

Peter Lehmann (ed.)

# Coming off Psychiatric Drugs

Successful Withdrawal from Neuroleptics,  
Antidepressants, Lithium, Carbamazepine and  
Tranquilizers

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Kerstin Kempker, Leo P. Koehne, Jan Kuypers, Elke Laskowski,  
Peter Lehmann, Ulrich Lindner, Iris Marmotte, Constanze Meyer,  
Harald Müller, Eiko Nagano, Mary Nettle, Una M. Parker, Nada Rath,  
Erwin Redig, Hannelore Reetz, Roland A. Richter, Marc Rufer,  
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Peter Lehmann Publishing   Berlin · Eugene · Shrewsbury

## About the Authors

**Karl Bach Jensen.** Born 1951 in Denmark. During 1973 and '74 locked up in a state mental hospital. Forcibly drugged with heavy dosages of neuroleptic drugs and electroshocked. Voluntary psychiatric patient in '75, '80 and '85. Since then, no personal contact with psychiatry. Get help from personal network and from natural remedies when madness appears. Since 1980 taken part in the national user-/survivor-movement in Denmark. Co-founder of the European Network of (ex-)Users and Survivors of Psychiatry in 1991. Chair of the Network 1994–1996. Co-founder and board-member of Landsforeningen af Nuværende og Tidligere Psykiatribrugere (LAP), the Danish Association of Users and Ex-users of Psychiatry. Since 2001, one of two European members of the board of WNUSP. Worked for many years as a teacher in public school. For seven years employed as the manager of a drop-in and activity centre in Kolding, Denmark. These years employed as a consultant in a social development center doing evaluations, research and courses. Edited a couple books critical towards psychiatry and wrote a number of articles in Danish magazines.

**Regina Bellion,** born 1941, in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), cleaning-woman, factory-worker, haute-couture sales-woman, teacher, waitress etc. Today living in early retirement.

**Carola Bock** (FRG), pseudonym, born 1949, industrial accountant, in early retirement since 1991.

**Wilma Boevink,** born 1963, social scientist on psychiatric care, an active member of the Dutch usermovement in psychiatry. Being a longterm user herself now working in Utrecht at the Trimbos-Institute (the Dutch Institute for Mental Health and Addiction). She works in the research department, integrating her personal experiences in her work. Author (together with José van Beuzekom, Erna Gaal et al.) of “Samen werken aan herstel. Van ervaringen delen naar kennis overdragen” (*Working Together on Recovery: from Sharing Experiences to Implementing Knowledge*), Utrecht: Trimbos-Institute 2002.

**Michael Chmela:** Born 1958, in Vorarlberg, Austria. From 1976 to 1983 studied medicine in Graz. From 1997 to 1999 Chair of the information and contact-center for self-help-groups “Club Antenne” in Vorarlberg. 1999, co-founder of the so-called trialogue in Vorarlberg. Active preparation and participation of the First Austrian Conference of people who have experiences with psychiatry, held in Linz 1999. Co-founder of the Austrian Network of (ex-)users and survivors of psychiatry, chair since 2001. 2000, co-founder of the registered organization <omnibus> and chair. Since July 2001, leader of the peer-counseling-center “Gleiche beraten Gleiche” (*Peers advice Peers*) in Bregenz, Vorarlberg. Since 2000 lecturer at the Kla-

genfurt University for social professions, main foci: self-help, movement of (ex-)users and survivors of psychiatry, empowerment, salutogenesis. Publications in different specialist journals about patients' rights and dangers of the anti-stigma-campaign.

**Bert Gölden**, born 1955, in FRG. Educated as type-setter in 1969, further education as film-setter. From 1985 to 1987 independent work as film-setter. A handicap led to an early retirement from working life. Since 1996, active working in the self-help and public relations work of the Deutschen Gesellschaft Zwangserkrankungen e.V. (DGZ; *German Society for Obsession Diseases*). In 1996 he founded a self-help group for people with obsession diseases and their relatives. Since 1996, too, participant in a "Psychosis-Seminar." Since 2000 regional representative of Nordrhein der DGZ e.V. (*North-Rhine Society for Obsession Diseases*) as well as contact for personal advice. From autumn 2001, actively working in the committees of DGZ e.V.

