

Psychosynthesis Research Foundation

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March 1, 1967

Dear Colleague:

The seventh meeting of the 1966/67 series of Psychosynthesis Seminars (held on the third Friday of each month) will take place on Friday, March 17th at 7:30 P.M.

The January meeting on the "Who am I?" technique led to a lively discussion of "the self and the Self", and it was clear that more time should be given to this theme. Our next meeting will deal with a development of the "Who am I?" involving visualization, the aim of which is to bring about a direct experience of the inner self.

The meeting will start promptly at 7:30 P.M. and will be held in the "Directors Room" on the mezzanine floor, Park Sheraton Hotel, 7th Avenue and 55th Street, New York City. There is a public car park across the street from the hotel.

We trust it will be possible for you to be present.

Cordially,

JACK COOPER, M.D.
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Phone: 914-725-4541

Date & Time of Meeting: Friday, March 17, 1967 - 7:30 P.M. prompt
Place: "Directors Room", mezzanine floor, Park Sheraton Hotel, 7th Ave & 55th Street, New York City
Speaker: Martha Crampton-Lazure, M.A., Montreal
Subject: A method for direct experience of the inner self.

PSYCHOSYNTHESIS SEMINARS

1966/7 SERIES

Seventh Meeting: March 17, 1967

Subject: An Approach to Experience of the Inner Self:
A Development of the "Who am I?" Method using
Symbolic Visualization.

Speaker: Mrs. Martha Crampton, M.A.

Participants:

Marilyn B. Rosannes Berrett, Ph.D.	Mrs. Martha Crampton(Lazure) M.A.
Jack Cooper, M.D.	Graham C. Taylor, M.D.
Miss Nancy Crampton	Mrs. Shirley Winston, M.A.
Jack Feder, Ph.D.	P.S. Kraus, M.D.
Frank Haronian, Ph.D.	Mrs. P.S. Kraus
Frank Hilton	
Mrs. Hilda Hilton	

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Mrs. Martha Crampton:

My presentation tonight will be in three parts: the first part dealing with the theory and a general description of the method; the second part being a demonstration with a volunteer from the group; and the third part being some examples of the use of this method from my own practice. I have chosen to present the case material last in order to avoid possible effects of suggestion on the demonstration.

Most of you here tonight heard or have read the transcript of the paper presented at our January seminar by Dr. Graham Taylor on the verbal "Who-Am-I?" technique as used by Bugental, Rouke and others. Partly stimulated by the discussion at that meeting, I have developed a variation of the W-A-I method employing symbolic visualization.

The theory underlying this method is based partly on the late Dr. Fabian Rouke's concept of the personality as being structured in concentric circles - the onion-skin model - with a central positive core which could be reached after peeling off the outer layers. The theoretical basis of the method to be presented tonight is also dealt with in a previous paper which I presented to our Psychosynthesis seminar in December 1965 on the subject of "Answers from the Unconscious."

The use of this method presupposes training of the subject in symbolic visualization and in obtaining answers from the unconscious. The subject is told that the personality may be conceptualized as a series of concentric circles and that by making a journey inward in imagination through the various layers, he can contact the inner self or synthesizing center which is so important in psychosynthesis. He is invited to commence this process, starting with the outermost layer of his personality and continuing toward the center in a step-by-step process until he feels he has reached the end of the path and can go no further. (It should be noted that a subject frequently feels prematurely that he has reached the end of the path and in this case the therapist must help him continue on.) The subject is told that the exact number of steps in this journey differs from one individual to the next, and that he must rest assured that the journey is not endless, that it has a definite goal and will be completed in a limited number of steps.

The subject is instructed to start by looking for a visual representation of the outermost layer of his personality, putting aside his rational faculties for the time being and allowing the answer to emerge spontaneously in the form of an image (which, as Dr. Assagioli says, is the natural language of the unconscious). He is told to report any image he sees, whether or not it seems relevant or seems to have anything to do with the way he consciously perceives himself.

As the subject reports an image, the therapist writes down what he has said and pursues the inquiry in order to determine how the subject feels about the visualization (if this is not mentioned spontaneously) and how the subject would interpret the visualization, if he is able to do so. The time spent on the inquiry phase will vary with the immediate goals of the therapist - i.e. whether it is deemed best to proceed directly to the inner core with a minimum of delay or whether it is desired to concentrate on the conflicts and defenses on the personality level during the session in question.

