

August 26, 1973

Dear MPA people,

I have been having a very hard time lately. I've been experiencing many of the same feelings that landed me in hospital in 1970: a lot of ~~anxie~~ depression and anxiety. The anxiety is connected with MPA work, especially with formal meetings with non-MPA people. The tension ^{has} reached panic proportions in a number of meetings over the past ~~for~~ couple of months. ⁵

I can't take any more of it. I need some time away from MPA. Over the past two years and eight months, I've just burned myself out, and now I have to get away for a while. I'm not sure whether I'm resigning my position or asking for a leave of absence. The difference is only in wording anyway.

~~But~~ ^{hardly} it's gotten to the point where I can't handle any MPA demands. Last thursday there was a meeting of the committee to find a new drop-in center. I came in at 2:15, 3/4 of an hour before the meeting. I was so uptight just being there that I had to leave before the meeting started.

I don't feel I want to leave MPA. I still consider myself a member and feel a very strong bond to the group. I hope to get back to work as soon as I can handle it. The group has become almost my entire life. Other than at my commune, I have no friends outside of MPA people. What I'm saying is that there's nowhere else I'm escaping to. I just need a long breather from the pressures so that I can return when I'm capable of contributing to the group.

I don't think it's just a rationalization to say that it will probably be good for the group for me to be away for awhile. I know the group is strong enough now to make it thru any crisis.

But things have gotten stale over the past year and the whole organization needs a shaking up. I have not had the energy to initiate the changes, and in many passive ways, I think my presence has hindered these changes. Things have gotten into a routine that seems almost unbendable. Of course the routine can be changed, but it requires seeing things thru new ~~eyes~~ and fresh eyes, which at this point, mine definitely are not.

I dont think i've been seeing things clearly for quite a while now. Things have gotten more bureaucratic; my behaviour has gotten more bureaucratic. The love that I feel for so many people at MPA can't find channels to express itself any longer. Just keeping myself functional and keeping the fucking machine moving has sapped all my energy. I need time for the energy to replenish itself so that when I caome back, it~~is~~^{will} not as someone who is distantly neurotic.

At the beginning I felt hopeful about what the group could accomplish, ~~in the way of making people feel good together.~~ *that we could make each other* But lately, I've become so swamped with the paperwork demands and ~~so much~~ *with the* pain that I see in so many people that there are times when I don't see solutions.

~~Intellectually, I know there are solutions~~

Although I may not have shown it (I don't feel capable of showing much of anything these days) ~~the~~ episode with Earl affected me very much.

Intellectually, I know there are solutions to the problems of aléenation within the group, and I really believe the group will find them.

~~My being away, or at least being less central to the business of MPA,~~

But at the moment, I don't have the energy to see solutions.

I do want to come back to work at MPA, but I'm not sure when that will be. It could be a couple of months or it could be longer. What I intend to do with my time during Sept & Oct is to try and sort out MPA in my head by writing about it. I hope to write a fairly long assessment of the group from the beginning up to the present.

I have talked to Alberta about the problems I've been having and about writing this assessment for the CYC. My contract ends in two months, at the end of October, and, if it's alright with MPA, Alberta suggests that I stay on CYC til Oct. 31st, using these two months to do some writing and try and get my head together.

This plan will not affect MPA financially since we already have four extra LEAP salaries which we won't be using during sept & oct. Formally, it will mean that MPA will have three and not four CYC salaries and that I will be hired directly by CYC to do the written assessment. If a replacement for me is elected --and I think someone should be--that person would be paid a LEAP salary, still leaving three unused LEAP salaries.

Stan, Barry and I and the EAC have discussed a plan to fill in the gap in the office. This proposal will come up later on the agenda.

I don't want to turn this into a soap opera, but I do have very strong feelings about MPA and about my leaving for a while. I think MPA is the most exciting and relevant community group in Vancouver and I know that we will make it through any crises that come up (this is the speech that I didn't make at the Anniversary party last march),.

I really need and want your support at this time.

If a crisis ~~some~~ arises that the group feels I am needed to help solve, I won't be far away.