

## **Report of the ESBP in Vitterio Veneto, Italy May 2007**

The International Society of Bonding Therapy had met last August 2006 in Washington DC. A successful policy, certainly afterward, was started to update and revitalize the Casriel bonding therapy. And now in the womb of Vittorio Veneto lies the Carmelito Convent CEIS Belluno. It is a convent with a beautiful small church with the paintings so special and specific to Venice. Ceis is sheltered by powerful hills and the distant majestic Dolomites. In this setting the ESBP meeting took place on May 19th and 20th of 2007..

There were 38 representatives: 20 of a training workshop by Gigetto de Bertoli and 18 others (16 Europeans, 1 from South America and 1 from North America) It had a truly international representation. Our host was Gigetto de Bertoli priest, teacher and bonding therapist. Gigetto has 3 NIP/Bonding psychotherapy groups. The one in Vittero Veneto has 30 participants (sociologist, psychologist, nurses, business communications etc.) There are 4 cycles each year of 3 days. For our daily needs and for the folks that slept in the convent there was his assistant. Sergio ever gracefully present.

After a welcome word from Gigetto came our traveling Ambassador and missionary of the bonding Martin Kooyman with his film over a bonding workshop. In short the film focusses on 4 people who participated in the group.

His film has been shown in various countries where bonding is being taught. After a good lunch Skip Ellis, the president of IASB International and the American Society of Bonding had the plenair group split up in 3 small groups with the assignment to ask intensely what they did with the new theories which were presented and taught by K. Stauss, the research on bonding and what kind of assistance was needed. The 3 groups met for an hour which was followed by a short and fruitfull discussion. This also functioned as usefull material for the board members. The last meeting of the first day was the study on bonding of Julie Maertens. Johan Maertens presented his daughters work because Julie could not be present. Julie had based her research on the effects of bonding by comparing her findings with that of Stefanouski. After this very active

first day there was diner and a deserved rest for most of the participants. There were a few who had to prepare for Sunday.

Sunday morning started with the pleasant and creative body work of Ramon Vega. He is an international fellow who lives in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He integrates his bonding work with that of Lowen, Reich, Perls, Gurdjieff and others. Martien Kooyman is the contact person from Europe.

The Portuguese teaching fellow Dominguis continued the fast pace of Ramon. He had scanned the internet for all the publications written by; or about Daniel Casriel. The results were minimal and poor. From the participants came some suggestions and ideas. One of the conclusions was that 10 tapes of Daniel Casriel will be put on the international bonding website. The following speaker was Gregor Fissen. He is a general practitioner and psychotherapist who works at Bad Gronenbach Psychosomatic Institute. He has followed up Konni Stauss who is his mentor and sponsor. There is a good climate for research. He has screened more than 1000 patients. Gregor is also member of the German chapter of psychosomatic medicine.

With 3 other colleagues he did a retrospective study "who finds inpatient bonding psychotherapy helpful?". This research found place in a clinical setting in which mat work and attitude work were used with some other techniques. The average stay in the clinic was between 6 to 9 weeks. The sample used was N=203. The participants had at least 3 bonding sessions.

There were 90 men and 112 women. The average age was 41.8 months and the main diagnoses was depression/anxiety. The first objective was to find out if there was a correlation between the "helpfulness" of bonding psychotherapy and attachment style. The secure attachment style (+,+) was positive; by the dismissive group was no significant improvement. The preoccupied group showed a lowering in tension and in a lesser way by the anxious. Important was the fact that mat work was negatively correlated with addiction disorders and there was no correlation with P.T.S.D. Actually patients who find BP helpful find almost every aspect in the community helpful. This is a possible "halo-effect". More specific research is necessary. In this research the average stay varied per client when measured for attachment style (at least 50 days and up).

By the secure style (+, +) half of these clients stay secure. By the preoccupied (-, +) and dismissive (+, -) 1/3 become secure; by the anxious 1/6 become secure (-, -). The researches in different styles of attachment have different conclusions depending on the questions asked. In general with the clients who do bonding therapy in Grunbach more than 50% find bonding helpful. There is better attachment, less fear of closeness, reduction of physical and mental symptoms, a reduction of tension and more optimism and serenity.