When the subject has reported an image and the inquiry has been completed, the therapist may praise him for his successful completion of a given step and invite him to take the next step on his journey inward. This encouragement is important as many subjects are unable to detect any "progress" inward and may question whether they are going in the right direction or whether there is any end to this process of peeling off layers. This is especially true of the outer layers where the subject may encounter deeply disturbing aspects of his personality; on the final lap of the trip, when the images of the supraconscious begin to emerge, the subject is generally impelled forward, as though by the attraction of the goal - the experience of the Self. The progress frequently appears to go in a zig-zag form as one goes through the various layers of conflict with the corresponding defenses, but in reality the path continues inward.

It should be noted that in some cases - particularly with subjects who are not of the visual type - that the answer does not always come in the form of an image. A subject may instead see or hear a particular word or phrase or report a thought or feeling. This can probably be considered the equivalent of a visual image for practical purposes, and one may proceed with the next step inward.

One sometimes encounters blockage and resistance in the use of this method, as with any method. Various devices have been found helpful in overcoming this. Often if the subject is unable to get an answer at a given level, it is useful to have him free-associate. This usually reveals the repressed material responsible for the blockage. Another possibility is to ask the subject to visualize on the question "What is blocking you?" and help him overcome the blockage in a process of symbolic working-through. One may also suggest to the subject that he visualize a door and imagine himself walking through the door, reporting what he sees on the other side, as in the technique described by Robert Gerard in Psychosynthesis: A Psychotherapy for the Whole Man (P.R.F. Issue #14). Other methods of value in overcoming resistance are: spontaneous drawing or other free expression such as body movement; the "here-and-now" body awareness type of work which is done in Gestalt therapy and which Marilyn Rosannes Berrett demonstrated for us last month; or, simply asking the subject what is the least likely thing that he might see, may produce results. So, with a little patience and ingenuity, it is possible to overcome resistance and guide the subject safely over the ups and downs in this exploration of inner space.

It should be borne in mind, however, that if a subject is unduly disturbed by the material produced in a given session, it may be necessary to devote some time to working through the problems in this area before continuing "inward." This method generally activates repressed and painful material very rapidly, and one must be careful - particularly with severely disturbed patients - not to go so fast that they are left with more than they can handle between sessions.

A question which one might well ask is whether a subject can or should undertake such an experience alone - that is to say, when not in the presence of the therapist. With the verbal version of the W-A-I it is common practice to ask the subject to write his answers to the W-A-I question alone at home. Greater caution, however, should be observed in the use of a method involving visualization, as the realizations tend to be more profound and disturbing. This is because they issue from the unconscious primarily, as opposed to the more conscious and rationally-determined answers elicited by the standard method, and because the experience of visualization may often be very intense and almost more real than life, as in a dream.

I once heard Dr. Deiter Baumann, Jung's grandson, a prominent Jungian analyst in his own right, say that anyone who experiments with active imagination alone does so at his own risk.

I have used this method in a self-realization course I teach at the Y.M.C.A. in Montreal, suggesting (after demonstrating the method with one group member) that those who wished to try it at home could do so, stopping if they found they were becoming unduly upset by it. One member of the group did succeed in completing the experience by herself, with a very positive result, and others tried but were unable to go the whole way. So it would seem that even with "normal" individuals, it usually takes some guidance on the part of the therapist to be able to overcome the various obstacles encountered along the path.

A few words should be said about the purpose and general value of this method. Why should a therapist be bothered to add such a method to his repertory of skills? First of all, it would seem that the method would be of special interest to therapists working in the overall theoretical framework of psychosynthesis, as it is a means of bringing about an experience of the inner self - at least on some level. This inner self is really the keystone on which the psychosynthetic approach is built, and I am very pleased to see that we have started to explore this important topic in our seminars here.

I am sure that most of you who are working with the concept of the self in therapy have had repeatedly the experience of a patient who simply cannot grasp the idea of an inner self - who looks upon it as a logical construct or an abstraction, something unrelated to experience or reality. Although the awareness of the self seems so self-evident to one who has analyzed his consciousness or had a spontaneous experience of this kind, most persons, as Assagioli says - including highly intelligent and sophisticated people - have no spontaneous awareness of the self. Therefore, any method which can bring about even a glimpse of this inner self as a living reality rather than a vague abstraction would seem to be of paramount value in psychosynthesis. The verbal version of the W-A-I method can sometimes lead to such a realization, but as Dr. Mickans suggested at our January meeting, a verbal method would not seem to be the most powerful means for eliciting deep experience.