**Ilse Gold** (FRG), born 1949. She was committed to a closed ward by a specialist for internal diseases for two weeks in 1991; secretly and by her own decision she quit taking Haldol and never took any psychiatric drugs again. Ilse Gold tragically lost her fight against breast cancer, which developed after the psychiatric treatment, on September 7, 1998.

**Gábor Gombos**, born 1961, is a physicist. He is engaged with the survivor-of-psychiatry-movement, since 1993. Since 1996 he is the chair of a Hungarian self-help association, Voice of Soul. He is the East European board member of the European Network of (ex-)Users and

Survivors of Psychiatry, member of the International Panel of the World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry, board member of the Hungarian Branch of the World Association of Psychosocial Rehabilitation.

**Katalin Gombos**, Hungary, born 1954, computer expert, has more than ten years of experience with psychiatry and neuroleptics. She is one of the founders and board-member of Voice of Soul Association of (ex-)Users and Survivors of Psychiatry.

**Maths Jespersen**. Born 1954. From 1980 to 1981 inmate of a psychiatric institution. From 1982 to 1988 producer of the actors' group Mercuriustheatre as well as local politician of the Green Party in Lund, Sweden. Converted 1984 to Catholicism. Since 1988 regional secretary of RSMH (Riksförbundet för Social och Mental Hälsa; *Swedish national organization of [ex-]users and survivors of psychiatry*). Founding member of the European Network of (ex-)Users and Survivors of Psychiatry 1991. From 1991 to 2000 editor of the *European Newsletter of (ex-)Users and Survivors of Psychiatry*. Since 1999, writer of cultural articles in a daily newspaper. Parallel research at the University of Lund (faculty of theatre). Since 2000, actor in the Stumpen-Ensemble, a theatre group with psychiatric survivors, drug addicts and homeless people as actors.

**Klaus John**, born in 1958, in West-Germany, married, father of two children, healing practitioner since 1985 with main focus on: acupuncture, electro-acupuncture according to Voll, homeopathy, guided affective imagery, hypnosis, transpersonal psychology and colortherapy. Three year training in transpersonal psychology

with Stanislav Grof, USA. Workshops in this field since 1988. Teacher for autogenic training at adults education centers since 1990. Certified Holotropic Breathwork™ practitioner since 1991.

**Manuela Kälin** (Switzerland), pseudonym. 1969, education as nurse. Practical work in different wards, abroad, too. 1983/84 education as medical masseuse. Three years physiotherapy in a hospital. Further education in complementary medicine. Since 1990 working in her own office in Switzerland.

**Kerstin Kempker**, born 1958 in Wuppertal (FRG), two daughters, lives in Berlin. From 1996–2001 she worked as leading social worker at the Runaway-House Berlin. Co-founder of the association “Für alle Fälle e.V.” (*“In Any Case”*), which works on the creation of a peer-counseling project. Now self-employed as author and project-advisor. Last book publications: “Mitgift. Notizen vom Verschwinden” (*“Dowry: Notes of Vanishing,”* Berlin 2000); “Flucht in die Wirklichkeit. Das Berliner Weglaufhaus” (*“Escape into Reality: the Berlin Runaway-House,”* ed. Berlin 1998).

**Leo P. Koehne**, pseudonym, born in 1970, in FRG, studied politics and works as a freelance journalist. Since 1994 member of the German Association of (ex-)Users and Survivors of Psychiatry.

**Jan Kuypers**, born in 1942, in Flanders/Belgium. Chemist. Former teacher of mathematics and researcher for process engineering. 1983, non-intended founder of the psychiatry-critical Ombudcenter Kisjot, named after Don Quixote. 1993 project leader for the setting of a Flemish representative union for (ex-)users and

survivors of psychiatry. 1990 and 2001 co-founder of the European resp. the World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry. Further academic education in philosophy, criminology, play-theory, ethics, semiotics, churches' history, anthropology, brain-biology, health economics and forensic psychiatry. Hobbies since the middle of the 80ies: Co-founder of the authors' circle Littera and of a school for high talents als well as board-member for the science-philosophic working-group De Ronde Tafel (*The Round Table*).

