

RENAISSANCE

Newsletter of the Association for the Development of the Person-Centered Approach Vol. 21, Spring & Summer, 2004



Bruce and Yoko Allen, the hosts of 2004 ADPCA

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Hypnocounseling: An eclectic bridge between Milton Erickson and Carl Rogers

by Hugh Gunnison, Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books, 2003.

Reviewed by James R. Iberg

I was interested in reviewing this book because I met the author years ago in New York at a conference of the Association for the Development of the Person Centered Approach at which he presented some of his ideas about hypnosis and client-centered therapy. I wanted to see what I imagined must be the culmination of what started back then.

Gunnison does a service with this book in highlighting similarities and differences in the approaches of two seminal psychotherapists — Milton Erickson and Carl Rogers. Gunnison documents well that these two masters both saw the client/patient's own experience as the source of therapeutic improvement, and both relied on accurately understanding and respecting the client/patient. By showing some ways the two different approaches interact with experiencing, he illuminates and illustrates some of the phenomena of human change that are pertinent to psychotherapy. Thus the book is an example of what Gendlin tells us will happen when we open our minds to what is useful and accurate about two (or more) theories rather than limiting ourselves to only one theory (see, for example, the theme in the footnotes in Gendlin, 1968).

Gunnison does a nice job of illustrating some principles regarding the structure of thought that can be helpful to the therapist. Having these linguistic choices more clearly in mind can help a therapist find responses that go beyond the client's own terms — terms that manifest the problem from which the client seeks relief.

This book promises to be helpful to client-centered students, who must learn how to hear the client from his/her own frame of reference without that degenerating into a wooden parroting of what the client has explicitly said.

I suspect that while the client-centered practitioner may err in the direction of getting stuck in the client's problematic structures of thought, hypnocounselors may err in the direction of trying to manipulate linguistic structures before the client is ready. Either problem involves inadequate attention to the experiential intricacy underlying the linguistic forms, out of which correct pacing, insight, new ideas, and problem resolution can emerge.

The book needed a more thorough editing. Many sections are tedious, repeating points that could be made more concisely, and there is incorrect word usage. Gunnison presents Rogers' theoretical propositions with specific page numbers which suggests that these are Rogers' words, while in fact they are paraphrases. This liberty seems inappropriate with carefully formulated theoretical propositions, especially when it is not made clear to the reader this liberty has been taken. To make it worse, one proposition is incorrectly paraphrased ("consistent" should read "inconsistent" in XVI on page 43). The text is very uneven in style, sometimes scholarly, sometimes sophomoric and pedantic. The author uses many abbreviations, which are obfuscating for the reader (FDA, FRT, PEGS, IDL, e.g.); there is no glossary nor do the abbreviations appear in the index. Maybe some of these features were an intentional hypnotic intervention — they certainly had a soporific effect on this reader.

Gunnison doesn't refer to client-centered literature published after the 1970s. The client-centered literature he does cite is limited to only Rogers and a few of his colleagues. Omitted is any mention of Gendlin and his students' work, which is very pertinent to some of the ideas and phenomena that Gunnison writes about. It's a bit like reinventing the wheel. One of the most well known instruments from the client-centered tradition is the Experiencing Scale (Klein, et. al., 1970, 1986), but Gunnison refers only to its precursors.

In his chapter on eclecticism, Gunnison addresses the undesirability of "One-Right-Wayisms." His way of avoiding these is eclecticism, which he distinguishes from syncretism (an unsystematic and piecemeal combining of elements of different theories). How helpful to this purpose could be the part of Gendlin's experiential philosophy about the relationship of theory to experiencing (Gendlin, 1962).

The author rightly gives as an example of "One-Right-Wayisms" an experience with the client-centered community in which one of the "inner circle" was very judgmental and closed to the ideas that Gunnison was presenting at a conference (I believe this was the conference presentation I attended, as I vividly recall such an exchange). Perhaps this unpleasant experience turned Gunnison away from learning more about modern work of students and colleagues of Rogers.

On page 148 Gunnison formulates a hypothesis about a rebalancing of right and left hemispheres that may be involved in therapeutic progress, for which one published study in the client-centered literature (Iberg, 1990) provides direct empirical evidence.

