

The Rogers-Laing Connection

Eduardo Bandeira

I will try to contribute with some information regarding a supposed fight, and very important event. I was the one who invited Carl Rogers and Ronnie Laing to meet in London to do a Workshop. I did that because knowing and respecting both of them as persons, and seeing the convergences in the essence of their approaches, I thought about how interesting this meeting could be. Stimulated by Maureen O'Hara, I went to them and made the invitation. Both immediately accepted with enthusiasm.

With the organization of the Philadelphia Association, the Workshop happened at the Hilton Hotel in London, with hundreds of participants. The previous night, the Roger's group and the Laing's gang, as he liked to say met at his house in Hamestad. First, Ronnie and Carl, with my facilitation met separately. It was a very polite and agreeable conversation. One hour later, the two groups arrived. Then, things started getting hot. Some bottles of wine later, we went to a Chinese restaurant nearby. At the dinner, Laing was very happy and started to make jokes with everyone, including Carl. "See that old man, he thinks he is a person!" he spoke loudly.

After the dinner, we went back to his house and at the door Natalie Rogers started to say that Ronnie had disrespected Carl and everyone started to argue. Carl stayed quiet. Laing became upset and said to me that he was misunderstood because he was joking only because he was very happy. At that moment we went inside the house and both groups started arguing very hard. Strong words were used, and after some time, the group started a discussion about the difficulties of the communication between the two ways of relating. It was a very interesting discussion between two groups of specialists in human communication, with great difficulties to understand each other. After that we all came to a common point. The next day, the Workshop was a success. Carl and Laing respected and enjoyed each other very much.

That is my view of what happened. To this day many of the people who participated in that event have strong memories of the richness of what they lived. Peace and happiness for you all.

Editor's note. This contribution by Eduardo Bandiera was originally presented on the international person-centered e-mail group network, and at my request, Mr. Bandiera agreed to publish his account in TPCJ. Interest generated in the Rogers-Laing connection probably followed on the heels of Maureen O'Hara's account published in Suhd's 1995 book *Positive regard: Carl Rogers and other notables he influenced*, published by Science and Behavior Books. Although I am satisfied with Bandiera's observation that "After that we all came to a common point," I also am curious about the point that he believes was commonly held, and would welcome others' reflections on this and other historical events. The following piece by John Keith Wood presents another significant moment in person-centered history.

Policy Statement

The Person-Centered Journal is sponsored by the Association for Development of the Person-Centered Approach (ADPCA). The publication is intended to promote and disseminate scholarly thinking about person-centered principles, practices, and philosophy.

All materials contained in The Person-Centered Journal are the property of the ADPCA, which grants reproduction permission to libraries, researchers, and teachers to copy all or part of the materials in this issue for scholarly purposes with the stipulation that no fee for profit be charged to the consumer for the use or possession of such copies.