



Centre for Training in Psychotherapy

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# **The History of CTP**

by Sharon MacIsaac McKenna

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At our September orientation to this academic year of '95-'96, I addressed the wondrous fact that CTP is in its tenth year. For on September 8 of 1986, the new Centre for Training in Psychotherapy had its first orientation evening.

That was the date that CTP was launched as such. That was the year we duly registered its title and formally announced its inception to the community around us. But CTP was evolving for a few years, unbeknownst to itself of course, in the activities of people who eventually met to see if they could establish a consensus about training psychotherapists. What I shall do here is describe this process in broad lines, as you've requested. Those activities were occurring on two fronts among some of the members of a group that called itself APLE (Association for Past Life Experiences) and in another group that came latterly to be known as the Kendal Group, though it too had antecedents in a former community known as Therafields. A few of the people in these two groupings knew one another, many did not (others still did not wish to!).

They came together because in the spring of 1984, Adam Crabtree went to visit Jim Healy in Switzerland when Jim was away studying at the Jung Institute in Zurich.

These are the bold lines I'm working from.

Let me begin with the programme that came to be known as the Kendal Group. The more I plough through the early files, the harder I find it to fix a starting point. But I came across this letter from Grant Goodbrand which was clearly launching a new thing. Addressed to his "Colleagues", and dated June 17, 1983, it reads:

"Here are three copies of the courses outlined and discussed at the seminar on June 13. They will not be publicly advertised. It is at your discretion which people will take these courses. My first intent was that they be for people seriously interested in doing psychotherapy and particularly those who have started working part-time. My initial concern was that, as it was expressed to me by one of them, that in spite of experience, enthusiasm, intuition, warmth and goodwill, that they did not **KNOW WHAT THEY WERE DOING.**

This undermines confidence and leaves doors open for errors, while closing other doors to opportunities while working with clients.

Besides newly working therapists you may wish to include others **OF SERIOUS INTENT AND PROMISE** and people in allied fields."

At this time, there were a number of people who had been part of earlier training groups in Therafields and felt the need to continue in some systematic learning. For instance, there was a large and developed practice in what was called "Body Work". Many people had begun training in massage and bioenergetics in the late 60's. Also present in this student population for whom Grant was trying to tailor a programme were people working in related professions like education and social work. Another



element is harder to describe, but it's there between the lines of this letter. Therafiels described itself as a therapeutic community. Those who came there for psychotherapy were attracted by the possibility of entering a therapy group or Therafiels' signature feature, a 'house group'. To be in a house group was like diving into the deep end; it was therapy by immersion and as such a powerful learning opportunity. Moderation was not a virtue. As one of my friends who wanted more down time once said: 'The Unconscious is a great place to visit, but you wouldn't want to live there'. Not surprisingly, the first impetus to learning came from people in an early (1966) house group who requested training. It became a characteristic progression: people who got involved in the house groups moved towards a learning group.

There were eventually about six learning groups. Many participants in the later groups were only exploring psychotherapy as a possible profession. Others were trying to develop themselves in related professions like social work and education. Those who did see clients worked in pairs and in a relatively auxiliary way. The learning groups were 'where it was at', where the keen and excited naturally ended up. They were also a haven for the lost, confused and professionally disillusioned. The training model was resoundingly experiential, i.e., derived from one's own individual and group therapy. There was an anti-intellectual bias: to be interested in theory was to be revealed as probably schizoid, one who had trouble with feelings. It was, in this respect, part of a broader phenomenon in the 70's. Grant Goodbrand, who for years had privately educated himself in clinical theory, was especially keen to redress this balance. The upper case phrases in his letter are revealing: he was aiming for more rigorous selection (for referrals 'OF SERIOUS INTENT AND PROMISE'). And then there's his 'concern', 'that in spite of experience, enthusiasm, intuition, warmth and goodwill...they did not KNOW WHAT THEY WERE DOING'. I remember Grant once saying, 'You know, things can be conscious and still be deep'.

