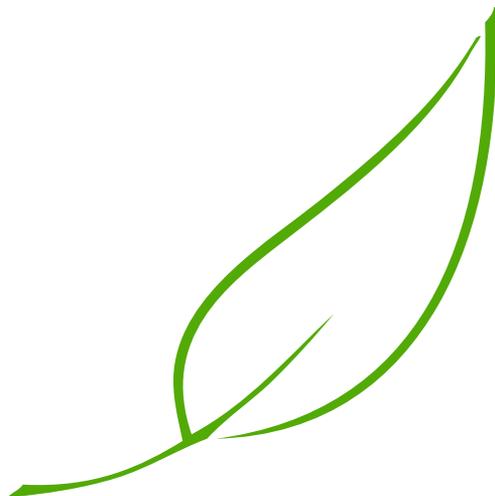


# GROUP THERAPY

by Ken Bradbury



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*Cast: Sigmund, Miss Muffet, Jack Horner, Mary, Dumpty*  
*The five sit in a semi-circle facing the audience.*

**SIGMUND:** Are we all here? *(no one responds ... not a willing group)* Very well. I guess we can begin.

**MISS MUFFET:** Is this gonna take long?

**SIGMUND:** Miss Muffet, you signed up for this session. You're free to leave at any time.

**MISS MUFFET:** Just asking. Lighten up, Doc.

**SIGMUND:** I'm glad you're all here. I've found that this sort of group therapy can work wonders. Do we all agree? *(no response from any of them)* Okay. Can we begin by introducing ourselves? *(nodding to Muffet)* Would you like to begin?

**MISS MUFFET:** My name's Muffet.

**SIGMUND:** Your first name?

**MISS MUFFET:** Muffet. Just Muffet. Miss Muffet.

**SIGMUND:** Very well ... *(nods to Jack)* And you?

**JACK HORNER:** Jack. Jack Horner. Little Jack. My dad was Big Jack.

**SIGMUND:** Because ...

**JACK HORNER:** Because he was bigger.

**SIGMUND:** Very well. *(to Mary)* And you?

**MARY:** Mary.

**SIGMUND:** That's all?

**MARY:** Last name's Littlelamb.

**SIGMUND:** And your middle name would be ...?

**MARY:** Hadda.

**SIGMUND:** Mary Hadda Littlelamb.

**MARY:** *(to Miss Muffet)* Are you laughing?

**MISS MUFFET:** No. Uh ... something in my throat.

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- SIGMUND:** *(to Dumpty)* And you?
- DUMPTY:** Dumpty. Just call me Mr. Dumpty.
- SIGMUND:** Mr. Dumpty.
- DUMPTY:** Don't say anymore or I'll cry.
- SIGMUND:** Oh. I'm sorry. Okay, now that we all know each other, my name is Dr. Sigmund and it's my job to lead you through this morning's session.
- DUMPTY:** Is it okay if I cry?
- SIGMUND:** Crying is perfectly okay. We're here to support each other.
- JACK HORNER:** Is this the only seat available? I'd rather sit in a corner.
- SIGMUND:** Uh ... we don't seem to have any corner chairs, Jack. We're in sort of a semi-circle.
- JACK HORNER:** I need my corner. Can I pretend I'm in a corner?
- SIGMUND:** Certainly.
- MISS MUFFET:** Weirdo.
- SIGMUND:** Miss Muffet! There'll be no name calling.
- MISS MUFFET:** Sorry. *(a pause, then to Jack)* You start eating Christmas pie and I'm outta here.
- DUMPTY:** She's making me cry.
- SIGMUND:** Please! Please! Can we all just calm down a moment? I want to lead you through a series of questions. They're easy. Really. Just answer with whatever comes to mind.
- MISS MUFFET:** Bored.
- SIGMUND:** Excuse me?
- MISS MUFFET:** That's what came to mind. Boredom.
- SIGMUND:** That wasn't a question, Miss Muffet.
- JACK HORNER:** I want my corner.
- DUMPTY:** I'm gonna cry.
- MARY:** Do you have coffee?
- SIGMUND:** I can get some.

