



DREAMWORKERS' CORNER

THE BIRTH OF DREAM GROUP FORUM

By KERSTIN ANDERSSON

In 1980 I invited Monte Ullman to St. Sigfrid's Hospital in Växjö for a three-day workshop with the staff there and also for a course during the weekend with 150 participants from the all of Sweden. It was the first time I met Monte, but I had heard of him and his method from friends in Stockholm. For me and for many others, this meeting led to a deep friendship and a fascination with his method.

For many years Monte came to Sweden regularly twice a year for five to six weeks each time. He travelled extensively here, training leaders and forming dream groups. He was the connecting link between these "dream islands." In time his visits to Sweden became shorter and less frequent, first to once a year and then to every second year. The question was raised as to whether we could go on ourselves, keeping his method alive in a form where it would not be misused and training new leaders.

Monte and I talked many times about this. Monte did not want the training to be too formal. But periodically we observed that individuals

were starting groups without the necessary training while still presenting themselves as trained by Monte even after only one or two days in his group. We then understood that an organization, which could take care of the training of new leaders and refer those interested in working with dreams to good and well-trained leaders, was a necessary development.

Monte was the only one who knew those who had worked with dreams in Sweden and who could evaluate those skilled in handling his method. He kept giving me names of persons he considered to be competent leaders. So, when the idea of an organization occurred to us, I had a list of 35 people approved by Monte as dream group leaders.

One day during Monte's spring visit in 1988, we sat for many hours talking about guidelines and principles for the organization. We agreed that a working group with six or seven persons representing different parts of Sweden was necessary to get things started. This group met in Stockholm for the first time in October, 1988. We worked intensely and prepared pro-

posals for a training program to present at a meeting of the entire group in Stockholm in January, 1990. Of the leaders, 30 of the 35 were interested in the idea of an organization. At the first meeting 24 persons participated. There were many differing opinions and feelings regarding the nature of the organization. However, we managed to pass a mandate to continue working towards forming an organization. At the next meeting of the founding group in August, 1990, the Drömgruppsforum was founded.

Until 1999, only leaders and those involved in leadership training were admitted to the Drömgruppsforum, but now the organization is open to everyone interested in dreams and in sharing our goal.

The aim of the Drömgruppsforum is to preserve and protect the method, established by Monte Ullman, to train new leaders, and to extend knowledge and information about dreams into the community.

It has not been easy to find an extensive way to train new leaders and be sure that they were ad-

equately skilled without being "institutional." We began with leadership training seminars in the way modelled by Monte. When a candidate starts to lead a group, we choose a supervisor for that candidate who will follow the dreamwork done by this person until he or she can be approved as a leader.

Presently, Drömgruppsforum has 93 members, including Monte as honorary President. Of these members, 44 are approved leaders, 29 trained by Monte and 15 by us. In April we celebrated our 10th anniversary with a three-day conference in Växjö where Monte was present. We are looking forward to the new decade.

The method Monte has created has been successful in Sweden. When it first appeared many had been hurt by the confrontational methods that had flourished during the 1970s. As a consequence, confidence in psychotherapeutic methods was very low. In contrast, this non-intrusive and respectful method provided a positive, healing experience.

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