PILOT PROJECT RELATING TO THE TRAINING OF SOCIAL WORKERS CARING FOR STREET CHILDREN

PROJECT No. 2

Title: Reinforcement of social workers’ capacities to provide appropriate care for street children.
Commencement February 2011

It is supplemented by project no. 1 by Marthe Alombé (see attached).

INSTITUTION OF A TRAINING AND CAPACITY REINFORCEMENT DYNAMIC

- Introduction of teaching on spirituality based on knowledge of emotional programming and the acquisition of the Mediator Training working techniques for greater neutrality, a changed understanding of the true needs of children and a deeper vision of the strengths essential to a social worker caring for children in order to ensure that the transmission of knowledge helps children rebuild their lives and, subsequently, their society.

Two-year project with half-yearly evaluations.

THE BENEFICIARIES

- 150 social workers in childcare undergoing class or field training in the various NGOs providing accommodation for children.
- Social workers in NGOs.

This project reinforces that conducted by Marthe Alombé, a psychologist and consult for the NGO “Amici dei Bambini” (see her pilot project).

ORGANISATION SUPPORTING THE PROJECT

TWO STUDENTS IN PEACE MEDIATOR TRAINING AND ONE SUPERVISOR, CÉDRIC NDEGE

Cédric Ndege, Psychotherapist, Referent Instructor for the African Centre for the Advanced Training of Childcare Social Workers (Centre Africain de Formation Supérieure des Éducateurs Sociaux - CAFES), Kinshasa, an institution that trains social workers in the childcare field to advanced and university levels. The underlying philosophy: “alternation between theory and practice”.

Vice-President of SOS Traumatismes au Congo, Kinshasa, office for listening and the provision of psychological care for individuals in difficult circumstances and children suffering from family rejection.

Five resource-persons, including Marie-Françoise Mushiya, also a student in Mediator Training, an instructor in the professional context, supported by SOS Traumatismes au Congo.

EXTRACT FROM THE STUDY AND CONCLUSION BY CÉDRIC NDEGE: PLACEMENT MEASURES FOR CHILDREN IN SITUATIONS OF FAMILY AND SOCIAL BREAKDOWN, KINSHASA, CAFES, 2006

“Since the end of the 1990s we have been seeing a proliferation and creation of several NGOs providing childcare
accommodation in Kinshasa. All of which is a response to the issues surrounding children living in the street or victims of family and social breakdown, given the inadequacy of the government’s response. After having conducted an enquiry in the accommodation centre sector in Kinshasa, it was apparent that, firstly, the methods used by social workers are not conducive to reintegration of the rejected children into the family, and that, secondly, there is increasingly a duality separating families from the centres due to misunderstandings relating to the activities and actions conducted by the NGOs.”

**DESIGN OF THE PILOT PROJECT IN THE PEACE MEDIATOR TRAINING COURSE**

Our study conducted with the various NGOs and beneficiary families and the Peace Mediator Training led us to put in place a dynamic for the reinforcement of the capacities of the social workers to match their real and specific needs and capable of educating their collective unconscious for appropriate, humanitarian and spiritually-based social intervention.

**EXTRACT FROM THE STATEMENT OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCE BY CÉDRIC NEDGE**

“Talking about Peace Mediator Training and the contributions of Martine’s philosophy:

**Its contribution to my personal and individual life**

I became aware that I had responded fairly often to my own emotional programming and served its causes, thus fuelling doubts and fears that gradually affected my professional performance in the context of social work for people in difficulty, Kinshasa street children in particular. I looked in greater depth at my understanding of my own mechanisms, going behind all the masks of convention and culture (on the basis of principles and concepts redefined in her philosophy, such as personality, character, dualities and behaviour). I learned that I was a human being before all else (that is to say before my religion, my culture or my habits).

**Its professional contribution**

Individual questioning enabled me to grasp the implicit and explicit aspects, or rather, the causes of failed social intervention to help children in care centres for the purposes of appropriate reintegration into the family and society.

- Do the methods used for action in childcare centres match the child’s developmental needs today? Because a child is a human being above all else.
- Are the social workers in care centres sufficiently neutral, lucid and emotionally deprogrammed to claim to assist the children to pursuit of their respective ideals?

In this way, having attempted to respond to this questioning in 2006, prior to the Peace Mediator Training, with regard to placement measures for children rejected by their families in Kinshasa, it was with some bitterness that we observed that a duality had come about, separating those responsible for care centres and the families, who see such accommodation at the present time as benevolent but a source of risk. The dualities observed in this study now provide an opening, with the Mediator Training, for appropriate solutions in the following manner:

**Firstly,**

- In order to resolve this duality, we are working on the concept with the social workers in care centres. In this new training module we are setting out to clarify and integrate Martine’s philosophical definition of “duality”.

_Dualities, she tells us, are merely the visible and practical manifestations of our freewill torn between the voice of our Conscience and that of our subconscious (cf. Réflexions à Brûle-Pourpoint sur ma philosophie [Reflections on my philosophy straight from the shoulder] by Martine Libertino, published by Éditions Duchamps). This teaching opens the way to the notion of Conscience and subconscious, the mechanism whereby they operate and the education of the subconscious by means of a gradual deprogramming of the emotions._
Secondly,

- With our trainee childcare workers we are starting a thematic debate on their own issues in the performance of social work faced with individuals in particularly difficult circumstances. We want to encourage them to work individually to discover the emotional programming derived from their own personalities and childhood in duality with their desires to help street children find wellbeing and happiness. Such in-depth work will give them the keys to success in their approach by offering solutions for their own lives.

Martine Libertino also tells us: *Helping children come in off the street and find happiness is possible only if childcare workers succeed in this before them and tell them how to do it. But that will be credible only on the basis of the example of their own lives. They must then prove to the children that despite the pain and the memories of the past, dignity, self-respect and fulfilment are still possible for human beings.*

The aim is to make social workers more determined, to lead them to see things with their heart, to understand that a person swayed by their emotions is neither pure nor courageous enough to withstand corruption, blackmail, false pride, desire for revenge or self-destruction.

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