

RENAISSANCE

Quarterly Newsletter of the Association for the Development of the Person-Centered Approach

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"The Person-Centered approach, then is primarily a way of being which finds its expression in attitudes and behaviors that create a growth-promoting climate."

Carl R. Rogers

Membership: A Matter of Cooperative Participation

"What does it mean to be a member?"

This question was recently asked of me about another organization, but I believe it is something all of us should be asking now about the ADPCA, in anticipation of our annual meeting in Knoxville.

To begin with, I'd like to say something about dues, since this has been misstated in the last *Renaissance*. Regular membership costs \$45 per year, and includes subscriptions to *Renaissance* and *The Person Centered Journal*. Five-year membership is \$200. Students can join for \$20 per year. All dues must be paid in U.S. dollars, and payable by check drawn on a U.S. bank. People who indicate they cannot afford dues are encouraged to pay what they can. Accommodations are made for those living in countries with nonconvertible currency. It is not possible to subscribe to *Renaissance* or *The Person Centered Journal* without joining the association. This was decided at the last annual meeting, because our publications (and postage) take up most of the dues money, anyway. We have no paid staff. (Send membership applications to me at ADPCA, Box 6881, San Carlos, CA 94070-1918, USA.)

Even this simple definition of membership has been difficult to maintain. Seven people in E. Europe wish to be mentioned on our membership list, cannot afford dues, and do not wish to receive our charity. They share one set of mailings received by an eighth countryman who is a regular member. Three people share the same address as a regular member, and wish to be members with reduced or no dues because they do not require separate mailings. One organization whose president is a member would like to be listed in our membership directory. We need to formulate policies for responding to these requests, rather than leaving it to the discretion of a few.

We have 200 members—134 live in the USA, and 66 live in countries all over the globe. One hundred forty four pay \$45 per year, 16 are signed up for 5 years, and the remainder are subsidized. However, I believe that membership should mean more than consumption. It should not be equivalent to joining Visa.

What then does it mean to be a member? I will share my beliefs in the hope of stimulating an exchange of ideas through *Renaissance* and the annual meeting.

Members share common goals or beliefs. In our case, I think this is a commitment to the process of empathy, unconditional regard and congruence in our interpersonal interactions, and the belief that this can lead to increased actualization in all parties concerned. While we may share these ideals, I agree with David Buckwalter's comment (Vol. 9(3), p. 3) that our behavior at our last annual meeting was often lacking in both empathy and acceptance.

Members are people. Organizations, no matter how closely constituted, cannot be members.

Members participate. This can be on a variety of levels. I have considered myself to be a member since the ADPCA was founded, though my only contact with other members until last summer was through *Renaissance*.

Members cooperate. In the ADPCA I think this means accepting the need of others to hear, be heard and to respond. Stating forceful feelings in a meeting and leaving prior to response, hiding our true feelings, or condemning (rather than sharing a reaction to) others' behavior, for example, keep the community from realizing its goals.

Members acknowledge leadership. Whether elected or de facto, continuous or spontaneous, every group has leaders. These are people who inspire pivotal ideas, or those who facilitate important work, change or stability within the organization and between the organization and outside groups. Due to losing my copy, I cannot name and source, but someone in the last *Renaissance* suggested that a person-centered organization did not have or need leaders. I believe that groups die without leadership. This does not mean that someone has to dictate, or hold a title. It means that someone takes the lead and starts a journal, or someone complains about feeling excluded then fights to facilitate inclusion, or someone runs a quarterly newsletter. By the way, I do not share the disdain of some of our members for titles. I believe they make it easy for others to understand the responsibilities accepted by individuals or committees.

These are my thoughts. What about yours?

—Jon Rose, February, 1993

Renaissance — A Rebirth

During the Renaissance period (1200-1500 A.D.) there was substituted for religion a more worldly point of view. "The center of reference became man rather than God." This new attitude became defined as "humanism." There was a gradual transfer of wealth and power to the common man. And it was a definite challenge to supernaturalism. (This from the *World Book Encyclopedia*, Vol. 15, 1962).

Yes, with the use of *Renaissance* as the heading for our quarterly newsletter we are continuing the efforts to transfer power from "the powers that be" to the general membership. And this "general membership" must be willing to step forward and be heard. While not everyone can be a Carl Rogers—each and everyone of us can have our own interpretation of what he or she believes Carl Rogers said and wrote. Each of us has a "way of being" which we feel Rogers was pointing at. Many times Rogers has been quoted as saying that his was not the final word. That

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Thoughts from Other Places and Other People

From Walt and Betty Ligon I received a brochure regarding "The Lisle Fellowship Inc." Under the "Statement of Purpose" I found this statement which, I feel, is a strong affirmation for "community building."

"Lisle offers living and learning experiences which involve participants intimately in the life of the community and group. Through living and learning together, members explore and integrate different values, beliefs and life styles."