- MARY:** No. I was just wondering. Look, I think I'm in the wrong place. (*rising to leave*) I have someone waiting for me.
- SIGMUND:** I didn't see anyone outside.
- MARY:** Well, they're not exactly people.
- MISS MUFFET:** Sheep. She's got sheep. They're all over the parking lot.
- MARY:** And what's wrong with that?
- SIGMUND:** Nothing! There's nothing wrong with that!
- DUMPTY:** I'm tearing up!
- SIGMUND:** No! Please don't cry. Mary, have a seat. Your sheep will be fine. They never go anywhere without you.
- MARY:** They followed me to school one day.
- SIGMUND:** I know.
- MARY:** Which was against the rules.
- SIGMUND:** That's what I heard. Now just have a seat. Okay ... first question. Is there anything that makes you anxious ... nervous ... upset?
- MISS MUFFET:** (*looking at the others*) Weirdos.
- SIGMUND:** Miss Muffet!
- MISS MUFFET:** Sorry.
- DUMPTY:** Heights. I can't stand heights. Big walls ... sitting on tall, big walls surrounded by all the King's horses and all the King's men.
- (*a long pause as the others turn to look at Dumpty*)
- DUMPTY:** And omelets.
- SIGMUND:** Omelets?
- DUMPTY:** I'm always afraid I'm eating a cousin.
- MISS MUFFET:** This is too weird.
- SIGMUND:** Miss!!!
- MISS MUFFET:** Sorry.
- SIGMUND:** Who else?
- JACK HORNER:** I was in this room once ...
- SIGMUND:** Yes?
- JACK HORNER:** It was terrifying.
- SIGMUND:** You were terrified of a room?

- JACK HORNER:** It was round. Perfectly round.
- MISS MUFFET:** No corners, right?
- JACK HORNER:** You've seen it?
- MISS MUFFET:** No. Just guessing.
- JACK HORNER:** Something would happen, someone would say something and I'd run to find a corner but ... nothing. Just circles ... just walls ... I started to get dizzy. I started to fall.
- DUMPTY:** Don't say "fall"!
- JACK HORNER:** It's like the walls were closing in on me so I stuck out my thumb.
- MARY:** You did what?
- JACK HORNER:** My thumb. That's what I do when I get nervous. I stick out my thumb.
- MISS MUFFET:** Does it help?
- JACK HORNER:** Not in a round room.
- MISS MUFFET:** What're you trying to do? Hitchhike your way out of the room?
- SIGMUND:** Please Miss Muffet, I'm asking the questions.
- MISS MUFFET:** Then ask them! This nut job needs help!
- JACK HORNER:** I am not a nut job! I'm a lost and lonely little boy and all I want is a piece of Christmas pie and a corner. Then you can just leave me alone and I'll be happy.
- SIGMUND:** How about another question?
- MARY:** What's a Christmas pie?
- SIGMUND:** I'm asking the questions! Okay ... let's just all take a deep breath, shall we? *(They do.)* Now ... is there a childhood memory that still bothers you? *(nothing)* Miss Muffet, you don't seem to have any trouble speaking. Why don't we start with you?
- MISS MUFFET:** I don't want to talk about it.
- SIGMUND:** This is the place to share our fears, Miss Muffet. Nothing leaves this room.
- JACK HORNER:** I can't leave?

- DUMPTY:** Oh no!
- SIGMUND:** I mean no information will leave this room.  
Miss Muffet?
- MISS MUFFET:** Well, there was this spider.
- SIGMUND:** Aha!
- MISS MUFFET:** Yeah. He came and sat down beside me.
- MARY:** That must have been awful!
- MISS MUFFET:** You think sheep are bad; you should try  
making conversation with a spider.
- SIGMUND:** And where were you?
- MISS MUFFET:** Sitting on my tuffet.
- SIGMUND:** Uh ... I hate to ask.
- MISS MUFFET:** Then don't.
- SIGMUND:** Okay. How about you, Jack?
- JACK HORNER:** Isn't it obvious?
- SIGMUND:** I suppose so. Dumpty?
- DUMPTY:** I remember the day I was laid in that awful  
nest.
- MARY:** Laid in a nest.
- DUMPTY:** Something wrong with that?
- MARY:** No! No! Go ahead.
- DUMPTY:** She sat on me.
- SIGMUND:** Who sat on you?
- DUMPTY:** The hen. A big fat hen. I could barely  
breathe. It was so traumatic. I think I'm  
going to cry again.
- SIGMUND:** Mary? How about you?
- MARY:** Nothing.
- SIGMUND:** Nothing?
- MARY:** Nothing.
- MISS MUFFET:** Oh sure.
- MARY:** Stay out of my business, okay?
- SIGMUND:** Easy, ladies.
- MISS MUFFET:** We sit here and spill our guts; then Miss  
Sheep Girl says she's had a perfect life.
- MARY:** I didn't say that.



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