

Letters

Dear *S&S*,

News of the death of the IDHP, in the last issue of *S&S*, was much exaggerated. Indeed the IDHP has spent the last year in a cooperative enquiry into how we can grow and adapt.

The focus of the IDHP since its creation in 1976 has been to sponsor and validate its postgraduate Diploma in Humanistic Psychology and Facilitation. In the last six years we extended our range to include one-year certificates and a very successful range of short courses. Membership of the IDHP has always been restricted to those facilitating or supervising our courses. This has meant that we lost valuable people whose careers took them to a different path. We also have over 700 graduates who have no lasting formal link with us. We decided that this needed to change. Two years ago, with the number of people coming forward to propose new diploma courses decreasing, and a pressure to move towards more traditional forms of accreditation, we decided to enquire into our vision, purpose and structure to set us on course for the next twenty years

Following a thorough and profound cooperative enquiry our conclusion has been to build a new structure around the IDHP which we have called the Facilitator Development Associates. The FDA incorporates the IDHP, carries its history, values and ethics, and will continue to promote and supervise IDHP courses.

The FDA/IDHP meets monthly rather than five times a year and focuses beyond the validation and support of courses. We aim to stand by each other's work as

facilitators through an ongoing process of self and peer accreditation; offer peer supervision; and promote and campaign for facilitation as a distinct approach (for example a therapy training does not mean you automatically have the skills to be a group facilitator), and for self and peer assessment and accreditation as a serious alternative to hierarchical accreditation. We also aim to offer a full range of IDHP diplomas, certificates and short courses reasonably costed to give wide access, and create a network of FDA cells where IDHP graduates and other facilitators can meet for self and peer accreditation, supervision and ongoing professional development. Several cells are already forming, and the network will be cross-linked to the IPN. It is our intention that if certain criteria are met then any cell could sponsor an IDHP diploma course, giving scope for greater regional development.

We also want to develop links to other facilitation groupings through links with the International Association of Facilitators (IAF), which has an embryonic European section, and a conference that will bring us into contact with other facilitators and support the formation of FDA cells. Next year we will offer the first FDA residential retreat. We are excited about all this new life and we hope you will want to be part of it.

We call ourselves Associates as the emphasis is still on the links between individuals and the network. This traditional IDHP model is often criticised from the outside from those who seek the security of a central body or association. However,

we feel that we have twenty years' experience of modelling an approach that many organisations now look to as a key tool for the future. We have been ahead of our time since the 1970s — it would make no sense to stop now our time has come.

In the future we may cease to use both IDHP and FDA names, but that time is not now. We need to hold both and work towards their integration. I am sure that people can work with the post-conventional complexity.

We have a full range of certificate and short courses planned for the coming year, and we are in the process of developing a new two-year IDHP Diploma in Facilitating Personal and Group Development which will begin in October 1997. For details of all our courses, enquiries about forming an FDA cell, or any other issues about facilitation call me on 01730 261939 or Meg Bond on 0171 281 3190; alternatively you can email us at patyoung@pncl.co.uk.

Mike Eales

The Editor replies:

We are very happy that news of the death of the IDHP is exaggerated, and wish it well in its current incarnation. We would, however, stress that we do go to some lengths to validate the news items we report on, and in this case checked the situation with several reliable sources. If your organisation is planning newsworthy changes of status and direction, do please let David Jones know at the address inside the front cover so we can give our readers accurate first-hand information.

Dear *S&S*,

Congratulations on the last issue of *Self & Society* and the writings which you skilfully gathered together on 'psycho-

spiritual psychotherapy'. The issue contained much food for thought for all psychotherapy practitioners, especially those in the transpersonal/psychospiritual therapy field.

Please notice that I say 'field', singular — for I wholeheartedly agree with John Rowan's caution, 'if you hive off psychospiritual psychotherapy as a different tradition from transpersonal work you give yourself the task of inventing a new speciality from scratch.' When you initially invited me to comment on psychospiritual as differing from transpersonal, I felt a slight sense of dread — for to me it is really like splitting hairs to do so. I believe that what I wrote for you represents realistically the place that good transpersonal psychotherapy has currently evolved to. The term psychospiritual embraces and elucidates that evolution. It is the direct result of transpersonal psychology embracing the evolutionary process of development and differentiation, of moving beyond its infancy into childhood and adolescence. Dialogues like that of the last issue of *Self & Society* help this evolution, but must not be considered as truth in any way, shape or form.

It has been brought to my attention that after the last issue of *Self & Society*, your readers might feel, believe, suspect that transpersonal psychotherapy is a thing of the past and this great new psychospiritual is 'where it's at' today. Nothing could be further from the truth! For example, in my article, I could have, indeed should have, said 'with the notable and definite exception of the Centre for Transpersonal Psychology'. My respect for the work of Ian Gordon-Brown and Barbara Somers and their colleagues at

the Centre for Transpersonal Psychology is immense, and a great deal of what is called psychospiritual has been created, taught and promoted by them.

