



Learning About Self and About Others

I come from a discipline where we have had to learn a lot of things the hard way. We used to keep newly delivered women in bed for two weeks after they had their baby. I think this was because we wanted to learn how to treat phlebitis better than we had ever known how to treat phlebitis, because the best way to have a woman get phlebitis and run the danger of throwing a pulmonary embolism is to keep her in bed after she has delivered. We were doing harmful things thinking they were right, because we did not know enough yet.

Another thing I have learned about inquiry is your presence in the circumstance alters the circumstance for the people you are observing and interacting with. It has got to be that way; there is not any other way. You have got to recognize your presence inside the circle changes things. You have got to sort through and try not to have too much of an impact on the situation and gauge the responses you are getting. I love

the cartoon (it might be a *Far Side* cartoon) where the two, typical cannibals with the bones tied up in their hair and bone necklaces around their necks are looking out a window of their grass dwelling and you see some professor-looking people coming up over the hill. One of the cannibals says to the other, “Quick, hide the TV, hide the stereo—the anthropologists are coming, the anthropologists are coming!” The notion is to be aware enough of yourself that you recognize how you alter things.

No Events