Further:

There is a tendency for the anxious attachment (-, -) to go to dismissive (+, -). Herein a similarity with the findings of Julie Maertens and Sascha Kats. This might have to do with self protection. The dismissive attachment style at onset has the tendency to reject therapy. They tend to dislike everything that reeks of help.

Conclusions:

The research of Gregor gives rise to more questions and then mainly the small group of disenchanting patients (the 20%). Stauss noted that it is an ethical point to explain to anyone going into bonding therapy that there are certain risks involved.

Further it is important to know that by doing bonding there is an evolution in the attachment style. It is important therefore that one considers the different aspects of therapy when starting treatment.

The client's history and planning, the assessment and new preparation, the psychodynamics and interactional behaviour are all relevant in treating and reevaluating the progress of client/patient.

The last speaker of the day was Skip Ellis. His lecture was an assessment of and research on 2 bonding workshops which he had learned from Konrad Stauss.

2 workshops:

a. Results of Unfinished Business and Forgiveness Workshops

This was a 2-day workshop which he gave with his wife Marilyn Ellis. They evaluated 29 clients over 2 days. He used the questions SASB. Chairwork was used in this workshop which was taught by Konrad Stauss and based on the work of Greenberg and Worthington. The empty chair stood for negative aspects of the parent (mama/papa). The client would express his emotions, be aware of his needs, be aware of the need to fulfil, and to overcome the obstacles hindering his/her need for fulfilment. 11.

The reason that Skip set up the chairwork with mama/papa is that this is usually the very core of the dysfunctional schema. The empty chairwork involves the negative aspects of the person you want to forgive. Actions can involve hitting the chair, pillows, using the battika or stamping feet:

- a. The client sits in the chair and expresses negative aspects of the important other.....
- b. The client expresses (1) what needs were not being met. 2. Asserts entitlement to what needs needed. For example the negative cognition or experience: "I got no love" changed to the positive cognition "I am loveable".

The 3 main things which block (us) the client from forgiving the other are ruminating, vengeance and in the VS going to court.....

Skip has 8 steps in the process of forgiving. I will not name these. I will only say that this lecture was worthy of a paper or workshop on its own.. That it is necessary to get training to understand the interactions of yourself as therapist with the client. Konrad Stauss has given this workshop.

An important aspect is that the SASB was functional in understanding the needs of the client. The process of going from negative to positive in forgiving the other was very visual with the pre(1), and post (2) trial of the SASP. That is why questionnaires can be useful in following progress of the client..

Skip also reported very positively over a second workshop called "Autonomy and Reconnection".

This was making conscious that the goal of relationship is the mutual satisfaction of basic needs which function in relationship to yourself and to the other.

#### Summary and conclusion

Johan Maertens summarized the discussions of the board. There were 2 aspects: Actual and Future.

#### Actual

- Ramon Vega has become a new member of the International Society. Martin Kooyman will supervise and coordinate Ramons work as Bonding therapist
- A new chapter for research is established in Germany.
- Gigetto de Bortalie Training School in Ceis is recognized.

#### Future

- A mail internet will be started. Contact will be made with Moniek van Deille.
- The board will be informed of the positive findings and advise accordingly regarding the possibility of bonding fellow Frank van Mastrigt in applying to becoming a teaching fellow
- In 2008 may 24 and 25 will be the next EABP.
- Somewhere possibly in June 2009 Johan Maertens will plan a joint conference of the Therapeutic Communities with the pedagogue of the therapeutic communities T.C. G. Leon and the International Association of New Identity. K. Stauss will also be present and represent the psychotherapy aspect within the therapeutic community.
- For Johan Maertens is this a reintegration of the wish which Daniel Casriel started in his bonding practice in New York in AREBA. the integration of the therapeutic community and bonding therapy.

These were the 2 days of the ESBP in Vitterio Veneto, Italy. I think each of the speakers in there own right could have filled a day talking about what they are doing and how they can empower the bonding therapy.

Frank van mastrigt  
Bonding fellow  
June 2007

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Frank van Mastrigt, bonding fellow  
May 2007

P = personal..... I think each of the speakers could have filled a day talking about what they are doing. Perhaps in a ..... time .... Will be .....