Many of the hypnotic interventions presented and discussed are linguistic maneuvers. In this reviewer's opinion, more elegant versions of interventions with similar goals have been developed and discussed by Cornell, a linguist and student of Gendlin (see www.focusingresources.com). The way Cornell's versions are more elegant is that they accomplish the goal of helping the client to discover his/her own power to change with less of the "therapist knows what needs to happen" than is inherent in the hypnotic versions. Throughout the book, Gunnison repeats the refrain that the therapist must let the client take the lead and that the answers and movement come from within the client, but his methods don't escape the implication that the client needs external guidance. Modern developments in the client-centered tradition do a better job of that, in my opinion.

Lest I leave you with the impression that my critiques of Gunnison's book are the main message, I repeat that the book is an interesting exercise in the experiential application of two different theories/approaches, by a counselor sincerely interested in his clients' welfare. He shares examples of his clinical work and his thinking about the work, which shows a willingness to be vulnerable and open to scrutiny at the level of behavioral detail. This is an important object lesson for those who lock in to debate at a more abstract level, which smacks of dogmatic adherence to one favorite theory.

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Victim No More

Cecilia Guzman

It started out as a regular baseball season. Cold springtime night games where we shivered as we watched the boys play and prayed that the pitcher would not walk too many hitters so the game would end quickly. As my 15-year-old son approached us after the fifth game of the season, my husband and I soon realized that something was wrong. Our son looked visibly upset and very angry. He explained in a tight voice that some of his teammates had called him "spic," made crude and offensive racial jokes, and generally bullied him. Needless to say, we were appalled and greatly offended. I felt as if I had been dunked in a cold vat of water where shock was mixed with overwhelming sadness and anxiety. Many nights I cried myself to sleep.

We live in a western suburb of Chicago that does not have a culturally and racially diverse population but this had never been a problem until now. How can this happen in today's "politically correct" environment we asked ourselves. What should we do now? After a brief discussion between ourselves, it was decided that a phone call to the coach was in order. To make a long story short, the coach was not receptive to our concerns and basically stated that it was not his job to "teach the boys that sort of thing." As a result of his statements, we called the park district baseball commissioner and reported our experience. He listened attentively, sympathized appropriately and stated that he would initiate an investigation into the incident. We did not hear from him again and assumed that the situation was taken care of. Unfortunately, several weeks later another racially charged exchange occurred—this time much more physical in nature.

In the meantime, we talked to our son about his feelings and about returning to play for the team. Initially, he did not want to play again because it was no longer any fun, but later decided that he would not succumb to their threats and bullying. I felt no small amount of trepidation at the thought of him being revictimized. But was this fear really about Carlos or was it a direct provocation of my own issues and anxiety? Was I the one being revictimized?

Initially, he did not want to play again because it was no longer any fun, but later decided that he would not succumb to their threats and bullying. I felt no small amount of trepidation at the thought of him being revictimized. But was this fear really about Carlos or was it a direct provocation of my own issues and anxiety?

As a first generation Cuban American, I have felt the sting of prejudice, exclusion, and ignorance. My parents' solution to my pain was distraction. After a particularly hurtful experience, I remember my parents taking me to the local amusement park in an attempt to heal my wound (and I suspect theirs as well) and to help me forget. But what they did not realize was that for me, that pivotal incident triggered my shame affect to such an extent that it became an internalized belief system—a belief that as a Latina I was not as good or deserving as my white counterparts. As I grew up any other experiences that slightly smacked of racism or

exclusion (whether real or imagined) just served to reinforce this belief.

It was not until I started graduate school and began my own intensive therapy that this irrational belief was unearthed and dismantled. But long held ingrained beliefs are difficult to shake and can rear their ugly heads when least expected as evidenced by my own reaction to "the baseball incident." It became apparent to me that I had over-identified with my son and his pain became my pain. Obviously, my own feelings of inferiority and low self-worth had not been completely resolved. I returned to therapy during which my very wise therapist told me, "The Chinese word for conflict and opportunity are the same, view this conflict as an opportunity for change." I held her suggestion close to my heart as my husband and I prepared for the inevitable confrontation awaiting us.

Unlike our previous attempts at solving this problem, we demanded a meeting with the superintendent of the park district, the baseball commissioner, the coach and ourselves. By the end of the meeting it was clear to all present that the coach did not view the perpetrator's behavior as a problem. However, the coach was strongly persuaded to conduct a meeting with the players and their parents explaining what was expected from each player relative to respect, responsibility and the appropriate consequences if another incident should occur.