I subscribe to the "Mental Medicine Update" which is the newsletter for "Mind/Body Health." In Vol. 1, No. 2, for Fall 1992 there was a review of a book called *The Healing Power of Doing Good* by Luks and Payne (New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1992). I think that this speaks rather directly to those of us who want to practice the Person-Centered Approach. A portion of the reviews states:

"When people help other people they often experience a "helper's high"—a sudden rush of warmth, good feelings, and increased energy followed by a longer-lasting sense of calm, emotional well-being, and increased self-worth. Those who experience this "healthy-helping syndrome" report better overall health—less pain, fewer colds—and appear better able to cope with chronic diseases and stress-related disorders. There are several keys to healthy helping. First, have personal contact with those who are helped—the effects seem to be much stronger. Second, help frequently. Those who weave helping into their weekly routines are more likely to report better physical and emotional well-being. Third, help strangers. Help given out of a sense of family or civic obligation is less likely to lead to the helper's high than help given freely. Fourth, let go of the results.

Focus on the process, enjoying the feelings of closeness. If you focus only on whether your efforts will truly change someone or improve society, you are as likely to be frustrated as elated. Finally, be persistent. Empathy grows within us the more we interact with and understand people who need our help."

And from Adriana Calleja in Buenos Aires I received a paper on "The Actualizing Tendency in Groups." Part of what this very interesting article said was:

"To understand that the facilitator is part of the structure means being oneself within the group, keeping consciousness of the power and responsibility of his differentiated role.

Congruence, acceptance towards the group and the participants, empathic understanding and trust in the group's creative potential are the facilitator's necessary conditions for creating a climate for growth promotion.

Facilitator's contribution to the group's process is to participate in it, offering the required resources for its development: listening and answering, suggesting exercises that enhance verbal and non verbal communication, helping to concentrate the group's attention in the "here and now." To trust in the group does not mean assuming a "laissez faire" attitude but being very attentive to what is said and occurs. In this way he will offer the group some elements, facilitating a process in which he is inserted. The intention is that the group, developing its own knowledge, will reach the solutions."

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his thoughts and theories must continue to grow and to change if his beliefs were to be actualized.

Many of us have our own "ways of being" which we value and which we believe is how Carl would have wanted it. Empathic understanding, respect and genuineness are seen as basic to Rogers' "way of being." However, these three elements of his "way of being" are not all there is to the Person-Centered Approach. Even our name (which Rogers initiated) has evolved from nondirective psychotherapy through client-centered to our present Person-Centered Approach.

Rogers' activities in individual psychotherapy, education, industry, encounter groups, etc. was in constant evolution. This evolution must continue. And it can only continue if there are those who want to commit themselves to a continued advance into

(and perhaps through) the Person-Centered Approach.

This is a plea to those who want to share their ideas and activities through Renaissance. Tell the rest of us what you are thinking and doing which is related to your version of the Person-Centered Approach.

Some of the more recent articles in *Renaissance* have included social activism, relationships, self-actualization, facilitation, value of community, nature/nurture controversy, etc. (The editor gives a sound and warm thanks to those who have enabled us to think about PCA through their articles submitted to *Renaissance*: Maria Gonzolez-Blue; David Alpert; Doug Bower, David Buckwalter; Betty Ligon; Chuck Stuart; Don Stevens; Ruth Stanford and yes, even Ken Newton).

1993 ADP-CA Annual Meeting

May 27 - 31 at Maryville College

Our Association Annual Meeting is being held at Maryville College which is approximately 15 miles from Knoxville, about an equal distance to the Great Smoky Mountain National Park.

This is an unsurpassed area for individual, family and/or group vacations. So plan your vacation around our annual meeting—combine professional experiences with your vacation here in East Tennessee and Western North Carolina. Just about every recreation or entertainment is available. Golf, swimming (in mountain streams or motel pools), tennis, hiking, tubing, country/western music, etc. All of this is available from Maryville (or Townsend, a village in a lovely valley adjacent to the Smoky Mountain National Park and only ten miles from Maryville). Great accommodations are available

in addition to those at Maryville College. We will be opening the conference on Thursday evening with small groups; after which we will come together in a large group to greet one another and begin our community building process. On Friday the entire day is given to community building.

We have received a number of papers or ideas which individuals have offered to present at our meeting. There continues to be time available for even more persons who would like to present their thoughts and ideas to us. So if you have something to say to the group, please send it in for inclusion; and please include your abstract and a short personal introduction of you for us to include in a program brochure we are preparing.

ADP-CA: On Becoming a Community

The Association for the Development of the Person-Centered Approach remembers and honors Carl Rogers in entitling the theme for our 1993 Annual Conference as "On Becoming a Community."

It seems we are in a state of crisis in our development as an association where becoming a community is vital. Thus the theme and goal of this national meeting will be "community building."

To facilitate this goal we will suggest that each person attending the conference choose a dyad from one of the small groups in which they will be participating. We will be initiating the conference on Thursday evening with small groups; after

which we will come together in a large group to greet everyone and begin our community building process. On Friday we will be devoting the entire day to community building.

It is our hope that each person that attends feels included and enabled to participate in the lectures, business meetings, socials, etc. that will be happening on Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

We welcome your ideas and concerns in facilitating this process to reach our goal of ADP-CA "On Becoming a Community."

'93 Planning Committee
ADP-CA Annual Meeting