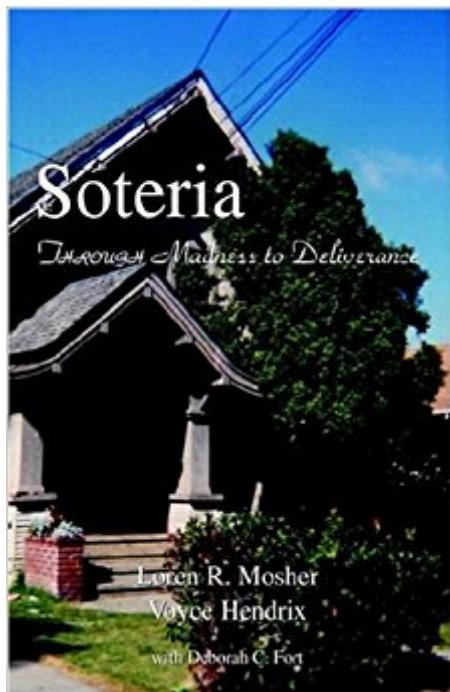


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Soteria: Through Madness To Deliverance



Synopsis

This is the story of a special time, space, and place where young people diagnosed as

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Loren Mosher, M.D., is Associate Director, Addiction, Victim, and Mental Health Services, Montgomery County, Rockville, Maryland, and Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, Bethesda, Maryland.

Soteria means "Salvation" and is about an experiment that was done in the late seventies early eighties in California. The premise of the experiment was essentially to take first episode psychotics and schizophrenics and put them in a house in a community instead of a hospital. Instead of filling them with drugs, the author and his team used a technique of "Being With" the person experiencing psychosis and aiding them in a Non-Medical Model manner toward integration and recovery. In other words, "being with" a person experiencing extremes states of mind, instead of warehousing or chemically restraining them. There were actually two houses, one called "Soteria" and the other called "Emmon" where recruits from college campuses would manage the day to day affairs of the house and interact with the residents. Mosher Et Al drew a fairly realistic picture of the environment and the people in it and how things were done. The claim of recovery without drugs is supported with some anecdotal evidence, but the book lacks any real case studies to support the claims. It is elsewhere that some of this evidence is available, for this reason I gave this book a 3 star rating. The

project came out of the ruins of the Kingdom Hall experiment in England which was conducted by the Laing, in which Mosher was an observer. Although "Kingdom Hall" was essentially a disaster, there were some quality ideas involved that Mosher added to his own ideas and created the Soteria project. The writing is good and not only Mosher puts his ideas and thoughts about the project to pen and paper, but also other members of the project. The most compelling aspect of this book is no so much the nitty-gritty details of how the experiment worked practically, but the fact that it is an alternative to Drug Therapy that is promising. Reader take note: In response to the original Soteria project, in Europe and the UK there are Soteria projects underway that take the essential idea of Soteria, with some revisions, so the project has come back to life. The question is, will this approach ever re-appear in America were the pharmaceutical and psychiatric marriage has done all but suppress most information regarding the projects.

I loved this book. As a former crisis residential director, I was blown away at the stories recounted of meaningful treatment and recovery, with minimal use of medications.

Soteria House shows the possibilities of another cheaper and much more humane approach to treating mental illness. It includes many of the current tools but with a staff that is encouraged to assist those going through psychosis or as many today begin to call it, "spiritual emergence". The book is well written and a classic for alternative approaches to mental health treatment. This is the way most of humanity treated their brothers and sisters when they had spiritual emergence or in Western Psychiatric terms, "Psychosis". The wholeistic movement toward better and cheaper mental health treatment includes the this classic as a return to the human way of helping others use psychosis as a healing breakthrough rather than a reason to have 40 years of toxic drug medications.

As an alternative form of treatment for schizophrenics, I applaud Dr. Mosher's point of view. I believe that psychotropic drugs do more harm than good, and that the big pharmaceutical companies are in cahoots with psychiatrists, buying their way into oblivion. Unfortunately, this type of alternative facility will never be funded by the United States.

The approach to allowing madness to be recognized as being human.

Gives the reader a thorough look at what truly productive mental health care looks like. It also

becomes obvious to the reader that this method is not used today because it is not supporting the drug and psychiatric industry. If anyone wants true healthy recovery and their life to be productive this project reveals the way it was supposed to be.

A very useful book for those who have been victims of the mental health system in the USA. It gives you hope and insight into alternative treatments without medication. I wish the place was still open....I hope someone would take this vision and build upon it!!

In "Soteria: Through Madness to Deliverance," Loren Mosher and Voyce Hendrix, with Deborah Fort, paint a vivid picture of the day to day life at Soteria-House, the Northern California alternative to psychiatric hospitalization that proved it is possible to help people through madness with kindness, empathy and validating people's experiences, and most importantly, by "being with" people, rather than "doing to" them. Due to his prolific writings, Dr. Mosher has presented many scientific papers on Soteria, but in this book, the program comes to life. The failures as well as the successes are described. Only with this book has it been possible to get a sense of what it was like to be at Soteria. Through the truly dedicated and caring staff, such as the incredible Voyce Hendrix (and even the residents), people were allowed their madness and, through being allowed their madness, able to get through it and on with their lives. This book is a must read for anyone interested in alternatives to the prevailing pessimistic paradigm of psychiatric treatment. It is truly a story of hope. A story of a better path -- a path not currently taken. Dr. Mosher, loved "being with" people who were psychotic. He called them "my most interesting customers." Dr. Mosher, passed away in July of 2004, at the age of 70, five months before the book was published. He must have written this book knowing that his personal efforts on behalf of providing a humane form of care was going to cease. Thus, "Soteria: Through Madness to Deliverance" must be seen as his final act of love to people experiencing disturbing psychosis by leaving a trail to follow for those who have the vision to see it.

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