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Limbic – The Travelling Therapy Bear

Limbic was first called into duty as a therapist some years ago, when it accompanied a 2-year-old home who was not sleeping through the night. With a missing eye, burn marks, and missing fur, it is obvious that Limbic has been traumatised¹. “It is having trouble sleeping through the night. Would she care to look after Limbic for a couple of weeks and help to soothe it should it wake during the night, as I have to go away?” Since then Limbic has gone home with many 2-year-olds.²

As can be seen by photos, Limbic has travelled the world and rubbed shoulders with many well-known solution-focused practitioners. Limbic has had a number of predecessors who did not return from their duties. Limbic and its predecessors, when not with a child, serves as a motif in the therapist’s office for older consultees, as many seek to develop new ways of relating to their “limbic system”.³ This includes learning new ways to self-soothe when such things as smoking, drinking, and over-eating need to be dissolved; as well as numerous interpersonal issues.

Relational Autonomy-Responsibility (or don’t be a Kant): Kant, Rawls, Piaget, and Kohlberg had suggested the child begins life with an egotistic attitude, which generates conflict and is subsequently tempered by the development of justice-based moral reasoning (rational self-legislation). This was famously challenged by Carol Gilligan in 1982, with her claim that women’s moral development is based on an ethic of care. Since then the writings of Levinas, Wittgenstein, Løgstrup, and numerous feminists have clarified this further. We have an empathic reflex to care for others. Limbic enters the family conversation as a motif on the reciprocation of care; and as the child’s care of the parents, others and household chores is explored, power in the family becomes shared. With power shared, an ethic of care developed, the instillation of (Kantian) moral rules becomes unnecessary, and it’s found that parent-teen conflicts seldom arise. (The empathic reflex is well recognised in many indigenous cultures.)

For some clients, not all, I’ve found that by holding Limbic when they describe their post-miracle scenario, more emotive detail is expressed in the description. Many of the therapists seen here with Limbic, have stressed in various ways, that the more “lived” the post-miracle description is, the more it becomes future reality.

- 1 Those familiar with the TV series “Breaking Bad” might recognize Limbic when it fell, as part of the wreckage from the Wayfarer 515 airplane disaster, landing in Walter White’s swimming pool. During season 2 it floated for several episodes in the pool before being fished out and placed in an evidence bag. As can be seen it lost an eye and was burnt by the explosion.
- 2 Although Limbic sleeps with its patients, it must be noted that it is neutered.
- 3 It is neuro-reductionism (neurobabble) to say it is their actual limbic system, but as a metaphor it can be useful.



Ella de Jong



Emma Burns & Nick Drury at the World SFBT Conference



Guy Shannon



John Wheeler



Elliot Connie



UK Family Therapy Conference Scotland



Harry Korman



Kirsten Dierolf



Luc Isebaert



Mathias Schwab



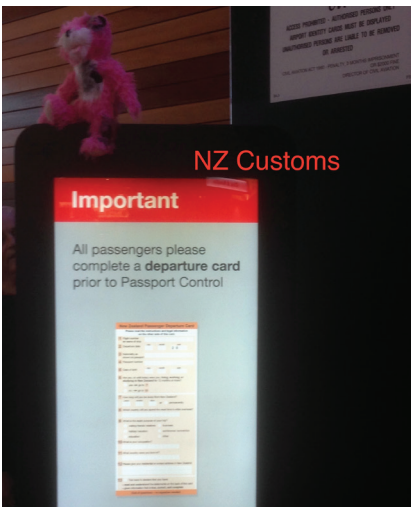
Mark McKergow



World SFBT Conference Frankfurt



Puding China



NZ Customs