

CHTP at IONS

2nd morning session

May 7, 2005

Student Perspectives (Zeno, Eric, Matt, et al)

Introduction by Colette: this is an opportunity for students to have their own time to dialogue and collaborate across institutions and associations.

Matt Spalding: Thanks to Colette and Skip for putting event together and for making space for students to give input, prominent forum for feedback. Thanks to the students for coming out at this time close to the end of the term

Evoking and provoking student perspectives in the field of Humanistic/Transpersonal Psychology. Break even within institutions, not a lot of cross-pollinating in the halls even at (CIS). Try to get more voices on the same page (Student, faculty, and administration).

Experiential exercise: Circle finger in air above head, clockwise. Observe as move finger in front of face, then below chin. Fingers start moving counterclockwise. Trippy, isn't it? An attempt to get beyond words. Well-received.

Brief overview: Start off with overview of themes, principles, ways that students have felt kind of out of the loop in the dialog of HTPP movements.

Divide into small groups, embedding students. Discuss relevant student concerns.

Group back, present to larger group.

Break

Big group for taking ideas and putting them into action.

Zeno: Women also have words and can philosophize. Asked Suzanne to create a piece of art for this group. Can scan/photograph and include it in the web site. Zeno is a 2nd year graduate student in Palo Alto. Comes from an empirically oriented school/tradition, but is trying to integrate principles of Humanistic/Transpersonal without losing identity. What is the identity of

this group, how do we fit? Students, coming into the profession, will be in this body for a long time. Some of us will mature within these organizations. Think about the meta institutions we're trying to create.

Matt: communication between students, faculty and administrators. Get over chasm of isolated minds. Preserve diversity of our traditions and point up some underpinnings that keep us all together.

Overarching themes of networking/collaborating/organizing: web (internet, blog, on-line journal), student symposia, student CHTP council.

Research/career/fieldwork: dissertation, faculty/professional apprenticeship. How can we facilitate students to stay in the field? This is vital to having a tradition that keeps moving forward.

Education/training: coursework, paradigms of learning: teaching. Students give greater feedback about what are relevant studies these days. Maintain an identity with traditions but bring in new content to keep them current with our time. Ways of framing essential human issues. Make esoteric accessible. Enough art, movement, dance? Too logo-centric?

Funding/Marketing/advertising/branding, grants, scholarships, language/terminology. Idea of power, financial aspects. Funding opportunities for students are really important. Medical complex students are getting lots of funding/grants that aren't available to HTPE students. Need to start somewhere to provide funding opportunities for our students.

Break into small groups: students tell about how we want to be more involved. Come back and report the main bullet points of the conversation. Break and then discuss how to put the points into action. At a transition point for this profession. Student voices can have a transformative effect on the discipline. Perhaps change the way of thinking. Symbiotic influence.

Experiential exercise #2: move from theory into practice and action. Who knows how to cut an apple in half? How to cut apples in a different way, still in half.

Developed lists of action items preferred by students:
Educational process, not a big picture, lots of piecemeal, need amore inclusive model; bring more experience into that model through ritual and

actual experiential material. Buying in through experience, rather than talking about differences.

Meta institution, work collaboratively with different schools and professors. Art therapy, dance, body mind work often segmented in the same school (no cross pollination). More direct relationships with mentors, not the same didactic model of instruction/relationships between students and teachers.

One foot in each world, bring more ideas in without being marginalized. Focusing too much on differences? Division 32 not as useful or inclusive as it could be. Credentialing process: how to have a larger voice (Humanistic/Transpersonal Psychology)

- Lack of networking about practicum opportunities in the bay area, supervisors, mentors, consolidated practicum site for those contacts.
- Little pockets of TP work here and there, individuals, not obvious to students entering the field. Better way to network, possibly CHTP sponsored forum. Students to make more connection with professors, have experiences together, share knowledge. Reclaim the spun-off pieces of Humanistic/Transpersonal Existential.

Next group

Use of the Internet, how to do it most effectively? How to create safety on-line for students to explore personal issues? The personal has to come into the study of psychology. Feeling uncertainty about transference, disagreeing with a colleague, how to get that out on line because that seems to be the current trend in education.

