

# THE ENCOUNTER

An Information Service for Group Psychotherapy Professionals. Published under the Auspices of the Golden Gate

FOUNDATION for GROUP TREATMENT, INC.

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P. O. Box 1141, Vallejo, California, 94590.

Editor, FH Ernst Jr MD

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**REPORT:** Psychiatric Nursing, Solano County Mental Health Service, Fairfield, California, by Betty Hovde, R.N.

Known by the term Day Treatment Center, the nursing service is involved in what we think is a unique program. The nursing staff, discarding name tags and uniforms, organize and enter into full day programs with patients, from playing checkers to involvement in Psychodrama--Role Playing and Group Therapy: composing songs and titling them, writing poetry, taking a fantasy trip on paper or a visit to Fairy Tale Land through the medium of "acting," play and pretend.

Picture, if you can: swapping shoes, telling jokes, looking into a mirror and talking about yourself, writing a skit from an ad on a magazine page. Sound ridiculous? Painting "feelings" on canvas; showing anger, frustration and caring. Listening to "Folk, Bach or Soul" music followed by discussions and interpretations. Revealing a painful dream, bartering for names, songs or fiction titles and having fun with it. Help can come in a sudden circle closing in or out on one's own painful archaic fears. We, the staff, aid our patients to become perceptive listeners; learning to be Parents, Adults, Children and to become better able to give and get okays. Tears and laughter, a picnic in the park on a warm spring day: This is therapy and it is our program. It may become painful and again it can be fun. Patients forget how glum they often choose to make their lives.

Eight hours a day, five days a week, this is my experience in psychiatric daynursing. Here in a mini-world, the patients live and re-live life as it happens. The goal is to relieve immediate symptoms of profound emotional stresses in the many ways possible. Life becomes a reality at this multi-discipline Day Treatment Center as they who are participating discover--patient and staff alike.

**EFFICIENCY IN GETTING-WELL:** STATISTICS: A follow-up was done on 177 inmates treated with group psychotherapy at the California Medical Facility, Department of Corrections, Vacaville, CA; men treated by six different, experienced group therapists during 1959-1961 and subsequently released. (One of the therapists used transactional analysis--"TA").

Four criteria were used to measure success:

- 1) No arrests for 12 months after release--50.3% overall
- 2) No arrests for 24 months after release--36.7% overall
- 3) Not returned to prison for 12 months --77.4% overall
- 4) Not returned to prison for 24 months --59.3% overall

TA compared to other five:

- 1) No arrests-12 months, TA 65.4%(others combined:47.7%). TA was 125% to 162% more efficient--median 125%
- 2) No arrests-24 months, TA 57.7%(others combined:33.2%). TA was 154% to 224% more efficient--median 163%
- 3) No prison--12 months, TA 76.9%(others combined:77.5%). TA was 82% to 113% as efficient--median 102%
- 4) No prison--24 months, TA 73.1%(others combined:56.9%). TA was 113% to 146% more efficient--median 134%.

The therapists had among themselves about 40 years of group therapy experience, since completing training. This varied from three to twelve years, median six years; TA therapist--six years. This data was drawn from the statistics of "The Murphy Sample"; the comparisons and the conclusions are the author's.

**ENCOUNTER:** A preacher called the sheriff of his county to tell him that there was a dead donkey beside the road near his church and to ask if the sheriff would see that it was taken care of in the proper manner.

The Sheriff replied that he had always heard that it was a responsibility of the clergy to lay away the dead.

The Preacher responded by saying that while he had no disagreement with this conclusion, it was also the duty of the clergy to notify the next of kin.

**MEETING:** Int'l Transactional Analysis Ass'n 7th Annual Summer Conf Aug 22-24, 1969, Mark Thomas Inn, Monterey, CA. Write: ITAA, PO Box 5747, Carmel, CA 93921, Tel 408/642-9213.

**FORMULATION: THE GAME "TROUBLED COUPLE":** This is the game of which "Courtroom" ("Games People Play," Berne) is one variety. The sequence of moves in this game (see THE E, 5/20/69, GAME MOVES UNRAVELLED) follows: **HOOK:** One of the couple (HURTER) makes an outrageous remark to and about the spouse (VEXED). This alerts (hooks) the audience into watching how this remark is taken.

