

Jane Allen

THE RECREATIVE QUALITY OF JOY

We may not realise that we often respond to life's pressures with only one facet of our personality, and that within us rests the ability to change this response as the following story recounts.

Angela was an exhausted member of the helping professions when she came to seek my help. She felt over-burdened by the profession she loved and the pressures of home into which she had accepted her aged Mother. She had recently found difficulty in sleeping and had nagging stomach pains on which drugs seemed to have no effect - she took no recreation except reading. She was very tense and very earnest.

It helped her to focus on that controlling part of her personality that told her she must push herself to do things for others till she dropped exhausted, which controlled her actions with oughts and shoulds and which made her expect a lot of herself and others and made her angry inside when these expectations were not fulfilled.

Whilst working with this part of her personality she discovered another part - a small girl who loved to escape from the strict control of much piano practice (her parents had high expectations of her being a pianist) and who loved the freedom of riding high on the swing and absorbing the beauty of the sunset. When she identified with this part, her face softened and her body relaxed. This part evidently held a lot of energy for her which needed expression in her life. We worked to unleash some of the joyous energy that had been repressed for years and we explored the two sides of her personality in many ways, ending with body movement so that she could understand what they did to her and for her and that she could choose to identify with either of them. The "controller" put her into the 'up tight' body posture with the frowning face she had carried for years. The "child" caused her to use her arms, hands, body in fluid movement 'to dance' which she declared was very liberating 'feels like me' and she realised how limiting had been her complete identification with the "controller". I felt the joy of the "child" could really help her.

Angela was in the habit of taking her problems, and frustrations to bed to worry over. I suggested that she should make a symbolic gesture of getting rid of them by identifying them separately with each garment she took off. I also suggested that she should have some music available in her room (she had mourned not having time for music). Having let go of the anxieties, she could identify with the "child's" joyous appreciation of the sunset and really allow herself to move to the music and enjoy it. Let it become a dance. Finally to slip into bed as the "child" instead of the "controller".

She came back a month later saying that her evening 'dance' had opened up another dimension - she revelled in the music, her body felt freer and as she moved she had received new insight into her previous behaviour pattern. It had been easy to give but not easy to take. She said *"I felt I was not worthy to receive and the strange thing is, I now find it easier to accept compliments about my work and my cooking and I'm beginning to accept people's offers of help. Relationships seem easier."*

Over the next few weeks she became aware that many of her dance movements had an inner meaning. She had begun to feel a warm glow within the heart region and as if she were encircled in a warm glow, she felt a sense of connectedness inside, wonder and courage. Her relationship with the World was changing, greater confidence, tolerance and understanding. For the first time in her life she had let her hair down, and expressed her anger when something she had said had been reported falsely in a printed document. Although she had expected the rejection by her colleagues, as she had previously feared, they evidently felt they could now relate to her more easily. She also was human! It had freed up the office atmosphere.

Angela was thrilled for herself, not only had she not had any stomach pains for some weeks, she was aware of the positive effect on the people with whom she worked and on her home. She was beginning to explore other parts of her personality too which added richness - she discovered an artist wanting to create and was going to try painting.

So much had happened in a short time as a result of giving equal importance and attention to both parts of her personality. For example, the "controller" was constructively used to give her the discipline which enabled her to fulfill her undertaking to dance every night

even when she felt exhausted. The "controller" had co-operated to help the "child" release a joyous energy and the dance of her body had indeed become a spiritual expression. The words of William Blake come to mind, "*Man has no body distinct from his Soul; for that called Body is a portion of Soul discerned by the five senses, the chief inlets of Soul in this age*".

G. Straker

COMMUNION WITH vs COMMUNICATION ABOUT: BREAKING THE CODE

The purpose of the paper is to illustrate that communication which is healing must be communion with and not communication about. Communication about feelings, events, issues etc. represents the context within which communion with another takes place. The paper aims to show this by describing a therapeutic encounter with a child who not only had a speech problem but seemed to lack even the desire to communicate.

It was from a person who lacked speech and indeed in the beginning even seemed to lack the desire to communicate at all, that I learned what communication is. The person I refer to was a little boy who, from the age of four, who, together with a very dedicated speech therapist, I treated for three years until the end of his first term at a special school.

The purpose of this paper is to share with you what I learned from my contact with him and there are two ways in which I could do this. The first is to give you an abstract synopsis of the concepts that I learned from my work with him. For example, I learned the difference between communication **about** and communication **with**. I learned that in conventional psychotherapy we talk **about** our lives, our problems, our pain, our past but that all this is only the vehicle that we use in our overriding desire and need to be in communication **with** or to be in contact **with** another. Because we use this vehicle of speech to communicate ourselves, the person who has a speech