What Grant's letter to his Colleagues announced was an ambitious Course of Lectures on the Practice of [Psychoanalytic] Psychotherapy that covered 35 weeks and was offered by Sharon MacIsaac McKenna, Grant Goodbrand and Marion Goodbrand. Readings and presentations were also required. During the same academic year, Grant also masterminded a series of lectures on 'The Forms of Therapy' that spanned 22 weeks of Wednesday evenings and involved a large team of lecturers. The 'Forms'? Group Therapy: Standard Group Therapy and House Group Therapy (featuring Peter Dales, Philip McKenna and others); Psychodrama (Adam Crabtree); Massage (Haigan Gobalian is one name you may recognize); Bioenergetic Therapy (Larry Rooney and Maureen Jennings), Relaxation and Input and Intensive/Abreactive Therapy (Judy Allen); Ego Supportive Therapy (Dan McDonald); Ego Supportive Therapy in the form of Work Groups (Adam Crabtree), and in the form of Artists' Groups (Grant Goodbrand and b.p. Nichol).

Jim Healy's name does not appear among the lecturers: he was away studying at the Jung Institute in Zurich.

As far as I can ascertain, this was a seminar and a learning programme without a name. In June of 1983, Therafiels as such was in the final stages of dismantling itself. In a long process that was a kind of revolution, the Therafiels leadership sold its urban and rural properties, changed its core administration, and along with everyone involved in it underwent a radical and intense self-critique. The lecturers



mentioned above, along with others, regrouped in a new seminar of 25 therapists. It was transitional and struggling for an identity; it also served as a kind of umbrella. While we were trying to settle on a title for ourselves, I remember someone suggested, 'No Name Therapists'. 'Minimalism' was a key word. And in 1984, we burst upon the scene as the 'Association of Therapists'. We published a newsletter, 'The Centre', for two years, 1985 and 1986. Adam Crabtree, Maureen Jennings, Lorna Milne and Sharon MacIsaac McKenna, to name the people you know, were on the editorial staff. To continue with the evolution of the Kendal Group. In the following year, 1984-85, Jim Healy and Sharon MacIsaac McKenna offered a seminar on dream interpretation which is substantially what we now offer in CTP. Grant Goodbrand offered a course called 'The Last Forty Years' on developments in depth psychology since the death of Freud. Then notice was given in 'The Centre' newsletter of what was described as 'the third year of the training programme'. Though we didn't know it at the time, this '1985-86 psychotherapy training programme' would eventually be adopted as the structure for the new school that opened in September of 1986. Retrospectively, we've come to describe it as CTP's pilot programme. Let me put this into vivid colour by describing who was actually involved, for many of them you've come to know. The therapists offering the programme all became members of CTP's first faculty: Anna Binswanger, Adam Crabtree, Grant Goodbrand, Marion Goodbrand, Jim Healy, Sharon MacIsaac McKenna, Philip McKenna and Larry Rooney. Who were students that year? Ann Smith Beckett, Gayle Burns, Rosa Bergman, Jean Rajotte, Robin Hellendoorn, Ted Foy, Brenda Stevens, Susan Lucas, Ken Ludlow, Joan Fahey, Jose SaoBras, Jackie Herner, and Leah Lucas, to name those familiar to many of you.

I mentioned earlier that a number of endeavors came together because Adam Crabtree went to visit Jim Healy when Jim was studying in Zurich. Now, for some deep background on each of these people.

Adam had felt responsible as Therafields dismantled itself to respond to people in the training programmes who wanted to keep on learning and/or were looking for new options. For instance, in 1985, he conducted a 'practical seminar' called 'You and Your Future'. He also organized a series called the Willow Workshops, open to everyone and concerned with therapeutic issues. Like Grant, an impressive self-starter, his manuscript on animal magnetism was by now in the hands of its publisher.

