

# Orientation

## FOUNDATION FOR NEW DIRECTIONS

An institute devoted to health, human relations, learning, community, and advances in human thought.

### **The Orientation of Our Health Work**

We explore our capacity to become whole through attention to inner states.

Attention leads us to layers of patterns, which present themselves through spontaneous, non-directed movements.

We observe our learned operating assumptions and control mechanisms through our responses to these patterns

The patterns change, in the context of a community of relationships, and evolve in real life situations over time, complete with interpersonal struggles and the demands of survival.

As old patterns dissipate, they are replaced by feelings of greater wholeness, more flexibility. Individual orientations flower, Maslow's hierarchy of needs and growth begin to manifest.

### **Expanding the Parameters of Non-Direction**

Dr. Marvin Solit, Founder

In the middle '60's, as an osteopathic physician, I discovered an approach to health and healing which I called Non-Directed Body Movement (NDBM). The discovery was that the muscles of the body, when not directed or controlled, have their own agenda and needs. Awareness of this activity leads to body movements that are non-directed. These movements while in the waking state are similar to, and related to the non-directed movements of sleep. Similarly, just as we expect to be healed by our sleep and its movements, we can expect healing from NDBM.

These movements, sometimes subtle, sometimes broad, are the natural thrust of the repair mechanism as it strives to establish balance, or health. Though this process may be uncomfortable or even painful, (as in the thawing of a frozen thumb, or in the realization of past injuries), we allow it to continue. For example, stretching is a way of relieving (controlling) tightness and discomfort, whereas the uncontrolled tissues would tend to maintain tightness as a precursor to unwinding from within..

What does it take to get into NDBM mode?

To be willing to see where our attention is drawn.

To begin to notice control and defense mechanisms.

A group of like-minded individuals who allow and support the process, in an environment in which the letting go of these mechanisms is accepted.

What are defense and control mechanisms?

The things we do to control our thoughts and feelings, and to resist what arises to attention.

How do I start?

In our workshops we stand on a carpeted floor with shoes removed, and ask ourselves 'What am I aware of feeling?' In the continued posing of this question, we begin to recognize our feelings, as well as what we are doing to change them. For example, some people find that they are so busy thinking that they are not aware of what they are feeling. This changes in time as you begin to feel more and think less.

Learning to listen to our bodies

We extend the principles of interpersonal communication to include the body: we respect what it tells us, without assuming that we know better. We don't assume, for example, that we should tell our body what food is good to eat, what exercise is good to do, or what feelings are appropriate. People who do not recognize that they are identified with their body do not consult with their body, thus suppressing and disenfranchising it.

The body, in turn, 'acts out', much like the worker who feels misunderstood by management, and expresses these suppressed feelings in illness, depression and a myriad of symptoms. NDBM makes it possible for these feelings, rigidified in the body's structure, to be heard, expressed and renegotiated.