Ironically, this response was what my husband and I had requested from the beginning.

I could only shake my head in disbelief and profound pride that my son displayed such dignity and incredible capacity for forgiveness. Most importantly, I realized that he had not internalized any shame regarding his experience with this boy. Although his pain had temporarily become my pain, my shame never became his. And for this, I am profoundly grateful.

After that final meeting with the authorities of the park district, I experienced a huge wave of relief and pride. Not only was I able to advocate for my son but in a totally unexpected way, I had also advocated for myself. No longer did I feel like a helpless child subject to the injustices of our society. I stood up to those white men in power, stated my case, and remained strong, steadfast and calm within my truth, which resulted in a small victory for myself and maybe for all minorities. I believe this conflict provided me with the opportunity to finally heal my wound. What began as a parent defending the rights of her child became a child/adult finally being able to defend herself. In the final analysis, what happened to me could be described as a paradigm shift. A change from a belief that my past experiences defined who I was to a belief that those

experiences happened to me but are no longer about me. As time passed and I was able to process my experience more deeply, I felt as if a huge weight had been lifted from my shoulders. Indeed, my therapist underestimated what a powerful catalyst this meeting would become.

The following week, my son played another game. During the 3rd inning, the main bully hit a whopper of a home run. As he approached the bench after running the bases, he received high fives from his cronies. Half the team did not acknowledge the run. However, much to our surprise, our son stood up approached this boy and shook his hand in congratulation. I could only shake my head in disbelief and profound pride that my son displayed such dignity and incredible capacity for forgiveness. Most importantly, I realized that he had not internalized any shame regarding his experience with this boy. Although his pain had temporarily become my pain, my shame never became his. And for this, I am profoundly grateful.

ADPCA 19th Annual Conference, Anchorage 2004

July 14-18, 2004, at the University of Alaska.

Free Pre-Conference Session: July 14, 10am - 5pm. Conference: 7pm July 14 to Noon, on July 18th.

Contact: Bruce and Yoko Allen

Address: Box 1268, Dillingham, AK 99576 Phone: 907/842-4992 E-mail: brucea@Nushtel.net

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PRE-CONFERENCE: July 14, 2004 10 am-Noon & 1 pm-5 pm., Commons Rm. 107

Free but space is limited. Please check below if you will attend.

_____ *Elements of Client-Centered Therapy and the Person Centered Approach*
presented by Barbara Brodley, Ph.D. and Kathy Moon, M.A.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEE: Conference begins @ 7 p.m. July 14, 2004

_____ \$185 early registration fee mailed from October 1, 2003-March 31, 2004.
_____ \$235 registration fee mailed April 1, 2004 or later.

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The second residential conference of the
**British Association for
the Person-Centred Approach**

will be held at

Loughborough University, UK
2nd – 5th September 2004

Our theme is **Identity and Diversity within the Person-Centred Approach**. There will be keynote talks by the British editors of the 'core conditions' series of books published by PCCS: Pete Sanders, Gill Wyatt, Sheila Haugh and Paul Wilkins, and a presentation by Maggie Pollard and David Tanner on wider applications of the person-centred approach. We hope to have a wide variety of workshops etc and welcome contributions from anyone who is interested in the approach and its applications.

You can get an early bird discount by booking a place by 30 April 2004. Fees for the full conference, including accommodation and meals, start at £290.

A brochure and application form can be downloaded from the BAPCA website at www.bapca.org.uk. For other information please contact Tracey Lawson: email: tracey.lawson@bacp.co.uk; Tel.+ 44 (0)870 443 5241. If you would like to offer a contribution to the programme please contact Jill Jones at jill.jones1@virgin.net.

Albert Einstein once said:

“A human being is part of the whole that we call the universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separate from the rest—a kind of optical illusion of his consciousness. This illusion is a prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for only the few people nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living beings and all of nature.”