**Elke Laskowski**, born in 1958, in FRG, mother of a daughter, wife. Studied social work and decided to become a nature cure therapist after working with so-called mentally ill people and find another way. She has become a healing practitioner. Since 1991, she works in her own office in Langenhagen near Hannover with hypnosis, Bach flowers, stones, colors and biodynamic body- and aura-work.

**Peter Lehmann** (FRG). Author and publisher. Education as a social-pedagogist. Living in Berlin. Author and editor since 1986, then foundation of Peter Lehmann Publishing and Mail-Order Bookstore. Different publications. From 1994 to 2000, board-member of the German organization of (ex-)Users and Survivors of Psychiatry. From 1997 to 2000, member of the Executive Committee of Mental Health Europe, the European section of the World Federation for Mental Health. From 1997 to 1999, Chair of the European Network of (ex-)Users and Survivors of Psychiatry (ENUSP), since 1999, board member for the countries of Austria, Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg and Switzerland. Since 2002, ENUSP secretary. 2002, co-founder of “Für alle Fälle e.V.”

("In Any Case") and board-member in this organisation.

**Ulrich Lindner**, born in Lübeck, FRG in 1936, living in Unterreichenbach near Pforzheim (Southern Germany). Retired theologian, philologist and historian. Member of the German organization of (ex-) users and survivors of psychiatry, leader of Selbsthilfe für seelische Gesundheit Nord-schwarzwald e.V. (*Self-Help for Mental Health in the Northern Part of the Black Forest*).

**Iris Marmotte** (pseudonym, FRG), studied German, arts and pedagogic in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), but was removed from the university and put into prison because of political reasons shortly before finishing her studies ("not a socialist personality"). Nurse job in a children's and adolescents' psychiatric ward of a regional hospital. 1983 imprisonment with political reasons, 1984 release from prison and GDR-nationality because of "special efforts of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)" and move to FRG. 1986 registration at the University of Bremen and continuation of her studies. 1990 phase of examination and interruption of the studies, because of illness, "revolving-door-patient," from 1992 to 1995 in sheltered living. 1994, "Die blaue Karawane" (*The Blue Caravan*), in Bremen co-founder of the "Nachtschwärmer"-("Nocturnal-Reveler")-projects and work as board-member, founding-member of the music-band "Die Therapie-Resistenten" (*The Therapy-Resistant*). 1995 job as neighbourly helper and reestablishment of the studies. 1997 job as night watch in a hospital and pedagogical worker in a home for mentally ill persons. 2000, finished her studies, since then, grammar school teacher.

**Constanze Meyer**, born in 1959, in FRG, psychologist and psychotherapist. Since the beginning, her studies dealt intensively with women-specific health-issues. Many years of full-time work at "Schwindel-Frei" (*Head-for-Heights*), an information and counseling center for drug-dependent women in Berlin-Tempelhof, Reinhardtstr. 5, D-12103 Berlin, phone +49 30 7528034. "Schwindel-Frei" has a women-specific starting point that equally takes psychosomatics and addiction into account. Since 2001, exclusively working in independent psychotherapeutic office in Berlin-Spandau.

**Harald Müller** (FRG), pseudonym.

**Eiko Nagano** (pseudonym), born 1953, in Japan. From 1968 until 1999, she was a psychiatric user. She graduated from Waseda University, Tokyo, in 1979 in sociology. Since 1981, she has been a member of the Zenkoku "Seishinbyou" sha Shudan, the Japanese National Group of Mental Disabled People. Publications: "Seishin Iryou" (*Psychiatric Treatments*), Tokyo: Gendaishokan 1990; "Seishin Iryou User no Mezasumono—Oubei no self-help katsudo" (*About the Interests of Users of Psychiatry—Self-Help Activities in Europe and the USA*), Osaka: Buraku kaihour syupansha 1999).

