

In Memoriam

## That Night in the Black Forest

### In Memoriam Juergen Becker: 25 April 1951–22 July 2017

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*If we would measure a homeopath by the contribution made to the profession, then Juergen Becker is a giant. It is not only the amount of provings he conducted but also the depth of understanding that emerged out of them.<sup>1</sup> His work and influence were pivotal in opening the eyes of our profession to our interconnection with other dimensions. He was a homeopathic Gregory Bateson, a universal man totally connected to all the wonders of our universe. His work has helped so many to better understand the myth, our life. We feel blessed to have met, known and worked with him.*

*Juergen was a dear friend of Rajan Sankaran. We were very happy to accept Rajan's suggestion to publish 'That Night in the Black Forest' in memoriam to Juergen.<sup>1</sup>*

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Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up.

–Pablo Picasso

Dr. Kunzli must have somehow embedded himself in my subconscious mind because some years later I had a dream that involved him. I dreamt that I saw a lamp that was supposed to be continually kept alight. It was in a cave. When I was looking at the lamp, a storm with strong winds occurred, which blew out the lamp. At first I was very disturbed and didn't know what to do. However, I decided to re-ignite the lamp with the help of a match. When I had done that Dr. Kunzli came into the cave and asked me if the flame was the same. I told him what had happened. He said that if so, the flame was not the same. I replied that the lamp was the same, the wick was the same and the fire was the same, so in essence the flame was the

<sup>1</sup> For the list of publications by Juergen Becker see Institute for Homeopathic Remedy Provings (IHHF) at [www.engon.de/c4/ihhf\\_lit.htm](http://www.engon.de/c4/ihhf_lit.htm).

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same, though it had gone out for some moments. I woke up from this dream and thought about it.

I understood that Dr. Kunzli was a very traditional thinker in homeopathy. And he was cautious about any new developments. I, on the other hand, felt that if the basic principles are followed, one can say it is the same science, just as I would say the flame was the same even if technically it was not a contiguous one. While staying within the fundamental principles of homeopathy, I wanted to explore newer avenues and methods.

Our Monday night meetings in Mumbai were going full swing. We were all young then and eager to explore. Sometimes we were joined by young homeopaths from other countries who were visiting Mumbai and had come to know of our meetings. That is how a young German homeopath happened to be there one night.

Ever curious about what was happening in homeopathy in other countries, we asked him who the good homeopaths in Germany were. He mentioned a few names and then almost apologetically added that there was also one homeopath who was eccentric and had strange ideas. Our ears pricked up immediately and we wanted to know more about this one. He said that his name was Dr. Juergen Becker and he was from Freiburg. He worked with fairy tales and other interesting things, and also gave seminars in a place called Bad Boll, a small town in the district of Göppingen in southern Germany.

My interest was aroused, so I wrote a letter to Dr. Becker introducing myself and requesting to meet and learn from him. He soon responded affirmatively and on my next trip to Europe I went to Freiburg to spend some time with him. He came to pick me up at the train station. In his mid-40s then, he had a small beard and was dressed in casual clothes. He had a somewhat faraway look in his eyes as if he was not fully there; I imagine his mind was buzzing with thoughts and

ideas. He greeted me and after a brief introduction abruptly asked me if we could go straight into the Black Forest and discuss things there. I was ready for anything.

The region, I remember, was dense with trees, certainly living up to its name. It was dusk when we arrived and we sat down under a tree. Juergen, as I would learn, is very intense in what he says and does. Soon, the forest became dark and black. It was shrouded in mystery, just like in fairy tales. So it was then that I asked him about his work with these fairy tales.

Juergen said that he found each fairy tale was representative of a state of mind. He started narrating to me the tale of Little Red Riding Hood. 'Little Red Riding Hood always walked the straight path from her home to her grandmother's house. She did not look left or right. While doing this was safe, it was also monotonous and unexciting. Then the wolf came her way and told her that just wandering away from the path, she could find interesting, new things. So, she wanders away from the path and sees flowers and other things and has new experiences. While all of this is exciting, it also comes with its risks'.

