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ADOLESCENCE, ADULTHOOD AND DISABILITY: TOWARD A NEW INITIATIVE

It will be postulated that the concept of 'disability' needs a radical overhaul and that the label covers a range of conditions and ability levels greater than that in the 'normal' population. Such lack of specificity hinders progress and development and needs much attention.

Examples will be drawn from a variety of professionals involved in different aspects of disability together with consumers' views of the provision of services by the statutory and voluntary sectors.

It will be proposed that in the UK there is a 'profession-centred' approach to the problem rather than a 'young person with disability' approach to the problem. It will be further argued that this militates against progression and development. The effects of self-fulfilling prophecies and labelling by professionals upon young people with a disability will be explored and certain conclusions drawn.

It will be emphasised that there is a need for a reorientating of professional involvement with the young person, the family and the community. The links between 'residential care' and 'non-residential care' will be explored and the implications elaborated upon.

A new initiative will be proposed which addresses the above points and which could lead to a radically different and better deal for young people with a disability through a restructuring of environmental factors and a radical shift in professional attitudes. The implications of this for staff training will also be addressed.

*Der Begriff der Behinderung bedarf einer gründlichen Revision. Das was unter dem Begriff verstanden wird gehört zu einem sehr breiten Spektrum von Fähigkeiten welches das der sogenannten Durchschnittsbevölkerung in vielen Hinsichten übertrifft. In England wird der Begriff 'berufszentriert' definiert anstatt 'kindzentriert'. Das führt zu negativen Etikettierungseffekten, die der Konferenzler im Detail untersucht. Er stellt ein Modell vor, welches die erwähnten Aspekte berücksichtigt und zu einem radikalen Umdenken in der Ausbildung zum Erzieherberuf sowie in der Ausübung desselben führen soll.*

*Le terme 'handicap' doit être redéfini. Il désigne des capacités très variées qui dépassent parfois les capacités de la population 'normale'. Au Royaume Uni, le terme est défini surtout par rapport aux professions du secteur plutôt que par rapport aux enfants et jeunes souffrant d'un handicap. Ceci mène à des effets négatifs d'étiquetage que le conférencier analysera en détail. Il présentera un modèle tenant compte des aspects précités et qui pourrait avoir une influence non négligeable sur la formation de l'éducateur et l'exercice de sa profession.*