(Provided by Ferdinand van der Veen)

Person-centered Therapy with Impoverished, Neglected, and Maltreated Children and Youth in Brazil

Elizabeth Freire
Board of the Person-Centered Friends

Dear Person-centered friends,

I would like to present to you a brief report of a program that provides person-centered therapy for impoverished, neglected, and maltreated children and youth in Brazil. This program is supported by a private person-centered institute, named Instituto Delphos, and staffed by volunteer therapists. It was first launched at a residential facility, which is operated for the care of children and adolescents who have been committed to the institution under applicable law, due to abandonment, neglect, abuse or death of their parents or guardians. The positive outcomes achieved at this residential institution led to the extension of the program to two other nonresidential facilities, which provide community day programs (including handicrafts, music, sports and educational activities) for poor inner city children and youth.

The volunteer therapists working in this program are students and supervisors of Delphos' person-centered training program. By our request, all of the facilities provided rooms for the therapy sessions, which the therapists themselves converted into play-therapy settings – donating toys, games, cushions, inks, brushes and whatever else was necessary. The program started, in 2002, with four volunteers and reached fourteen in 2003. More than seventy children and adolescents of these three institutions have been attended since then.

Before the program was launched at the residential facility, we had thought that group therapy would be better than individual therapy, since the former would reach a larger number of children and youth. Soon, however, it was realized that what these children and adolescents required most was individualized attention and a private space-time of their own, since they live in a group situation twenty-four hours a day. They do everything in groups: they eat in groups, they go to school in groups, they sleep in groups, and so forth. Therefore we decided that an individual therapeutic setting would be of great help. At the very least, it would provide an experience of "privateness." Six months after the beginning of the program, the first outcomes were so successful that the same model of individual therapy was then applied to children and youth of the two non-residential facilities.

The non-directivity of person-centered therapy produced a strong impact at the very beginning of the program. The children and youth were accustomed to being interrogated by a multitude of professionals – psychologists, social workers, educators, directors of the institutions and so forth. They were so accustomed to answering questions that the non-directive climate of the therapeutic relationship surprised them.

**... what these children
and adolescents required
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For example, Jane, a thirteen years old girl, said to her therapist in her first session:

"I do not know what to talk... I have nothing to talk about (...) there were so many psychologists with whom I talked, so I have already talked a lot with them, but then I was quiet and they made questions to me... They asked a lot of things that they wanted to know. Now it's just me who has to talk... so, what am I supposed to do? I have nothing to talk about."

However, despite this puzzled initial response to the therapist's non-directive attitude, Jane talked a great deal during the whole session, freeing painful and profound feelings, sharing them with the therapist, without the therapist's directing a single question to her. The only therapist's utterances were empathic understanding responses.

The puzzled initial reaction to the non-directive person-centered interaction suggests that these children and youth were not used to being allowed to experience autonomy and self-determination, that is, they were not accustomed to experience their personal power within a relationship. But they soon came to realize that the relationship with the therapists of this program was unique, quite distinct from anything they had experienced before. For instance, Carlos, a child sheltered in the residential institution, when saw his therapist in front of the dining hall, while they waited for the door to be opened for lunch, asked her:

- "Tia ['tia' is the affectionate way children in Brazil address adults], this counseling is different, isn't it? We do not have to remain answering questions because the 'tia' does not ask questions of us. We talk whenever we want. If we do not want to talk, we can just play. It's we who choose what to do."

When the therapist agreed with him, Carlos turned to another boy next to him and said: - "You see? I told you!"

"Tia ['tia' is the affectionate way children in Brazil address adults], this counseling is different, isn't it? We do not have to remain answering questions because the 'tia' does not ask questions of us. We talk whenever we want. If we do not want to talk, we can just play. It's we who choose what to do."

Not surprisingly, after the program was running for a few weeks, many children and adolescents came on their own initiative to the therapists asking for therapy. This showed that the space-time of therapy and the therapeutic relationship were of great value to them. The following client's utterances illustrate their appreciation:

- "I'm so happy that now I have someone who listens me."
- "It's so good that I can talk about these things with someone. That relieves me..."
- "I would like you to attend my friends too. It's so good here!"