He explained to me that this is the state of mind of a teenager, who wants to break away from the routine, from tradition, and find new and exciting ways to do things. There is a desire to zoom on a fast motorbike for the thrill and excitement it gives. All he or she wants to experience is having things happen differently. This leads to what we now call the 'generation gap'. He continued the story explaining each part of it in his own unique way. The large eyes, ears and mouth of the wolf, he explained, represented the exaggeration of the senses and the need for sensory stimulation. This comes from exploring the new and moves away from the monotonous routine. Each incident in the story has a meaning in that context.

In the thick darkness of the forest, Juergen spoke and I heard him with rapt attention. For almost the first time in my life, I saw someone integrating medicine with something outside of the medical field. Juergen integrated it all in his work. He saw the commonality between medicine, psychology, mythology, fairy tales, music, art, politics and economics. I asked him how it all started.

Juergen explained that one night he had had a dream. In that dream, he had to look at the world through a small device, something like a camera box. Then he saw that the device fell apart and he could see everything without any restriction. The whole visual field opened up before him.

When he woke up, he understood the dream to mean that we are all looking at patients and diseases through the restricted instrument of symptoms, diagnosis and other phenomena. If we are able to get rid of these restrictions, we gain a much broader view. We find an inter-connectedness in all things, whether in literature, movies, theatre, music, art, history or even zoology, botany and chemistry. Not only are these interconnected, but they are also powerful healing agents. Each phenomenon in history can be related to what happened at the same time in the arts and sciences; synchronicity exists among the phenomena. Through observation, you can see patterns that can connect all synchronous events. I listened, fascinated.

In the next few days I got to know Juergen more. I began to see what kind of a person he was, one to whom this way of

being seemed natural. Juergen came across to me as a person who did not calculate, who did not plan and who did not slot things into categories. He simply observed, listened deeply and saw the connection between different things. His way of knowing was not through reasoning but through experiencing. If you want to know something, you must experience it.

His testing of various remedies in homeopathy was also based on experiencing their effects on himself and other volunteers in his seminars, rather than theorising about them. It seemed as if he functioned purely from his right brain. That also made him, in a way, simple, transparent and pure. He had no airs, was not an inventor of things; he was an observer, a discoverer. Knowledge was not his creation; it was already there. His method also made him quite courageous, in his manner of standing up to anyone. He was a minority of one in the big conferences he attended. What he knew was not what he had read; it was what he had experienced.

It seems Juergen had chanced upon a secret door to a space where all knowing comes from pure experience and not from rationalising or thinking. He had entered that space and stayed there. That night, when I met him for the first time in Freiburg, Juergen opened this door and let me into that space. During our time together, I came into a new place of awareness. From it, I recognised that there are two ways of knowing: the logical way and the way of direct awareness, the experience of things. In that direct experience, when logic and reason are switched off, small miracles happen.

This was a world so different from the one of rationality with which I was so familiar. Yet this man in front of me so innocently revealed that such a dimension existed. If one is open to this dimension, then one connects to a bigger consciousness than oneself. This idea was to help me a lot in my future work.

Recognising that powerful things happen when you are simply open to them was reinforced when a few years later Juergen visited Mumbai at my invitation. Just before he arrived I got a call from Dana Gillespie, a Jazz singer I had met in Vienna on a day that became a turning point in my life. I was surprised by this call, since Dana had not called me for many years. She said she would like to meet up with me and asked if I would like to visit a spiritual teacher called Ramesh Balsekar with her the next day. I told her that I was to pick up Juergen and would check with him. When Juergen arrived and sat in my car I asked him what he would like to do in Mumbai besides homeopathy. He said, 'I have nothing I want to do, except one thing: meet a man called Ramesh Balsekar'. Such uncanny coincidences often occur around Juergen.

There are times when I give my thinking and analysing a holiday and function from pure observation and awareness. It is in these moments where magic has the space to manifest. When this happens I often think of my first meeting with Juergen. That night, in the darkness of the Black Forest, I found a new light.

#### Reference

- 1 Sankaran R. Dog, Yogi, Banyan Tree. Mumbai: Homeopathic Medical Publishers; 2017