

# RENAISSANCE

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

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*"What makes something Person centered is in the process, not whether or not there are experiences that are hostile or hurtful, in my opinion. Even in relation to process (i.e. back and forth communications between people over time) the question to me is how to make a particular process more fully or consistently express the P-C principles/values/attitudes. It is always an approximation not a finished product, like the concept of the fully functioning person. In Rogers' theory none such exist, just the approximation in persons of the personal variables involved."*

Barbara Temaner Brodley, PCA/CCT network, 12/13/98  
(submitted by Kathy Moon)

## Where are ADPCA members?

I am a part of the British group planning the ADPCA meeting in Manchester in the year 2001. I was interested to find out which geographical areas people attending ADPCA conferences come from. If, as I had assumed, most people attending are "local", how many "local" people could we hope to attract when the conference is in Britain. I started by constructing a spreadsheet armed with the ADPCA membership list and the list of people who attended the 1998 meeting in Boston. I was surprised by some of the results.

First I looked closely at the Boston conference; of the 111 people attending, 77% have addresses in the USA. The remainder were Europeans, except for 1 from Bermuda and 3 from Mexico.

For my purposes I defined the following States as "local": Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Washington DC. 50% of those attending came from those states and therefore 27% from other States in the USA. 27 people came from Massachusetts although only 13 of our members have a Massachusetts address. The conference obviously succeeds in attracting local people who are not members but, hopefully, are interested in joining.

The largest single group came from Massachusetts (27 people), Illinois was second with 15, followed by New York State with 14. The next largest group came from England - the home of 6 attendees. Three people came from each of the following: Mexico, California, Florida, Louisiana and Ohio.

From the 1998/99 membership list we appear to have 215 members. Distributed by continent: Asia 8, Australia/NZ 1, Africa 3, Europe 69, and North America 134. This means that 62% of our members are North American and 32% European.

The "top 10" States/Countries are:

England	29
Illinois	23
New York	18
Massachusetts	13

California	13
Florida	8
Georgia	6
Japan	6
Tennessee	6
Greece	5

If England, Scotland and Wales are added together and called Britain, the British figure increases to 34.

I take great comfort from these figures as far as our 2001 conference in Manchester is concerned. We are confident that we can attract a significant number of local people - within 50 miles of Manchester and further afield in Britain.

Almost a third of the membership live in Europe. Many of these members face considerable difficulties: language, payment of membership in US dollars, and difficult exchange rates for those living in Eastern Europe (we have members in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary and Poland). 2001 looks like a good time to hold a meeting in Europe.

I try to make it easier for Western Europeans to maintain their membership in ADPCA by paying me in sterling with either British cheques or Eurocheques. I pass the money to Robert Oppenhiemer, who converts it into dollars. Sometimes I gather a stack of money and send it to Julia Rabin in dollar travellers checks. Is the time coming when we should consider having a bank account in Europe too, either in sterling or the new Euro currency, to make it even easier for the Europeans to join the association? 8 of our members live in Euroland: the 11 countries who will use the new currency. It would be good to debate this subject before the meeting in Louisiana next year.

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# Core Principles of the Person Centered Approach

*I wrote this brief statement recently while a guest at the European PCA Network meeting in Luxembourg, Sept. 26-27, 1998. It is mostly self explanatory. The part I did not include was that what I say here is based on a wide variety of personal experiences in PCA activities and organizations, spanning more than 40 years, beginning at the Counseling Center of the University of Chicago. These experiences include being both a student and a teacher in student centered courses, being both client and therapist in client centered therapy, carrying out research in client centered therapy and extending it into the area of family therapy, participating in a client centered therapeutic community, participating in and facilitating encounter groups, and participating in local, national and international PCA meetings and organizations.*

*In writing this brief statement of principles I drew on all these experiences to distill what was most valuable and essential in them and identified them as uniquely person centered. And I wanted to describe these essential elements in way that would be understood by persons not familiar with the PCA, and that could readily be included in PCA statements of purpose or goals.*

*I welcome your comments and responses.*

*I would also like this statement to serve as a stimulus for others of you to put into words your own view of our core principles as you have experienced them in each of your lives. We can have an exiting dialogue that would no doubt clarify the significance and uniqueness of the person centered approach today. I will take responsibility for collecting people's views and to identify their authorship.*

I have observed several times that descriptions of the person centered approach by person centered organizations do not state what, for me, are its most essential and valuable characteristics. There are certain values and principles that are central and unique to person centered practices and organizations, that identify these practices and organizations as person centered, and that distinguish them clearly from those that are not. I believe that it is important to clarify and describe these core person centered principles and values, whether they are the ones that are presented here or others. I see them as necessary for guiding and developing our own person centered activities and, especially, so that others who are unfamiliar with this approach may understand its unique character and its possible importance for them in their own lives and work. This is a brief statement of two elements that for me are the foundation of person centered activities, whether therapy, facilitation, training, teaching, consulting or group organization. In my opinion they, more than any others, give such activities their unique person centered characteristics. They are the principles of self direction and of mutuality.

Foremost is the principle of self direction of the client or participant. Self direction is based on the value of individual autonomy and self responsibility as most conducive to personal and social fulfillment and to the worth of the individual human being. The person centered therapist (facilitator, trainer, teacher, supervisor, consultant, and so forth) seeks to foster self direction and self responsibility of the client (student, trainee, member, participant, consultee), within the constraints of the social situation. Specific characteristics of person centered therapy training and practice are based on this fundamental principle of

self direction. In person centered training programs, for example, this means that individual trainees are given responsibility for determining their own goals, learning processes, evaluation procedures, schedules, resource utilization, and their relations with trainers, fellow trainees and clients, to the largest extent possible within the social context of the activity or program.