The outcomes of this person-centered program have been generally quite successful since the beginning. Interviews with the educators and coordinators of the institutions showed that the children and adolescents who received therapy generally achieved:

- Significant improvement in interpersonal relationships, with more positive attitudes towards others (peers, family and institution's staff).
- Better achievement at school;
- Improvement in mood and emotional functioning, encompassing the accomplishment of a greater and more constant well-being.
- One particular outcome may also illustrate the success of the program. A good example is presented by a six-year-old boy who was

attended at a nonresidential facility. He used to be seen by the institution's staff as troublesome, agitated and aggressive, with difficulties of relating with peers and teachers. After beginning therapy, he became calmer and more sociable, engaging in constructive interactions with others. Furthermore, his change triggered positive changes in his family too. He would live with his mother and four siblings in conditions of extreme privation and poverty. His mother would be rather neglectful about herself and her children, as if she had simply "given up" to take care of her and their lives. They would live in complete dirtiness, with no hygienic care at all. The institution's staff had described their home as a "garbage can". Following the positive changes in his son's behavior, the mother came to his therapist asking for psychological help too. She started therapy and soon her behavior also changed quite positively. The institution's staff described her as "another woman" after she started therapy -- actively engaged in taking care of herself, children and house. The change in her appearance was quite impressive: from a dirty woman with tattered clothing and disheveled hair to a "good-looking woman, clean, and well dressed."

The very positive outcomes of this program impelled the therapists to expand it so that a greater number of other person-centered therapists might engage in this volunteer enterprise. As a result, in 2003, a non-governmental organization, named "Person-centered Friends" (Amigos Centrados na Pessoa - ACEP), was created with the goal of providing person-centered therapy to impoverished, neglected and maltreated children and youth.

When I commented about this project in the CCTPCA e-mail list last year, I received an e-mail from Jill Jones saying that if she lived here, she would like to be involved in this project and therefore she offered some financial donation. Her offer was quite encouraging and supportive to all of us. We actually have been facing an obstacle in continuing our work in the residential facility. This institution is located in the countryside and the therapists take two hours by car to get there, with half an hour being on a small, unsurfaced road full of curves. It is a

rather dangerous road and one of the volunteer therapists crashed her car on her first visit to the institution. Fortunately she wasn't hurt, but she is still frightened to drive there again alone. There are many person-centered therapists and training students who would like to volunteer to work there, but they can't because of the distance. Many don't have car and many cannot afford the cost of gas (to go every week). Therefore, it is indeed our goal to have enough resources to pay for some transportation to take the therapists there once a week. This would ensure that our project would keep working for a long time, providing person-centered relationships for these institutionalized children and adolescents.

After some e-mail exchange with Jill, she suggested we write some piece explaining our work and asking for readers to become "Friends of the Amigos Centrados na Pessoa" in Renaissance and in the BACPCA newsletter in the UK. We thought it would be a great idea. So, if you would like to contribute to the Person Centered Friend's project too, please contact us at friends.acep@terra.com.br. We would be very glad to provide you with all the information you need.

Following the positive changes in his son's behavior, the mother came to his therapist asking for psychological help too. She started therapy and soon her behavior also changed quite positively. . . . -- actively engaged in taking care of herself, children and house. The change in her appearance was quite impressive: from a dirty woman with tattered clothing and disheveled hair to a "good-looking woman, clean, and well dressed."

Local Groups

CHICAGO

Lisbeth Sommerbeck Visited Chicago

Lisbeth Sommerbeck visited Chicago in early May and gave presentations at Argosy university and Benedictine University. The Client-centered and Experiential Minor at Argosy University, coordinated by Margaret Warner and Marge Witty, sponsored the visit. Lisbeth serves as a psychotherapist, supervisor and teacher at Dianalund Psychiatric Hospital in Dianalund, Denmark is the founder of the Danish Carl Rogers Forum. She has recently authored a book entitled *Client-centred therapy in Psychiatric Contexts: A therapist's guide to the psychiatric landscape and its inhabitants* published by PCCS Books in England. (For purchase contact: <http://www.pccs-books.co.uk>)

Lisbeth has worked for 30 years with persons who have been given psychiatric diagnoses, especially schizophrenia. She is active in the training, education and supervision of psychiatrists, psychologists, and psychiatric nurses. She publishes in client-centered theory, problems which arise within the dominant medical model, and working with people experiencing psychoses.

JAPAN

We are pleased to announce that **the Japanese Society for the Person-centered Approach recently has joined the ADPCA as an organization member.** The five Japanese Society members who joined the adpcagroup e-mail list are:

Minoru Hatase: m-hatase@mvj.biglobe.ne.jp
Naoko Hatase: ZVQ04336@nifty.ne.jp
Masataka Murakubo: murakubo@post.saga-med.ac.jp
Shoji Murayama: shmuray@attglobal.net
Mikio Shimizu: shimizummm@yahoo.co.jp

Welcome to all of you!