**Mary Nettle** (England). Having obtained a Higher National Diploma in Business Studies and a Diploma in Advanced Marketing from Bristol Polytechnic, she worked for several years in marketing research with Audits of Great Britain and with Quaker Oats Ltd. In December 1992, she became self employed as a mental health user consultant. Involved in presenting the user perspective in all aspects of mental health. She is an Honorary Fellow

of Brunel University and has been appointed by the United Kingdom's government to work part time for the Mental Health Act Commission mainly in South West England. She is an active member of MindLink, the service user voice within Mind, the mental health charity covering England and Wales, and its chair person from 1995 to 2000.

**Una M. Parker**, Yorkshire, England, born 1935. Retired school teacher. Quaker. Lives with black cat in a flat in Leeds since 2001, leaving behind the large village where she had lived for 33 years. Still friends with husband who lives in Australia, since 1993. Two adult daughters. Appointed in 1996 as governor (voluntary) of the mental hospital in which she was a patient 30 years ago. Co-counselor (Re-evaluation Counseling) since 1974. Now speaks to groups and runs workshops on mental health. Belongs to local, national and international groups of psychiatry survivors, particularly Mindlink and ECT Anonymous. Attended the Forum that met in Beijing alongside the UN Fourth World conference on Women in 1995. Enjoys singing, circle dancing, T'ai-Chi, co-counseling, visiting family and friends, reading, writing, using computer, knitting, sewing, gardening, stroking her cat...

**Nada Rath**, née Dmitrasinovic 1940 in Yugoslavia, industrial chemist, now living in Germany, early retirement 1995, co-founded the German organization of (ex)-users and survivors of psychiatry in 1992, board-member of this organization from 1996 to 1998. 1997 initiator of the foundation of the Hessian regional organization of (ex)-users and survivors of psychiatry.

**Erwin Redig** (Belgium). Spent several years in psychiatry. Living as a free man now in Antwerp, Belgium, and have connections with the national and international survivor movements. The work is essentially humanistic; it is about human rights and human dignity. *Erwin Redig died on June 14, 1999.*

**Hannelore Reetz** (FRG), pseudonym, born 1943, accountant, today part-time working as a dentist assistant, married, clean since 1990.

**Roland A. Richter**, born in 1963, in FRG, worked as a social worker in state institutions until 1995, since then he is working as a case worker for people in custodial care and sheltered living, for people who are regarded to be chronic mentally ill. Since 1995, has lived in Bad Münsteriefel/Nordrhein-Westfalen, works self-employed as judicially appointed guide and advises stationary institutions as advisor for organizations in the management of quality.

**Marc Rufer** (Switzerland), Dr med, psychotherapist. After finishing studies of medicine worked as a junior doctor in a big psychiatric state hospital. From the beginning had big difficulties with the psychiatric "diagnostic" and "therapy" of psychic "disorders." The step to criticize psychiatry as a whole, was made after a time of intensive debates. With books and many articles in magazines and newspapers he tries to make critical thoughts about the psychiatric system public. Book publications: "Irrsinn Psychiatrie" (*"Insane Psychiatry,"* Berne 1988); "Wer ist irr?" (*"Who's Crazy?"*, Berne 1991); "Glücksspielen. Ecstasy, Prozac und das Comeback der Psychopharmaka" (*"Happy Pills. Ecstasy, Prozac and*

*the Comeback of Psychotropic Drugs*," Munich 1995).

**Jasna Russo**, born in Belgrade, in 1964. Member of the Berlin Association for Protection against Psychiatric Violence (running the Runaway-House Berlin). Publications in: Kerstin Kempker / Peter Lehmann (eds.): "Statt Psychiatrie" (*"Instead of Psychiatry*," Berlin 1993); Wildwasser Bielefeld e.V. (ed.): "Der aufgestörte Blick—Multiple Persönlichkeiten, Frauenbewegung und Gewalt" (*"The Disturbed Look: Multiple Personalities, Trauma and the Women's Movement*," Bielefeld 1997); Kerstin Kempker (ed.): "Flucht in die Wirklichkeit—Das Berliner Weglaufhaus" (*"Escape into Reality: the Berlin Runaway-House*," Berlin 1998); Claudia Brügge (ed.): "Frauen in ver-rückten Lebenswelten" (*"Women in Crazy Worlds*," Berne 1999); Jim Read (ed.): "Something Inside so Strong," London 2001.