Adam was very clear that he had to make a real break with his Therafields matrix. He was seeking new forms of cross fertilization. They presented themselves in the persons of Ian Currie and Joel Whitton. The three got together at Les Pleiades restaurant in the Centre in May of 1983. When they met again at the end of the year they decided to form an investigatory group of serious-minded people who were interested in exploring past-life phenomena and its implications.

So in January of 1984 about 14 people met at Toronto Western Hospital and after several planning meetings the group incorporated itself as APLE, the Association for Past Life Experiences.

As well as internal discussions, APLE offered public lectures and workshops on past-life memories. In the internal discussions ideas ranged to other paranormal and psychological issues as well. Among those discussants several were to join the CTP faculty: Joel Whitton, Gerry Steinberg, Michael Owens and Ken Keeling. Jim Healy was also involved in some of the later APLE seminars. APLE eventually



ended, in part because of the shift of interest among key members to CTP.

In that first year of APLE's existence, 1984, Adam went to the University of Freiburg to speak on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of Mesmer's birth. While he was there, he journeyed to Zurich to visit Jim. They began to discuss opening a school to train psychotherapists.

Why did Adam approach Jim in particular? Jim had gone to London to train at the Gerda Boysen Institute in the fall of 1979. He had done so as a therapist in Therafiels senior seminar, and he had not gone with its leader's blessing. Jim's decision to train at another institute was seen as a vote of no confidence. Furthermore, he went on to still another training centre, the Jung Institute in Zurich. Part way through his London training, Jim returned to Toronto with Anna Binswanger, a student at the same Institute. For a year Jim and Anna conducted a training group in biodynamics in Toronto. Jim, then, kept a continuity with his earlier associates, but by undergoing such demanding trainings elsewhere, he had also brought a kind of disjunction into his relationship with his Therafiels formation. It was his moving elsewhere that spurred Adam's interest and confidence.

I would like at this point to consider other events in Jim's time abroad. Jim entered the Boysen Institute in the fall of '79. It was a school teaching an especially sensitive form of bioenergetics and so a place of intense emotionality. But its founder knew little about transference; consequently the school was roiling with it. By November (i.e., within two months), the faculty saw the need for an interactive group for themselves and for a biodynamic group for the senior students. Can you guess how they came to realize the *need* for these? Can you guess who it was they asked to conduct these groups?

On his return to the Boysen Institute for his second year, Jim continued leading the two groups. At the same time, he and Anna were asked to conduct a training group for body therapists in Germany and Switzerland. They did so until their return to Toronto in 1984. The groups met in various cities: Basel, Vienna, Hamburg, Freiburg, and for about 12 weekends a year. Jim and Anna joined the founding members of The European Association for Body Psychotherapists. (Klaus Wiedermann, whom many of you know, trained in Germany with some of these associates). Thus, when CTP was coming into form in pilot phase, a biodynamic group was part of the curriculum.

Jim and Anna returned to Toronto a few months after Adam visited them in Zurich. They were immediately involved in the learning effort with which I began this talk. The one, namely, for which Grant had been so largely responsible. Its faculty met at Jim and Anna's home at 84 Kendal and the enterprise came to be known as the Kendal Group.

Meanwhile, APLE was very active. Though there was no talk at their meetings about beginning a training programme, APLE brought together a number of stimulating people and it also offered lectures and workshops. So it whet the appetite of some of its members for a more concerted learning structure. Adam invited Jim to continue the conversation about starting a school that they had begun abroad. He also invited Joel and Aubry Kurtz. They met in Joel's office in December of 1984. Their thought was to cast a wide net over Toronto to see who in the city was interested in such an endeavour. Adam remembers that at one meeting, Jim began talking about the learning programme he was currently



involved in (the Kendal Group). Joel was immediately interested: here was a lively learning venue and it was already in progress. He suggested teaming up with them. Adam said (more or less), 'Let's not!' He was afraid it would be in too much continuity with Therafields, that it would not be new enough. But as Jim spoke, Joel got more interested, and he prevailed. Jim was asked to invite some interested friends to meet with the three of them as well as some others from APLE.

