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Learning to accept yourself

by Anne Watson

"It's a non-directive approach, the counsellor and client are equals" says Walter Cavalieri, instructor of a unique peer counselling course at GATE (Gay Alliance Toward Equality). "The goal is not for the counsellor to direct the agenda, but rather to initiate communication exchange between client and counsellor. You try and play on your hunches and help the client see for themselves where the problems are. If they can see the real situation, they are in a position to find a solution."

Cavalieri attributes his thinking to the theories of psychologist Karl Rogers. Rogerian theory is based on this type of communication between client and counsellor.

Cavalieri has exceptional experience in the field of counselling. Completing his Bachelor's degree in Social Welfare, Cavlieri is an adult and youth counsellor at GATE. He is a certified instructor in Suicide Prevention Training and has worked for the AIDS Network of Edmonton. He would like to pursue family counselling and is contemplating graduate studies in social work as well.

His genuine interest is apparent as he speaks of his work with natives in Northern Alberta and the workshops he conducts on Suicide Prevention.

At this time the Faculty of Social Welfare at the U of A offers no courses dealing with the issues of homosexuality. In his capacity as a counsellor Cavalieri feels instruction on this topic is necessary so social workers can conduct non-judgemental therapy with gay clients. He suggests that if a courses of this type were added to the curriculum the topics of sexual anomalies, homosexuality, transsexuality, pedophelia and sexually transmitted diseases could be covered. Counsellors who are aware of these topics would be infinitely more effective in dealing with someone confused about their sexuality.

Cavalieri says there is a need for youth referrals. While GATE and other Edmonton agencies offer this counselling, "high schools are reluctant to let us in to inform youths that it is available. They seem to think we are trying to influence youths in one direction. In youth counselling, the aim is not to tell them what to do regarding their sexuality, but to help them find acceptance as they are and to encourage them to practice responsible sexuality where no one is hurt." Cavalieri belives many of the problems youths get themselves into could be avoided with counselling early on. Distressed, confused youths often act out their frustration by turning to the streethustling life and juvenile delinquency.

Cavalieri favours an honest, understanding approach to therapy with a profound emphasis on the communication between counsellor and client. He stresses awareness and a non-judmental attitude are important in dealing with homosexuality. Perhaps this is something all of society can work on



Walter Cavalieri

Checora

Feds take first step

by Ann Grever and Rick Hurlbut

The federal government is slowly, painfully inching towards protecting gays and lesbians from discrimination, not because they want to but because they may have to, to keep in line with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

On March 4, 1986 Federal Justice Minister, John Crosbie announced the federal government's intention to include sexual orientation as one of the protected bases against discrimination, along with sex, color, race, religion, etc., in a package entitled *Towards Equality*.

"I think I'm actually more optimistic than most people were immediately when he held a press conference and introduced the package,"said Sheila Greckol an Edmonton lawyer who practices in the areas of civil rights and labour relations."It would appear if the government's intention is to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation...then they will have to do so by legislative means... the most logical way to that of course is to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act."

•Despite strong opposition from two Albertan MPs, Greckol does not expect Crosbie to back down from eventually amending the Act because it would mean trouble politically for the federal government. "They said it publicly, taken a position...our best hope is that they will proceed anyway and they'll make these bigots from Alberta look like lone wolves crying in the wilderness "

Greckol also believes that the government may be doing this in response to the government's report on discrimination, written by a committee that looked into ways to bring federal government policies and legislation into line with the charter, especially Section 15. "It is significant because it appears the government believes the Charter protects homosexuals."

Sheila Greckol

If the Act is changed, as is expected by Greckol, discriminatory conduct against gay men and lesbians will no longer be tolerated in areas of federal jurisdiction.

But this announcement has not been met by much enthusiam from Les Young, the Labour Minister here in Alberta. Young has already stated publicly that the government of Alberta would not be considering the inclusion of similar rights or protection for homosexuals.

In this case, gays and lesbians will not be continued on pink triangle 4



You write to me, half a frozen continent away. There are thousands of

miles of ice and snow between us, cities of strangers, distant gazes — confident, in their shock and ignorance, that a cause can be, will be, furnished rationally, smoothly; routine will be restored with your few calm words

the grip of your hand strong on someone's shoulder. All night long, the only words you are able to pronounce clearly

and highways like strands of

tangled wires stretching across the icy plains. You are in a city which is on a river between two frozen lakes.

There is no sunrise in your city of fear. The night remains, vast and black, and you wait for someone to stroke your fevered forehead,

to kiss your eyelids, to explain this strange recurring well of tears. You are seeking sweet consolation; you are grieving, but, oddly, lack

a corpse, cannot name the deceased, and in any case have not the surgical skill to perform the post mortem exercises. Strangely, you're called

upon by the widow, by wondering orphans in the night, to succor, comfort, assuage. They want the Twenty-third Psalm, are anxious, cry out for tender mercies and all

that you can think to tell them is that death has its own peculiar odour and is attended by vermin, by disease; that the remains must either be burned or buried deep.

All through this night of gasping uncontrollable tears you have been ushered into one ill-lit room after another and questioned why by incredulous faces with steamy are stench rot disease; you're desperate to comfort,

and, madly, mouth the words that worms thicken and thrive and a rumour will spread like an angry bruise on nights like this, and rising from your chair, you turn to the

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window and still can find not one glimmer of light on the eastern horizon of the valley of the shadow of this, the endless night of your dying dreams.

You write to me of fear. You fear quiet things, mostly, although there is that dull smacking thud

of fist on flesh, and the tart tepid taste of your own red blood;

For John, who is fright

the quick flash of the knife in that black night which you say Rembrandt would have been painting in Detroit in our eighties. More,

though, the quieter fears: of your daughter's distance in her dinner table gaze, your recognition

that her knowledge already exceeds what you've taught her; of your own reflection in your father's feeble faltering; of indiscreet stealth.