There is a program at Saybrook that is based on-line with dialog between participants. Networking. Use internet as the means by which students, professionals, people from other fields form connections and stay up to date, events like THIS. Share views and communicate about what we want to do, about our great ideas, bringing the forum to the people.

Undergraduate students: Provide opportunity to network. Let students know about the extraneous things that go along with getting a degree in psychology. Faculty need to take the initiative in teaching students how to drink from the pool, and where it IS. Better preparation for undergrads.

Student papers aren't being published but may be publishable. Peer review? Disseminating viewpoints? Call for papers? Occasional meetings? Share ideas, start to build community (professionals) of continuing generations of people working in social sciences.

Tribe.net: collection of people discussing special interests, events posted, connected with community. Solid material in which to grow community. Something like that system interconnecting psych departments?

Next group

Sense of how to use the internet: getting lost? Losing connections with people? Threaded discussion, search for keywords, permanent place to store conversations. Point to a live encounter, not the end of the discussion, but a place to start the discussion. Meet mentors in the flesh, sign up at the door if you are willing to be mentor. Spend time together.

How to build a container for all of this? Splinter ideas, this organization? Hold a webpage? Moderators? How to maintain that type of system.

Another way of dealing with power is to empower. Gotta be a way to build this thing if it is really needed.

Being in an institution that doesn't really feed the heart, give us what we need to be able to grow (love, affection, holding). Some intention around that, in terms of how teaching and learning have been stopped both institutionally and personally. Anxiety of administration. How to make learning more integrative, understanding of other people's perspectives.

Important distinction: Identify what you're missing from your formal education, and go get it yourself.

Infrastructure: Really looking for shared experience.

What is it that is missing from your experience? Sense of actively reaching out. Faculty assume students will show up if they need help.

Open forum comments/discussion:

Culture doesn't foster intrinsic motivation. Higher educators may need to look at how to create a way to help the student catch up to that. About a lot

more than entering higher education. Goes way back. People are treated like sheep, how do you expect students to take initiative if they have been taught not to all their lives?

Part of community and connection, if we don't have a presence or a strategy about how to make this message larger, we are a community of sheep. Strategically focused on advancing a vision that communicates what we know, and makes it heard in the world.

Community is ingrained in the psyche (in Mexico). Surprisingly, they don't TALK about the need to build community there, because they live it already.

A therapist has a contemplative practice, which makes a contemplative therapist. Include in the definition terminology that helps keep the practitioner part alive, not stuck in theoretical part. "Transformative" practice. Participatory process. Have as part of the definition that you have an understanding that you can't be Humanistic/Transpersonal if you don't have a Humanistic/Transpersonal practice.

Everybody who claims to be part of that would have to also be doing it in their own lives. Dialectic between actually experiencing it and bringing that experience to the practice/clients/therapy.

Differentiate Humanistic/Transpersonal from medical model: "practice" makes me think of what I'm doing in my own life. Practicing, not just practicing ON somebody.

Contemplative practice can mean a lot of different things; in defining it, what do you exclude. I've been quite dissatisfied in the field of Transpersonal –much is left unaddressed. If we want to be involved, we belong. It's good to inform people of the shape of the movement, but also to freely encourage participation.

Student-generated salons? Meet four times a year (once a season). Post on line in order to bring people together in the same space. Students show up and discuss what's happening, what's relevant. Symposia with a structured form.

Resurrection of gestalt movement resurged with the advent of the internet. Very instrumental in the re-flowering of gestalt therapy. People are coming back to it all over the world. Not an either/or but a both/and.

Also think of this in a developmental framework. Want to capture the collective knowledge of the faculty and administrators for the benefit of the students/incoming professionals. Particularly debrief the folks who are about to retire. (!)

Students please put email on sign up sheet. Make a check mark if willing to join this council. Potential mentors (professionals) please sign up too.

Art: As back-up, in terms of Internet connection—leave your business cards with Jessica to get on the lists.

Thanks for participating in this conversation; it doesn't happen all the time.

New student rep for CHTP executive council: Zeno nominated Matt Spalding. Jessica seconded.

Division 32: Zeno going to APA, would like one other student to attend with him to bring this forward at their hospitality session. Please see Zeno if you would like to go with him.