My writing was in no way meant to minimise any existing centre for transpersonal psychology in this country or abroad. From humanistic psychology onwards (and please do not create a fifth force in psychology) we are all responding to an emerging paradigm that addresses the impoverished world of today and actively seeks to not only eliminate suffering, but to redeem it; and seeks not only to pathologise the human being but to celebrate our 'fundamental alrightness', which the mystics and saints through the ages have commented on.

Diana Whitmore

Dear S&S,

In the September issue of the magazine my review of Richard Stevens' *Understanding the Self* was sandwiched between another review by Neil Frude and a response by Richard, and I in turn would like a chance to respond.

When I review books for *Self & Society*, I do so from the standpoint that this is a journal of humanistic psychology (as indeed it says on the cover), and that the readers will be most interested in how it relates to that discipline. So I normally try to answer questions like 'Is it relevant to humanistic psychology?'; 'How exactly does it relate to humanistic psychology?'; 'Does it mention humanistic psychology?'; 'If so, does it do justice to it, or get it wrong in some way'. One of commonest ways of getting it wrong, by the way, is to reduce it to Maslow and Rogers, and to forget that Rollo May, Jim Bugental and

Alvin Mahrer have all been active members of the Association for Humanistic Psychology.

At one point Richard says: 'The philosophical basis of John's views on psychology and the self seems to have remained largely set over the years I have known him.' It seems to me that the philosophy of humanistic psychology has remained based on existentialism and phenomenology, as it always was, because that is part of its identity. Humanistic psychology without them would not be humanistic psychology at all. To eliminate the choosing subject, the person, from humanistic psychology would be to abandon it altogether, in my opinion. So when I review any book, all this is at the back of my mind.

John Rowan

Dear S&S,

One of my clients is a convicted paedophile, so to get a clearer insight into his psyche I recently read Dennis Howitt's book *Paedophiles and Sexual Offences against Children*. I was therefore astonished to read John Rowan's review of this book in the last edition of S&S. Rowan states that it is 'a rather nasty book.' This is certainly not the book I read, which gave a very thorough and sometimes challenging and thought-provoking account of the research seen from all angles.

If we are going to be humanistic therapists, should we not be non-judgemental with all people we take as clients? And should we not at least listen to what they have to say rather than demand that their views be pulped? Without condoning paedophilia in any way, are not the protagonists human beings deserving of positive

regard and a fair hearing? Is it not bigoted to say, as this review suggested, that paedophiles are nasty and should be got rid of?

As for the review itself, whatever happened to balanced feedback? If Rowan did not like the book, what part of it was it that he did not like? In the same issue of *S&S*, Richard Stevens criticises Rowan for not really reading another book he had reviewed; I wondered exactly the same in

this case. So maybe *S&S* should not ask Rowan to review so many books, so that he would at least have the time to read them thoroughly. The purpose of a book review is not for some self-appointed Mary Whitehouse of therapeutic literature to censor alternative viewpoints, but to provide a balanced, non-judgemental account so that we can choose whether it is an appropriate book to read.

Glyn Hudson

AHPP Page

Whiz Collis

This will be my last page as Chair of AHPP, as by the time this comes out we shall be having our AGM and I shall have finished my three-year stint. It has been a fascinating time, and I have tried to cooperate in improving relationships with AHP, and to continue to put AHPP before the public and other practitioners. I've found it immensely hard work, sometimes extremely depressing, but mostly it has been exciting and absorbing. I have had tremendous support, not only from other members and officers, but especially from Ian Doucet in the office. He has been a constant source of help, part mother, part friend. Thank you, Ian.

We had an extremely good meeting of the Core Beliefs Working Party, though sadly the attendance was ten out of a possible thirty, only two of whom were not board members. The debate was spirited and beliefs were passionately held and argued for. Of course no decisions were taken, and there needs to be a lot more

discussion. A full report will be given to the Annual General Meeting on November 17th. However, there were some thoughts about a new category of membership — Human Potential Worker — and future discussions will see if this is a feasible option.

We are having good talks with BAC about the United Kingdom Register of Counsellors, and Judith Baron has suggested that if AHPP has Collegial membership of BAC our members will not need to apply individually for BAC Membership to have access to the Register. I am not quite sure what Collegial Membership involves, but we are pursuing this and other avenues with the UKRC. We hope to have more to report to the AGM.

So good luck to my successor, whoever he or she may be, and thank you to all those members who have contacted me for various reasons in the past three years. It has been quite the best part about being chair. Goodbye!