Embodied Relating: 
The Ground of Psychotherapy

with Nick Totton
October 3rd-4th
East Down, Dartmoor
£220 + £30 per night optional accommodation

 Truly integrating body psychotherapy with verbal work means recognising that our embodied perception is fundamental to all psychotherapy practice: it is the concrete experience from which we derive abstractions like 'transference', 'counter transference' and 'projection'.

Embodied relating is not an esoteric branch of neuroscience, nor an obscure psychotherapeutic theory, but something embedded in our everyday life: we can all 'do' embodied relating, though some do it better than others. Like many other important aspects of life, it generally happens of its own accord, but sometimes benefits from the sort of close examination which tends to happen in therapy. However, psychotherapy has a history of keeping embodiment out of its field of awareness, and preferring language-based relating to all other kinds - indeed, until quite recently, downplaying here-and-now relationship altogether. All these things are now changing; and this workshop is intended to be part of the change.

I believe that all relationship is initially between bodies: embodiment and relationship are inseparable, both in human existence and in the practice of psychotherapy. If we explore embodiment, we encounter relationship; if we explore relationship, we encounter embodiment. Therapy is more powerful when the practitioner is able to recognise the constant interplay between these two aspects of being human, and to follow and support the shifts of charge from one to the other. This allows us to identify and process the many situations in which relational problems between therapist and client are best understood as issues of embodiment.

On the workshop I aim to bring us back to the ground of embodiment, and to discover how we can work from our bodies without necessarily doing anything other than sitting in chairs and talking. The workshop is for body psychotherapists, verbal psychotherapists and other practitioners interested in developing an integrated approach to embodiment. It will include discussion, experiential work and supervision.

Nick Totton originally trained as a Reichian body therapist, has explored widely in areas ranging from craniosacral therapy to Process Oriented Psychotherapy and Psychoanalytic Studies, and now practices and teaches Embodied Relational Therapy and Wild Therapy. He has written several books, including Body Psychotherapy: An Introduction; Psychotherapy and Politics; Wild Therapy; Not A Tame Lion: Writings on Therapy in its Social and Political Context; and Press When Illuminated: New and Selected Poems. His latest book, Embodied Relating: The Ground of Psychotherapy, is due out from Karnac in October. He has a grown up daughter, lives in Cornwall with his partner and grows vegetables.

East Down (www.eastdown.org) is a beautiful training venue on the edge of Dartmoor near Cheriton Bishop. Accommodation is available for £30 a night during the weekend.

To book or find out more, contact Judy Shaw, judyshawuk@btinternet.com or call 01404 831007/07799135323. If you want to discuss the content, email Nick at nick@3-c.coop.