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Making the stranger feel at home, A place to be recognized, to recognize oneself, Reflections on the 'transitional' hospital space

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Learning Goal:

We aim to understand strangeness as it shows up in the transitional space of the psychiatric hospital.

We point out the process of familiarization as an institutional process that involves much more than the sole psychiatrist and the "narrative" cure.

Abstract Text:

Neither a dwelling space nor a place for an ambulatory care, psychiatric institutions are places that must be firmly present and reliable to welcome patients in all their states. They are specific places that keep at bay men and women who are lost in the ongoing daily life. They are spaces that bring back at least some of the hospitality that is no longer available for people who don't feel at home anymore.

Therefore the psychiatric institution seems to be the one of the last places left where a process of re-familiarization can take place. It is a kind of in-between space where we can dwell on the world but where we should however not settle down, a place where we are often forced to go, with the paradoxical objective of leaving it. It is where madness and the city come together in a way that there is enough time and space to put it together, at least for a while.

We want to address some of the issues regarding this transitional space. What can of space should it be? How can it remain a helpful place while hospitality is increasingly meant to be efficient and productive? How can psychiatry still welcome strangeness and initiate a re-familiarization process while it is asked to assess behaviour and set targets and goals? What kind of re-familiarization are we seeking for? In the end, what do we mean when we want our strangers to feel at home in the world?

**ON THE HEALING POWER
OF HUMAN RECONNECTION**