**Lynne Setter**, country of origin New Zealand, born 1963, no children, divorced. Occupation—International Marketing Consultant. First suicide attempt aged 9, hospitalized a number of times from early teenage to recent years. Lived in Asia, Europe, the Middle East and the United States. After ten years abroad, now living in New Zealand.

**Martin Urban** (FRG), born 1939, psychologist and psychotherapist, worked for seven years in a psychiatric and for six years in a hospital for psychosomatic medicine, now working in his own office near Stuttgart. As a member of the association of German psychologists, he is the head of the section "Clinical psychologists in psychiatry." He edited the book "Psychotherapie der Psychosen—Konzentrische Annäherungen an den Weg

der Heilung" (*"Psychotherapy of Psychoses: Concentric Approaches to the Way of Healing*," Lengerich 2000).

**Wolfgang Voelzke** (FRG), academically qualified economist, employed since 1975 by the town administration in Bielefeld. Beginning 2000, he works as co-ordinator for psychiatry and addiction. He co-founded the national organization of (ex-)users and survivors of psychiatry in Germany and the local organization of (ex-)users and survivors of psychiatry in Bielefeld.

**David Webb** is a white, middle-class man, born in 1955, who lives in Melbourne, Australia. Studied and worked as a computer software developer and university lecturer until 1994. Surviving suicidality, heroin, Methadone, antidepressants and neuroleptics, he has returned to part-time lecturing. He is a dedicated activist against the abuses of psychiatry and has recently commenced research into suicide and spirituality.

**Gerda Wozart** (pseudonym), born in 1946, in Bavaria. Longer stays in England and France. Studied in Perpignan, married twice, loads of kids (her own others'). For some time she has been living in the Black Forest. Lecturer in an adult education center, founded her own office for writing and translation, publishes poems and short stories. Since 2001, first chairwoman of the Independent German Authors' Organization (FDA) in Baden-Württemberg.

**Josef Zehentbauer**, born in 1945, in FRG, married, four children. Doctor, psychotherapist and author. Several years' work in neurology (University of Würzburg), different psychiatric clinics and the emergency ward of a mental hospital. Worked as a doctor in Nigeria and India.

Initiated projects with Franco Basaglia and other exponents of Italian “Critical Psychiatry.” Publications including among others: “Die Auflösung der Irrenhäuser oder: Die Neue Psychiatrie in Italien” (*The Resolution of the Madhouses or: the New Psychiatry in Italy*,” 1983; Munich, 4. edition 1997); “Chemie für die Seele. Psyche, Psychopharmaka und alternative Heilmethoden” (*Chemistry for the Soul: Psyche, Psychotropic Drugs and Alternatives Methods of Cure*,” Königstein 1986; 9. edition Munich 2002); “Die Seele zerstören. Neuroleptika, der größte Arzneimittel-skandal des Jahrhunderts” (*To Destroy the Soul. Neuroleptics: the Biggest Drug Scandal of the Century*,” video documentary, Munich 1989); “Körpereigene Drogen. Die ungenutzten Fähigkeiten unseres Gehirns” (*The Body’s Own Drugs: the Unused Capabilities of Our Brain*,” Munich 1993, 11. edition 2001); “Psycho-Pillen. Wirkungen, Gefahren und Alternativen” (*Psycho-Pills: Effects, Risks and Alternatives*,” Munich, 4. edition 1998); “Abenteuer Seele. Psychische Krisen als Chance nutzen” (*Adventure Soul: to Use Psychic Crises as a Chance*,” Düsseldorf 2000); “Melancholie—Die traurige Leichtigkeit des Seins” (*Melancholy: the Sad Lightness of Being*,” Stuttgart 2000; 2. edition 2002).

**Katherine Zurcher.** Born in the USA, lives in Switzerland. She was diagnosed with fibromyalgia (*chronic illness which causes muscular pain, headache, fatigue and many other symptoms*) in 1999. She regrets having tried so hard to adapt to society. She enjoys writing and poetry, taking photographs, riding her bike, communing with nature, philosophic discussions and much more. She still searches for the person her younger self wanted to become before she got lost.