

# Recovery from Post-Communist Mentality

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***Beáta Farkasné Tóth/Founder VITALITY HEALTH PROMOTING PROGRAM***

**TF: What is your project about?**

This is an advanced wellness project for the complex improvement of social health care. It has a threefold role. It intends to connect physicians and medical scientists, social hygiene professionals with teachers at public education, trainers at fitness centres and wellness entrepreneurs to work together. It's set up to associate all people who share the same idea about the proven importance of holistic healthcare and stress management. The second aspect is the clear explanation and presentation of how mental approach to reality can affect physical condition. It shows the characteristics of the human mind and how chronic moderate stress of modern times harms human health. The project emphasizes the identification of fundamental vital needs and the importance of learning about natural factors which can contribute to the healthy development of a human being. It also aims at calling attention to the neuropsychological factor of brain plasticity (the human ability of building brain structure from repeated pattern of mental activity) and highlights the difference between the reactive and resting state of the brain. It's a complex health promoting program with the third mission of informing people about possible ways to maintain their health. We will suggest forums and guiding information about the variety of local programs concerning prevention, recreation and rehabilitation according to the special needs of individuals.

**TF: This Project is located in Hungary?**

Yes. I want to apply these ideas to my home country – Hungary.

It is an especially urgent necessity to focus on building new ways to have a physically and mentally healthier society here. The mentality of Hungarian society has been damaged for many decades. By political forces people were conditioned to follow external rules of inertness and to live a life of shame, anger and fear. Although the Fall of the Iron Curtain brought about the official disappearance of communist political leaders, unfortunately the following generations – including my generation – inherited the passive, inert mentality. Hungarians as passive dependants were left alone with the mental remains of Communism. In 1989 they were not prepared for democracy. Many of them have remained wired to pessimism, negative bias, passive approach and mistrust. These harmful mental factors have brought about consequences in health statistics. The demographic data and surveys on social health condition give account of aggravating, alarming tendencies. It is time to become more considerate about them. So our program tries to bring these facts and interconnections to public attention.

**TF: How is our working life going to look like within the upcoming years?**

Everything depends on the individual life management. Decade by decade people are going to become aware of the fact that they are responsible for their own lives. This understanding is a slow procedure. However, the working conditions will change within these slow processes. More and more people will feel the need for proper working conditions and the demand for a healthier working environment will rise as well as the need for more space for creativity at work. Autocratic mastering will become a pointless strategy if people have sufficient responsibility, intelligence, creativity and self-control. The values of motivation, individual commitment and cooperation will become more prominent in the future.

**TF: What are the opportunities of our time?**

The continuous development of technology can provide people with wonderful prospects to understand the peculiarities of the universe and the wonders of life. Social media and education are dedicated to efficiently present and reveal these findings and discoveries. In this way the world can become more comprehensible for people and they can understand the nature of their existence and improve their life management strategies better.

**TF: What are the challenges?**

Deep within human nature there is a characteristic which can become an obstacle: fear. Fear can cause excessive self-interest. Overcoming egocentric mentality means the greatest individual and social challenge for people. Egocentric approach can be the cause of many grave problems in the world such as wars, corruption and aggression. Many conflicts are not dealt with intelligence but aggressive dominance. Love, empathy, intelligence and creativity are amazing treasures of humanity to get rid of obstacles of self-interest and violence.

**TF: What borders need to be dissolved?**

In Hungarian mentality there are inner borders of inertness and a pessimistic approach towards reality. These mental borders are built deeply inside in people's mind and soul. We have to break those borders down because they separate people from each other. This is not only typical for Hungary but for all parts of the world where there are unsolved conflicts and wars. Moreover, interdisciplinary borders also exist and they have to be dissolved in order to get wider perspectives. We need to work together to gain a holistic view at an issue and share our research, findings and experience.

**TF: What is your vision?**

Actually, our long-term health vitally needs love-focused positive mentality and humanistic, resilient life management

as scientific research and personal experiences support the fundamental nature of these revelations. If we go against our long-term natural needs and we continue following cognitive distortions and mental frustrations, we can build up the horrors of human hell on earth with the use of negative mentality. On the other hand, we can decide to practice our moments with love-focused presence and become engaged in its complete experience. There is a song by Andrea Bocelli – ‘I believe’ – that says we can make our heaven on earth. Every moment, every situation can be similar to a heaven like experience but that depends on each individual person – what one wants to create. My vision is that more people will be able to live healthy, peaceful life with lots of heaven like moments. Probably this far-away prospect sounds naive but it’s not impossible.

If people manage to understand that every one of us has the same fundamental needs and shares similar drives for life and health, humanity can realize that all of us have intrinsic connection by nature. People of the countries can be able to dissolve more social and global issues with deeper understanding of their fellows. I believe the conscious change of individual mentality is the only way of human survival. It is the fundamental idea for social advance, as well.

Beáta Farkasné Tóth is speaking at TEDxPannonia on Aug. 8th, 2014

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