**MANEUVER:** (Maneuvers of games have two or more aspects, ie, the player is maneuvering, turning other people.) Part 1a. Outrageous HURTER turns then to the audience as both spouses laugh. The "Troubled Couple" trade punches on each other, seemingly for the laughs, but turning each time to the audience, bringing the audience along. Once the audience is well engaged (hooked) and laughing and turning to them,

1b. One of the partners, VEXED, cries "foul" and turns to the audience with gaze down. 1a-1b is replayed 'til,

2. In one of the semi-silences, a "peace-making" audience member (ALLY-A) intervenes to talk to one of THE COUPLE, usually the one who "caused" the last "hurt" While HURTER is commenting back to ALLY-A

**GIMMICK:** VEXED impatiently interrupts HURTER as HURTER goes silent and turns from ALLY-A back to VEXED. THE COUPLE then repeat MANEUVER-GIMMICK sequence until in another silence between trading punches, VEXED will have recruited his (her) own conversation initiating ALLY from the audience. Once ALLY-B has talked to VEXED and VEXED is in turn responding to ALLY-B

(GIMMICK:) HURTER will, in turn, be much vexed and INTERRUPT. VEXED immediately goes silent and turns to focus on HURTER, then eyes down, turns away. This brings (Hurter and) audience along, ie, again cluing audience into what next to do.

VEXED and HURTER thus establish talking priority of the more vexed of the couple. This is by breaking off talk to ALLY and instead attending to each others' troubled remarks, turning from ALLY as if out of "consideration," perhaps inferring that ALLY's comments were a reason for again being in trouble with spouse. If THEY were hurting each other, they would discontinue the hurting and embarrassing of each other. Instead, by establishing the seeming integrity of breaking off from the ally, going silent when interrupted by the partner and then turning away from ally and from vexed partner, the audience is tricked into going silent and into averting their gaze also.

**PAY OFF:** VEXED and HURTER gain command of as many silenced "I-don't-want-to-get-involved" people as are in the situation. There are the instances of other couples where one or both have played ALLY. In the silences these latter couples are building up, for later use, "reasonable-points-to-discuss-later-with spouse."

**TO NOTE:** 1. Almost all "Troubled Couple" couples go to the same home that same night, not infrequently to cohabitate. The couples with "reasonable-points-to-discuss-later" regularly end-up on the outs with each other, do not cohabitate for at least one night.

2. This game is played in therapy group. "Courtroom," itself, is the specialized brand of "Troubled Couple" found in divorce and "reconciliation" arenas (eg, courtrooms) to later be resolved by that particular couple. Many, if not most divorced couples, have initiated divorce more than once before becoming effectively, in fact, finally divorced. In "contested" divorces, argued "before the bench" the judge will usually lower his eyes and give a few passes to "outbreaks" from the couple in court.

3. This game, as are most, is named after the gimmick. "Troubled" has talking priority.

4. Solution to this Game in groups, social or therapy, is for the onlookers to keep looking at, watching the two would-be social commanders.

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The FOUNDATION for GROUP TREATMENT, Inc., a non-profit organization, was established for the purpose of providing clinicians of all schools and disciplines using group treatment methods with opportunities for increasing their effectiveness and efficiency toward the professional treatment objective of the patient getting well.

THE ENCOUNTERER is the news service of the FOUNDATION. It will have notices of interest, current developments in this treatment field and clinical reports.

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3. REPORTS on events of interest to group treatment professionals.

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Adult, "level-head," objective, ego state	A
Child, childhood, "the kid" ego state	C
Cycles per minute	CPM
Cycles per second	CPS
THE ENCOUNTERER	E
Gimmick: (trick, wrinkle) 3rd move of a GAME	G
From: I-am-not-OK-and-you-are-OK	GNM
THE ABOLITION Life Solution of Get-No-	
Where: I-am-not-OK-and-you-are-not-OK	
THE EVOLUTION Life Solution of Get-On-With	GOV
(It, life, living; I-am-OK-and-you-are-OK	
THE REVOLUTION Life Solution of Get-Rid-Of:	GRO
I-am-OK-and-you-are-not-OK	
Get-Winners, Get-Well, Getting-Well, usually	GW
synonymous with the GOM Life Solution	
Hook: (come-on, engagement) 1st move of a GAME	H
Maneuver: (con, angle, ploy) 2nd move of a GAME	M
Number	NO
Parent, Parent, ego state; to be differen-	P
tiated from Adult ego state	
THE E	THE E
THWIT'S	
VOL	
Volume	
Pay-Off: ulterior (latent) motive, reward-4th	P-O
move of a GAME	
Pounds per square inch	PSI
Prescription, prescribed, therapeutic	<b>R</b>
advice, treatment recommendation	
SCRIPT	
Life-Story: map of person's life-often resem-	
bling a fairy-tale	
SOB Authority, SALLY-Ole'-Boy-Authority	SOB
SOB Authority with an "authority problem"; a	
Crusader; a revolutionary	
Concise graphic formulation	
TA	TA
Transactional Analysis-originated by Berne.	
It is:	
1. A theory of (social) behavior	
2. A theory of personality structure	
3. A method of (group) psychotherapy treatment	
4. An organization	
It embraces and is not contradictory to	
psychoanalytic theory and practice	
THE ENCOUNTERER	
"To Hell With It"s, Having a case of the	