

Letters to the Editor

Editor
Self and Society

Dear Editor,

It was with great interest that I read the issue of Self and Society entitled Social Work. The integration of Human Potential ideas into my daily work as a marital consultant in a

government social service centre, is a topic very close to my heart. I am writing to share some positive experiences that I have had myself. I am also looking for some response from others of your readers, if possible, as I wonder if there are others in England the land of my birth who are working in a similar fashion

to myself?

I was very fortunate in being encouraged to apply for a position on a team of marital consultants two years ago now. This occurred just at the time that my interest in Humanistic Psychology was being awakened. Thus I have integrated these two approaches at the same time. I say I was fortunate in being invited to join this team, because the leader of the team had gained acceptance within our organisation, to the extent it was accepted that his counselling services could be effective and that of his trainees also. He had also fought the principle that to be effective the counsellor himself needs the minimum of harassment in terms of government paperwork etc. Today our team no longer exists as such, but those of us who remain within the organisation continue to have acceptance as being capable as counsellors, which certainly aids client/counsellor confidence if nothing else. However within this working milieu I have found myself in a position with a certain amount of support and supervision in which I could try out some of the ideas of the Human Potential movement and integrate some of them into the general approach I have developed as my own

personal style. For example I have used relaxation techniques to reduce tension to help clients' concentrate, or to aid them the better to tune into their own or their partners feelings, or both. I have used ideas from psychosynthesis on developing the will and guided imagery as aids to self-understanding and improved communication. The concepts of yin and yang, of positive and negative sides of everything have been integrated too, to name a few of the ideas I have incorporated. Unifying my approach to marital counselling in particular is an orientation to the couple as a dyad, a systems approach. I have written an article on this which was published in the Bulletin of the Quebec Association of Marriage and Family Counsellors a year ago.

Hoping that fellow British Social Workers find my experiences encouraging and hoping to add weight to Oded Manor's article in particular.

I am,
Yours sincerely,

Margaret Bishop
Montreal, Quebec,
Canada.

NB: The issue on Social Work is still available at 50p post free

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For details contact Olivia Lousada 01 733 7235.

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