The principle of mutuality complements that of self direction. Decisions regarding the trainee and the program are made in an open atmosphere of mutuality, consensus and equality regardless of status. For person centered organizations the meeting of the community as a whole, rather than a particular person or subgroup, holds the fundamental decision-making authority regarding the program, again within the limits of the social or institutional context.

Learning how to apply these principles successfully is a gradual process. Persons unfamiliar with self direction and mutuality may be hesitant to accept them because they are unfamiliar with the process of learning and growth that occurs when they are conscientiously applied. In my experience, organizations that have a basic commitment to the principles find that the skills and understanding required for self direction and mutuality grow year by year. Matters which seem beyond the application of the approach become successfully managed as persons gain in their understanding, creativity and skills in the application of the core principles. Many persons find that self direction and mutuality then become more successfully expressed in their own lives as well.

Ferdinand van der Veen  
9/30/98

# Capitalism and The Person Centered Approach

By David Joseph Alpert

I was recently struck by the espoused capitalistic values of a member of the Association for the Development of the Person-Centered Approach. In a conversation, a discussion was initiated by me as to the essential incompatibility of the person-centered approach with the capitalistic enterprise.

The espouser of capitalism spoke of the initiative released by capitalism. And I spoke of the formative tendency of the universe, which is democratic and non-aggressive. The espouser of capitalism believed that any attempt by a community to control the behavior of one of its members was anathema.

As I see it, the person-centered approach does allow for control of others. For example, if I see a child about to errantly cross the road, I will restrain it. However, the type of control over others allowed and encouraged by capitalism seems to contradict the essence of the person-centered approach, which is that we not control the everyday actions of others, such as the speed at which tasks are completed and the manner in which tasks are accomplished.

In capitalism, certain persons (the capitalists) possess the capital (the money and the property) which allow them to direct the actions of others who seek either (or both) meaning or sustenance in performing activity (labor) (which serves to allow the capitalist to augment their capital). The capitalist is extremely interested (or through capitalism's demands through competition is compelled) in maximizing the degree to which labor creates output in relation to the input of capital and time.

Capitalism thus demands of capitalists a cut-throat ethic. Products generated in this manner carry the imprint (holograph) of a dog-eat-dog mentality. And persons caught by circumstances in the role of laborers are forced to endure the alienation from the formative tendency of the universe that is generated by a system (capitalism) which has no interest in promoting a 'way of being' which prioritizes being over doing.

Sometimes a society is so defensively attached to an idea (e.g. "the earth is flat") that there is no willingness in the society for counterproposals. It seems to me that this is so here in the United States of America as the twentieth century is being completed in this common era when it comes to capitalism. It would seem that this defensive attachment to an idea needs to be challenged so that capitalism is brought down off the pedestal rightly deserved by the formative tendency of the universe.

In no way am I arguing here that the person-centered approach would be compatible with a top-down state socialism. It is rather my belief that all forms of action ought to be informed by consideration of the formative tendency of the universe. I do not believe that capitalism or top-down state socialism can incorporate a valuing of the formative tendency in the universe.

As I see it, a new economic philosophy is required for one's economic actions to be consistent with the person-centered philosophy. This new economic philosophy would have at its foundation a basic tenet: that all economic relations honor and embrace the formative tendency of the universe.

## WARM SPRINGS WORKSHOP

### PRESENTERS:

Persons internationally recognized as being involved with the person-centered approach will be presenting.

### LOCATION:

Warm Springs Rehabilitation Center

Warm Springs, Georgia

*Facilities are rustic and participants will share rooms.*

*There are bathroom facilities in each room.*

### DATES:

February 17-21, 1999

### FEES:

Registration \$160

*Sliding scale fees for registration can be arranged on special request. Some scholarships are available.*

Room \$40/night/double room

*Meals are available in the campus cafeteria.*

All fees are due by January 15, 1998.

**THE PERSON-CENTERED APPROACH  
WARM SPRINGS, GEORGIA  
FEBRUARY 17-21, 1999**

### LIMITED ENROLLMENT:

Early registration is suggested to guarantee a room.

Name .....

Address .....

City, State, Zip .....

Country .....

### MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

Person-Centered International

### MAIL APPLICATION TO:

Jerold D. Bozarth

1160 Hunting Creek Ln

Watkinsville, GA 30677

**RENAISSANCE SUBMISSIONS**

Deadlines for contributions to the Renaissance are as follows:

**JANUARY 1,    APRIL 1,  
JULY 1,    OCTOBER 1**

Contributions received by the deadline will be honored as space permits.

Please send submissions to:

Jody DeRidder  
1227 Luttrell St.  
Knoxville, TN 37917, USA

or Email to Jody at:  
davidnjody@icx.net

**Note:** Renaissance issues may be posted on the ADPCA website (<http://www.adpca.org>). If you object to your submission being made available over the internet, please notify the editor at the time of submission.

## 1999 Annual Meeting Announcement

The 1999 ACPA conference will be held from August 4-8 at Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, Louisiana. Those of you who are planning to come by air carrier need to think about arriving through Shreveport or Monroe. There will be dorm space available on campus and there are nearby hotel accommodations in Ruston. If you need more information, feel free to contact me at pbickham@woodard.LaTech.edu or (318) 254-1235 home; or (318) 257-2449 work. Our planning committee is hoping that everyone will have a good time in Louisiana! See you then!

*Paula Bickham*

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*Many thanks to Kathy Moon and Paul Blanchard  
for their help on this issue!!!*

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