

## **Abstract (practice based) til Nordisk Folkesundhedskonference, 22. - 25. august 2017**

**Title:** Connecting, reflecting and healing through education: A way of living and a way of being in the world.

**Presentation:** Oral (work shop).

**Subjects:** Sexuality, body, life experience, trauma, healing, health promotion.

**Author:** Ass. professor Per Kristian Roghell, Nord university. Email address: per.k.roghell@nord.no

**Keywords:** Education, healing, life-experience, sexuality, human body.

**Background:** Fall semester 2011 Nesna University College, now Nord university, started a *further education on sexuality, sexual assault and abuse*. The education was a post bachelor education over two years. The students were drawn from varied professions and occupation contexts including teachers, social workers, nurses and midwives.

The focuses of the first semester was on the philosophy of daily life and reflection on their own life and work experiences. Essay writing, constructing narratives and counseling were the related skills. The students own lives, background and experiences were significant for writing and reflection.

In the second semester the students were invited into counseling process with the focus on reflection and respectful dialogue. The other main focus in this semester was on sexuality during the life span and different sexual expressions and orientations.

In the third semester the focus was on children's sexuality and sexual development; sexual abuse - and the possible consequences in life. Anxiety connected to pregnancy and giving birth was also emphasized.

The students wrote 4 essays/exams. All the students joined counseling groups. In the process to get to know their body expressions belly dance was a part of the training.

**Aims:** To place a **health promoting** perspective on the close connection between own lived experiences **and** education, knowledge, knowing and insight, and discuss experiences in the counseling process.

**Methods:** Oral evaluation processes, qualitative interviews with students and written experiences from the counseling groups.

**Results and discussions:** In this presentation I will share the experiences of the students personal growth, professional development and healing processes. It is a significant experience that the students came in to personal growth processes when they reflected on their own stories. One believes that this personal process is very important for professional work. In the education we did not create a sharp line between health and illness, but emphasized the challenges sexuality represents for human beings. To look at sexual problems as an aberration, an objective enquiry without a reflection on your personal and subjective self, may create a distance to the other, the human being who needs to be met.