Once a subject is able to grasp this central concept or awareness of the self, it becomes so much easier to work with the other methods of psychosynthesis: the exercise in dis-identification; the methods for developing the will; and the various other active techniques. If there is anything that can be said to differentiate psychosynthesis from other similar approaches, it is probably the central role of this inner self as a living reality to be experienced directly and worked with actively. The presentation of Gestalt Therapy we heard last month utilized the concept of various layers of the personality, but it was pointed out that the concept of the self was not worked with directly and in fact was considered detrimental to therapy. The Jungians speak of the Self, but merely as a psychological process and not as a reality or entity in itself. So it is important that we seek to develop in psychosynthesis what Assagioli speaks of as a "science of the Self, of its energies and manifestations, of how these energies can be released, how they can be contacted, how they can be utilized for constructive and therapeutic work." (Psychosynthesis: A Manual of Principles and Techniques, p. 194)

I hope very much that in the discussion period we will be able to take up the topic of the nomenclature of the self which - as presently used in psychosynthesis - tends to be somewhat confusing. Assagioli has proposed the terms

"Higher Self", or Self with a capital S, or spiritual Self, for the real ground of our being and has used terms such as self with a small s, little self, conscious self, the "I", the point of pure self-awareness, and so on, for that which is the projection of the Higher Self in the field of the personality. These terms tend to be misleading as the use of the term "Higher Self" suggests that the "little self" is lower and hence something bad; in reality, however, the "little self" or point of pure self-awareness is also a unifying center - at least on the personal level - and it is usually necessary to achieve at least a fair degree of integration on this level before proceeding very far with a spiritual psychosynthesis. There is also some difficulty in using words such as "spiritual" or words starting with capital letters as many people today find such usage distasteful and indicative of a "cultish" approach. It is therefore proposed to use the term "personal self" for what Assagioli refers to as the self with a small s and the term "transpersonal self" for what he designates as the "Higher Self" or Self with a capital S. These terms seem both accurate and unobjectionable, as far as I can see, though I would welcome some discussion on this subject later.

To return to our method, it can be seen, then, that it may be of potential use - not only therapeutically, but theoretically in the development of our understanding of human nature. It can help us to test various models of the personality, such as Dr. Rouke's "onion-skin" model comprising a false positive outer layer, a false negative layer inside this, and a true positive inner core - a model which, incidentally, seems over-simplified and erroneous in many cases studied by the "visual W-A-I" (which is what I'll call this method in shorthand terms to distinguish it from the "verbal W-A-I").

We can also explore in this manner the nature of the inner self and begin to answer such questions as the difference between the supraconscious and the self; whether all persons are capable of contacting the transpersonal self, and so on. We can study the various symbolic manifestations of the self and how these symbols can be used to further growth. Although the experience of the self gained through this method usually remains indirect to the extent that it is mediated by symbols, it may lead into a more direct experience which can no longer be expressed in words and images. In any case, the symbols of the self can definitely have a transforming and integrating value, as was noted by Jung, who went so far as to state in Contributions to Analytical Psychology that "the psychological machinery which transmutes energy is the symbol." Assagioli speaks of symbols as "accumulators, transformers, and conductors of psychological energies," (Psychosynthesis, p. 178) and the value of symbols in therapy and self-realization can be greatly enhanced and amplified by the active methods of psychosynthesis. The symbols of the self can have an "opening-up" effect and, as Assagioli points out, may serve as a bridge between the personal and the spiritual psychosynthesis.

Though I do not as yet have sufficient experience with this method to judge whether all subjects can obtain through its practice a glimpse of the transpersonal self, it does seem that many subjects can gain thereby an opening of spiritual awareness which can accelerate the psychosynthesis and be most helpful in the resolution of conflicts on the personality level. The Biblical story of the devils which were exorcised only to be replaced by other devils as soon as there was an empty space, is a useful parable for psychotherapists to keep in mind; for if we take away something from a patient, weakening his defenses, without giving him something to replace them, we may be making room for another devil to enter. But a glimpse of the inner self can often give a patient the courage and strength to face his fears and conflicts. And, just as a small seed can grow and split a

a mighty rock, so can the spirit of life within, when awakened, succeed in piercing what Reich has called the "armour plating" of the character defenses.

One advantage of a method such as this - based on movement "inward," as opposed to a method such as Desoille's guided waking dream which employs movement "upward" or "downward" in imaginary space - is that it seems to make it easier for the subject to experience the "inner light" as something within himself rather than something up in the sky which is difficult to translate into daily life. The task of "stepping-down" or transforming these higher energies into a form in which they can be utilized and integrated in one's life is a key problem in psychosynthesis. And a method which can bring an awareness of the self within surrounded by various layers of supraconscious contents on the inside and various layers of lower unconscious conflict and defense on the outside, seems very fruitful in this respect. But I'll save a more detailed discussion of this matter until the case material is presented.