On March 29, 1985, eleven people met at Joel's office to discuss the possibility of starting a new training institute. I found the minutes in my files. Secretary to the meeting was Rosa Bergman. Why initiate such a venture?, someone asked. Because 'there isn't any such programme'; 'courses around the city are fragmented' and without 'a solid base'. Adam chaired the meeting. Present were: Marion and Grant Goodbrand, Philip McKenna, Anna Binswanger, Larry Rooney, Michael Owen, Joel Whitton, Jim Healy and Gerry Steinberg. The meeting ended on a note of 'strong interest'. They agreed to meet again in the following month and to invite some others, namely, Sharon MacIsaac, Ken Keeling, Paul Levy and Don Evans.

Everyone returned to the second meeting on April 19, and Paul Levy and Sharon MacIsaac joined them. From that meeting on, it was a go. Some joint effort was going to eventuate. We are still a year and a half away from CTP's first night, though. The year ahead was very intense, sometimes turbulent. Though I don't have minutes to the meetings (and don't know at present if anyone does), I have a pile of position papers that confirm my impression of passionate and near schismatic discussion. Two issues were crucial and came in for over a year of discussion.

The most heated, because nodal, was on the role that group therapy would play in the new institute. Very early on, Philip said that his most profound and valuable learning had occurred in groups. He could not justify setting up a quality psychodynamic training that would leave out groups. His assertion was a key one, yet we were far from consensus. What sort of groups would we conduct? At the 'cooler' end of our options were groups in which role-playing could be used. Other group members would observe and then discuss. Slightly warmer was the workshop format with its more direct participation, as in bioenergetics, for example. The workshop is short-term and circumscribed. In either option, participants have high definition as training therapists. Similar styles have been used at university, for example, in social work training. At the far end of the spectrum were learning groups in which members enter interactively upon their own therapy, in a manner indistinguishable from a standard psychotherapy group. We were agreed that students had to be involved in individual therapy before and during their training. We were also agreed that their therapists need not be faculty members. The heart of the question around groups though, was whether or not students would enter upon a therapy within the programme itself. That's a very consequential step to take and it radically alters a programme. In the end, it was what we opted for. The reason we did so was because we were convinced that a psychodynamic peer group is the best instrument for revealing areas of irresolution and for beginning to act differently with others. Those areas can comfortably survive courses on theory and even many a cooler group (we just get wilier). But where you avoid going yourself, you'll avoid going later with a client.

A second matter for long discussion was what approaches to psychotherapy we would cover. There was a strong preference for eclecticism, to do justice to as many forms of therapy as went by the name. How



far could we stretch and still have the middle hold? The curriculum of CTP's first year shows how much we tried to include: Freud, Reich, Klein, Fairbairn, Hartmann, Mahler, Sullivan, Bowlby, Winnicott, Kernberg, Kohut, Jung, The Multiplicists, Cognitive Therapy (Peterfreund, Powers, Thom and Chomsky). That took us till Christmas! After Christmas we introduced Existentialism and Daseins Analysis, Transpersonalism, the Religious World View (sic), Erikson, Piaget. We ended by viewing transference and defenses, as understood by some of the above theorists. By February the students were exhausted.

Though the topics of the lecture series were new, those who planned the curriculum of the new school essentially adopted the programme of the Kendal Group. It had been 'tested' the year(s) before by those students and they were given full credit. They joined a group of new candidates, most of whom were unknown to most of the Faculty; this was a new feature. Those you are likely to know are Alan Davis, Lynda Frewin, Kim Gilbert, Melanie Reeves, and Walter Jarsky.

Joel had said during the planning phase that the new institute should be a learning community. That is, that the faculty should undergo the same training (with the exception of the groups) as the students. So it was that the faculty made up the third stream of students who met for those first lectures in 1986.

Sharon MacIsaac McKenna