

## Counselling Training – Spain, April 2008

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### In the land of the giants

**Once upon a time** – you suddenly woke up in a land entirely populated by giants

Deafening noises, bright lights – terrified - you screamed – the nearest giant slapped you.

**Fear** gripped you, lack of comprehension – anxiety probably stay with you all your life.

After a while the giants didn't look quite so frightening and one or two of them seemed to take a special interest in you.

**One particular giant** seemed quiet attentive, got you food (which tasted horrible) and some clothes to wear (which itched), and when you cried this giant tried to help, although it usually misunderstood what the problem was.

Then one day this friendly giant shouted at you, hit you and then abandoned you in your room.

How could you ever be safe again in the land of the giants– the one giant you trusted abused you

**But you survived**, you learned slowly how to cope.

Then one day you met some other little people like you, great, you got one well, at last someone who thought and acted like you – you now felt much more at home.

Time passed and you slowly learned the laws of the giant's land.

You gained insight by observing the giants and copying them – you began to figure out how you could stay safe. Occasionally a giant abused you, either physically hitting you, or poking fun to make you cry, but you survived.

**You learned** the lessons of survival –

Do as you are told

Obey the giants in authority

Don't cry and show your weaknesses

Do as you are told

Keep a stiff upper lip

Study hard

Get a job

Get married and have children

**You have now grown up**, and then one day you wake up and there is a tiny little creature looking up at you. She has just woken up in the land of giants and is terrified.

And because you love her you start caring for her and teaching her everything you learned about surviving in the land of giants.

And so the story goes on

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## Water Bugs and Dragonflies

Down below the surface of a quiet pond lived a little colony of water bugs. They were a happy colony, living far away from the sun. For many months they were very busy, scurrying over the soft mud on the bottom of the pond.

They did not notice that every once in a while one of the members of their colony seemed to lose interest in going about with its friends. Clinging to the stem of a pond lily, it gradually moved out of sight and was seen no more.

'Look!' said one of the water bugs to another. 'One of our colony is climbing up the lily stalk. Where do you suppose she is going?'

Up, up it went slowly. Even as they watched, the water bug disappeared from sight. Its friends waited and waited but it didn't return.

'That's funny,' said one water bug to another.

'Wasn't she happy here:' asked a second water bug.

"Where do you suppose she went?' wondered a third

No one had an answer. They were greatly puzzled.

Finally one of the water bugs, a leader in the colony, gathered his friends together. 'I have an idea. The next one of us who climbs up the lily stalk must promise to come back and tell us where he or she went and why.

We promise. they all said solemnly.

One spring day not long after, the very water bug who had suggested the plan found himself climbing up the lily stalk. Up, up, up he went. Before he knew what was happening, he had broken through the surface of the water, and fallen onto the broad, green lily pad above.

When he awoke, he looked about with surprise. He couldn't believe what he saw. A startling change had come to his old body. His movement revealed four silver wings and a long tail. Even as he struggled, he felt an impulse to move his wings. The warmth of the sun soon dried the moisture from the new body. He moved his wings again and suddenly found himself up above the water. He had become a dragonfly

Swooping and dipping in great curves, he few through the air. He felt exhilarated in the new atmosphere. By and by, he alighted on a lily pad for a rest. Then it was by chance that he glanced below to the bottom of the pond.

Why, he was right above his old friends, the water bugs!

There they were, scurrying about just as he had been doing a little while before. Then he remembered his promise to return and tell everyone what happened when someone climbed up the lily stalk.

Without thinking, the dragonfly darted down, suddenly hit the water and bounced away. Now that he was a dragonfly, he could no longer return into the water to talk to his friends and keep his promise.

Even if I could go back - he said - not one of the bugs would recognise me, or even understand what I was saying. I guess I'll just have to wait until they too become dragonflies. Then they'll understand where I went. And so he flew off into the sun.

Doris Stickney