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04-78-25-64-35

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English Translation

RE : Letter of Professional Reference for Chantal DESMOULINS

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a clinical psychologist and am simultaneously on staff at a dialysis center and maintain a private practice. In the framework of these two activities, I work with patients who are faced with physical illnesses such as renal deficiency and diabetes, as well as other ensuing pathologies, as well as with individuals who suffer from either psychotic or neurotic disorders.

My university education principally focused on listening and the psychoanalytical approach, but I additionally trained myself in approaches that are more physically and emotionally based. These various tools allow me to have a more holistic approach to the individual.

About three years ago, thanks to a colleague, I discovered the Catharsis technique and I had the great fortune to participate in a training that was led by Chantal Desmoulins, one of the designers.

I have to say that this approach is totally unique in the sense that, even now, few other tools seem to me to be as therapeutic:

- The technique, in itself, already offers a framework by the rules of its usage: the size of the paper, the specific drawing tools, and the CD, which determines the length of time for expression. For people who are very disordered and especially, I think, for children who have been placed under state care, this method of working is calming and reassuring, and allows them to express themselves, all the while holding them in a safe space, without the therapist having to directly intervene.

- The strict repetition of these guidelines throughout the process allows them to gain confidence in themselves little by little, to discover that they are capable of the worst and the best, and, little by little, to respect themselves, even if only through the care with which they work. The relationship between therapist and patient can then be built around this mediation.

- My practice with both adults and children allows me, to this day, to confirm that there is a real evolutionary process. I am convinced and almost amazed by this precise and rigorous work that leads the person step by step to face up to the reality of their suffering and to express at the proper time the emotions that have been held back for too long.

I think that especially anger and even violence can finally be released in total security, sometimes at the very end of the process (which sometimes needed to be repeated two or even three times in the most difficult cases so that sometimes I ended up not being sure of the help that I could provide!). But I could see a change of behavior and interactions that sometimes even surprised the person and those around him/her.

In any case, I wish to offer my heartfelt thanks to Chantal Desmoulins for the rigor and the humanity that she maintained throughout our training. She knew how to make us work methodically, rigorously, and with precision in the work of observation and analysis that this technique requires. She also shared a lot with us through the quality of her presence, her welcoming attitude and her patience in this apprenticeship. She reminded us of the necessary humility in our therapeutic work by warning us of the dangers of a too-hasty interpretation or of a technique where we ourselves could become the objects. Today when I feel myself to be in a dead-end or in difficulties, I come back to this technique of art therapy and it is truly a precious help that I am able to offer to my patients.

I can also not neglect to mention that Chantal's professionalism inspires her to maintain regular contact with us in order to supervise our Catharsis practice. This help and support will contribute to even deeper research in this technique. Personally, I will remain available to contribute to this enriching work that Chantal Desmoulins has already so expertly set in motion and for which I wish to offer my heart-felt thanks once again, for me personally, but also for all the patients who have benefited or who are still benefiting from this therapy.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Pace,