RECONSIDERING THE IDEA OF TRUST

Jere Moorman
Camelot Leadership Development
Consultants/1150 Silverado
Street/Suite 115/La Jolla/CA/92037

I trust because I am a trusting person. If I trust you to be trustworthy, I have become unnecessarily dependent. Hate follows dependency.

culture of blame: "I'm disappointed in you!! I thought I could trust you." The appropriate response to disappointment is to get to know the other better, not to blame the other. Carl Rogers core conditions of empathic listening and unconditional positive regard can help here.

I grew up with a definition of trust having to do with living up to the unspecified expectations of others. This definition I find to be barbaric, reductionistic, dependent, and unrealistic. I reject this notion of trust!!

In proposing the responsible person in place of the person expecting others to be trustworthy, I draw on the work of the great psychologist Carl Rogers-whose major foundational view of the person was that they have the potential to be responsible.

I seek to be a competent believer, a vulnerable knower, and a trusting person. In seeking to be a "trusting person" I can't emphasize enough the difference between this and a goal of "seeking others to be trustworthy!!"

It is a victim stance to expect others to live up to unspecified expectations.

Sometimes I may choose to be "suspicious." Both trusting and suspicion are

I propose, instead, a view of the radically responsible person. Rights are something someone gives you; responsibility is something no one can take from you. In proposing the responsible person in place of the person expecting others to be trustworthy, I draw on the work of the great psychologist Carl Rogers-whose major foundational view of the person was that they have the potential to be responsible.

choices for which I am responsible.

I want to learn how to take responsibility, not how to blame effectively.

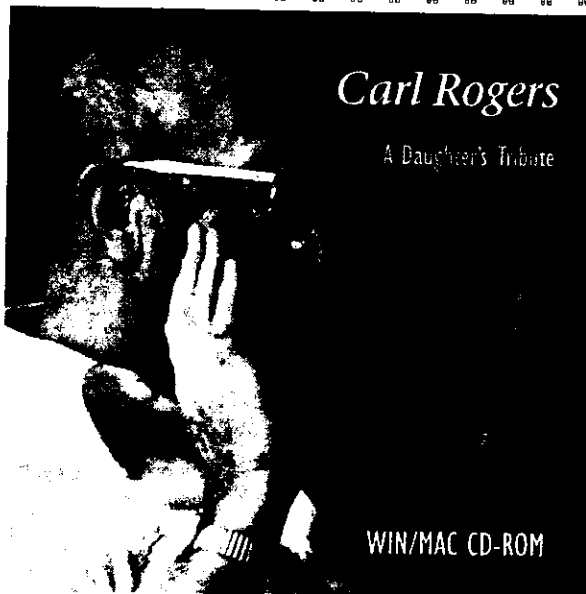
By being exposed to the core conditions of Rogerian Psychotherapy (client centered therapy) an individual can reclaim the locus of evaluation and accept responsibility for their own lives.

As soon as I expect you to be trustworthy, I have established a "resentment in advance"-and I have lost my congruence.

Trusting others to be who you want them to be-i.e. "trustworthy," is not Rogerian in any way that I can discern.

In conclusion, if trust is depending on the other to live up unspecified expectations, I propose an end to this version of trust. With a critical mass of persons willing to be radically responsible-individuals, organizations and cultures will be better off than if we increased "dependent" trust. What I hope for is a change in kind: to radical responsibility and full human functionality-not an intensification of degree in trusting others to be who we want them to be.

The ideal off trusting others is an ideal for a



NEW RELEASE:
 CARL ROGERS:
 A DAUGHTER'S
 TRIBUTE

A

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 OF
 THE LIFE AND WORKS OF
 CARL ROGERS

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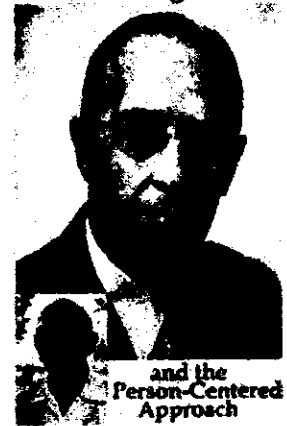
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(Information provided by Anne Dorre)

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