of relationship and illustrated them with rich material including a great line in illustrative jokes.

Experiential workshops were offered around each type of relationship. Vin Gomes (Transference), Kunderke Kevlin (Transpersonal), Marcia Karp (Working Alliance), Emmy van Deurzen-Smith (Authentic) and Marianne Fry (Reparative).

It was unfortunate that Petruska was unable to stay. I remember how valuable it was having Wendy Savage around after she gave the keynote opener at last September's AHP conference. Petruska's presence would have done something useful to the good energy that developed throughout the two days.

*... the client has learned, à la Gendlin, how to use therapy and the therapist is able to be present with the client's process with a quality of love...*

Fun workshops included a semi-structured Café scene where issues and arguments were developed and a hilarious competitive debate in which anyone who wanted to held forth on the merits of one particular relationship. A vote gave it to the transpersonal mob by a whisker.

A point which Petruska made in her talk was that although the different relationships are linked with different theories and schools of psychotherapy experienced practitioners are much more like one another than they are like less experienced practitioners in their own camp. This suggests that the distinctions between type of relationship are devices for learning and not things which should be stubbornly adhered to. In my experience changes sought by clients come about not because a particular relationship develops but because the therapist is able to be with the client's process with a quality of love and the client has learned à la Gendlin how to use therapy. Understanding types of relationship is a helpful part of the journey towards becoming such a therapist.

David Jones

## NATIONAL BODYWORK CONFERENCE

March 15 - 17 1991

Beechwood Conference Centre,  
Leeds

After a year and a half of preparatory work, initiated and kept in motion by Nick Totton, the first ever national gathering of bodyworkers got under way on Friday 15th March 1991. The 34 participants represented some 28 body therapies from Reichian (including Radix and Bio-energetics) to Polarity and Postural Integration, from Movement/Dance to Voice, from Shiatsu and Subtle Energy to Shamanic Healing.

Crocuses and Spring sunshine helped to set the expansive tone of the conference, as did the relaxed and supportive environment provided by the community who run Beechwood. The 'well-used' atmosphere, slightly run-down buildings and grounds, excellent food and comfortable bedrooms and workrooms all contributed to the success of the proceedings.

The first plenary and support group sessions evolved into a variety of getting-to-know-each-other activities including massage. The programme for the weekend was drawn up by consensus during these sessions.

Workshops were offered on Taoist Pulsation, Alice in Wonderland (movement therapy). Pre-birth issues (from a Bio-energetic viewpoint), Polarity Energetics, Bodymind Therapy, Radix (neo- Reichian) bodywork, Shiatsu, Voicework and Shamanic Healing amongst others. Interest Groups on a variety of topics emerged

and met in the spaces during and around mealtimes, including 1992 and the future of Bodywork as an identifiable grouping, Bodyreading and Diagnosis from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, and T'ai Chi before breakfast!

Partly by design and partly by chance this conference had a very 'grassroots' feel to it.

This conference made an excellent start towards bridging the gap between Psychotherapy and Alternative and Complementary Medicine.

There is clearly room for discussion on important topics such as medical versus therapeutic versus educational models of practice, degrees of linkage with activities perceived as medical or leisure/educational (or personal growth!), professional and/or lay practitioners, qualifications and accreditation etc. At the end of the day, however, what is most important is sharing with and supporting each other in making available to meet public demand a range of safe and satisfying, challenging and expansive, fun and healthy bodywork activities.

No hasty conclusions were reached by this first conference about joint or collective actions, forming organisations or starting publications. However, an address/contact list was compiled and circulated and a clear consensus emerged to 'do it again'. Three people volunteered to do the preparatory work for a Second National Bodywork Conference. Already the arrangements are in hand for a Spring 1992 rendez-vous. Details from Abigail Gooder, 071 254 8730.

Keith Pearce