

CAN COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE BE PREVENTED?

Project report March 2007

JAVA, BLITAR, YOUTH DETENTION CENTER This is our third year of cooperation with the university of Ubaya in this program. A third intensive three day training was held for staff and the young inmates. The first day I worked with the employees refreshing the content of the anger management workshop we'd held the previous time and repeating some of the techniques. Many guards consider it normal to use physical violence toward the youths. It is exactly this topic we tried to make conscious. We support a nonviolent approach as a role model for the inmates. This time the focus was on their personal fears and apprehensions in relationship to the youngsters they work with. It was most fascinating to find out that the majority of the participants were quite afraid of the new director, who seemed to use what was perceived as pressure and an authoritarian approach to his co-workers.

We discussed this among my colleagues and decided not to approach the director with our findings, feeling that the pressure on the employees would be increased if he were informed.

The following day we offered counseling techniques for better understanding and approaching the emotional states of the young inmates.

The focus of the training is the **prevention of violence by the staff** toward the youths as well as the prevention of violence among the youths themselves. We plan to prepare a manual for handling youth differently. In the training session with our group of youths (ages of 8 – 19) we addressed again the need to think about their future out of prison. While two of my colleagues gave personal short counseling sessions to individuals, I worked with six young people who wanted to participate in creating a team for **the prevention of violence among the youths themselves**. We discussed how they could intervene as a team to hold back the fighting participants. The major component which creates the tensions and fighting are the pent up emotions and anger of the youths toward the security staff who uses violence as well as their own situation of being powerless and held locked up. We tried to work on how they might give emotional support to the fighting parties after breaking up the fights. This caused the pent up emotions of the prevention team to surface and be expressed. We will continue to train this team to become effective in reducing the violence among the youngsters themselves.

The team now is known to the guards and youths as the official prevention team and it was suggested to the guards that they let the team handle the violence.

Since the last visit, quite a few youths have now been motivated to look at their future and to learn something useful. Within the limitations of the prison we once more will arrange a motorcycle repair training course which, upon conclusion will provide them with a certificate to assist them in getting a job on the outside.

Another three day training for staff and inmates is planned in June.

Upon the invitation of the University of Gajah Mada (the oldest Indonesian University) in Jogjakarta, by a professor who had participated previously in my training on **THE ART OF EMPOWERMENT** in Surabaya, I held lectures for their PhD students and M.A. Students in transpersonal psychology. A very intense two days eight hours per day. I was hosted graciously and exchanges took place with various colleagues.

BALI YOUTH PROJECTS: We moved our Lagu Damai Foundation office to Ubud, to be more easily accessible. Our office is now at Jalan Raya Andong where Martini administers the office and goes to university in the evening. We are offering the

opportunity for another young, poor person to be trained in another larger foundation and then work in our office to relieve Martini, who wants to study eventually in a foreign country.

I met with all our students. Three of the senior high school students are getting ready to visit the university. Our most gifted one, wants to study medicine. Indrawati, whom we have now sponsored for seven years will finish her general studies in medicine at the end of this year. To be able to enter medical school in itself is a major achievement due to the manifold corruptions in the educational fields. Agung has chosen Japanese language and Wayan would like to be a teacher of Indonesian language. We are working to make the dreams of these young people come true. Without our support none of the families could even envision paying for the studies.

All other students are doing fine. I have, based on a previous experience when recipients did not fulfill certain obligations that come with being sponsored, made new contracts with each student. The high school students are committing to two hours of support weekly cleaning the garden, etc... The university students are now receiving the money for their studies as a loan with no interest. Their commitment is to donate two days per month, that is 24 days per year to a community project. The content will be determined together with the foundation. Should they not keep this commitment, the foundation will demand a repayment of the loan .

YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM: Based on the idea of longterm prevention of violence, in order to support cross-cultural and inter-religious understanding we are developing a youth exchange program within the many ethnic groups in Indonesia and between Bali and the West. Our first young girl from Switzerland will stay in a Balinese family for five weeks in July, and the Balinese girl will later stay with the Swiss family. Of course this is financially easier for the Western participants and we are looking for funding support for the Indonesian youths for their air travel. The same type of program started for students last Christmas with our Muslim student from Aceh staying with our Balinese Hindu students in Bali. It was a great experience for all involved to open up a different way of life

JIWA DAMAI, BANJAR BINDU, BALI: FUTURE SEMINAR CENTER The research and challenge of transforming the pool into a non chlorine pool is continuing. The idea is to connect it with the many ponds and springs on the land. I finally found a Balinese manufacturer of natural medicines who also has experience with reducing the wild algae growth naturally. We started the process of using Geolite in each pond to see if it will produce clearer water. This pilot study will continue for the next months.

We also offer short time internships in Bali

Should you like to visit some of our projects, we will be happy to accommodate you at our seminar center.

Thank you all for your continued emotional and financial support.

Dr. Margret Rueffler

PsychoPolitical Peace Foundation

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