A final point which should be mentioned here is that the interest of this method is not limited to those therapists practising within the theoretical framework of psychosynthesis. It is a valuable tool for the study of the personality conflicts and defenses with which any therapist is concerned. It can be a useful means for therapist and patient to outline in advance the general ground to be covered in the course of therapy, i.e., it serves a diagnostic as well as therapeutic purpose. It can often help the patient to see in a remarkably vivid manner his various self-images and the complex nature of his own defense structure. It also serves a useful role in producing a catharsis of guilt and repressed material in the early stages of therapy. Thus, even if a therapist were not interested in the theory of the self, he might find much of value in this method.

At this stage I will not give any case material in case it should color the actual demonstration. We can go into that later this evening.

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DEMONSTRATION

(The volunteer, given the pseudonym "Betty", had joined the seminar just as Mrs. Crampton completed her presentation and so had no knowledge of the method or the underlying theory. The whole demonstration took 30 minutes, for often there were long silences before Betty responded to Mrs. Crampton's questions or promptings. Questions or suggestions etc. put by Mrs. Crampton are in parentheses in the following transcript. Ed.)

Crampton: We are going to take a journey inward in imagination, the goal of which is to contact the inner self; and what I am going to ask you to do is to visualize the various layers of your personality, starting with the outermost layer and then go inward, just one step at a time. So will you close your eyes and get comfortable.

Now, Betty, visualize the most outermost layer of your personality - don't reason about this but just look for a picture, and report to me whatever comes to your mind.

Betty: First I see the grin. (C: What kind of a grin is this?) It's got teeth in it - the association of course, is with the Cheshire Cat. (C: How do you feel about this grin?) It has two faces: it can be a very nice warm thing or it can be kind of hostile and smug.

Crampton: At this point I would just like to mention to the group that sometimes when this method is done in a group the other members find it helpful to try to visualize along with the subject. You are free to do this or not, but it may help you to enter into Betty's experience more deeply - to try to visualize along with her.

All right, very good Betty; now take the next step inward.

Betty: Now I am on the inside of my mouth - I see we are going to take the oral pathway! I can't help wisecracking. (C: What do you feel on the inside of your mouth?) My tongue is very busy. (C: What is it doing?) It is feeling along the surfaces of my teeth. (C: And how do you feel about this layer of yourself?)

Betty: Now I think of a snake poking its head around. It is as if my whole tongue was a snake - and it has a forked tongue of its own. (C: Okay, very good; now take the next step inward.)

Betty: I am in my nose now; that surprised me, I didn't think that we were going there next! (C: What is in there?) (a sigh followed by a chuckle. Ed.) I am afraid that the only thing I can say is "snot" - very snotty in there. (C: How do you feel about this layer?) Oddly enough, I am strangely pleased; I enjoy the idea of being snotty, and I feel a kind of malicious grin that goes with snottiness. (C: Let's take the next step inward, the next layer.)

Betty: By the way, all this is a complete surprise to me; I never thought of myself as being all these nasty things before. I always thought I was such a nice lady (said laughingly. Ed.). (C: You are doing very well because you are not supposed to reason about this.) Okay, the next step in from the nose - after a silence. Ed -

I am in the eye sockets, and this is different, this isn't grinning or snotty - it is full of tears. (C: What do you feel on this layer?)

Betty: I feel that I could very easily cry right now. (C: Do you want to?) There doesn't seem to be sufficient to set it off. (C: What would you cry about?) (long silence. Ed.) About something very lovely, warm and beautiful that happened today. (C: Can you tell us about this?) I am sorry, it is not the kind of thing I can share. (C: Then take the next step inward, Betty.)

Betty: I am in the middle of my head. (C: And what is there?) Oh dear! I am so full of these corny, literary allusions. My first association was Descartes' "little man" on top of the pineal gland. (C: Do you see him?) Yes, I kind of see him. (C: What does he look like - a leprechaun - it's St. Patrick's Day?) Yes, something like that; he's got a pointed head and for some reason he is in black - it is not that he is wearing black and white, he is drawn in black and white; he is not in color. He is like a cartoon. I don't take him very seriously. (C: What is he doing there?) He just seems to be running around. (C: All right, take another step inward.)

Betty: This little man gets in the way; I think that is his function - keeping me from getting further in but I think I can dodge him. There is a place more towards the top of the head, just above the little man, which is closer but at the same time I feel it at the pit of my stomach also - these two places are linked. (C: How are they linked?) (Long silence and a sigh, Ed.) When I really get into my brain, dodging the little man, it's sort of, I guess it's the solar plexus or something that it ties up to. (C: What do you see or feel?) At first I had a feeling of dark and warm, full, like a summer night up in the top of my brain, and in the stomach - or whatever it is in there - a sort of pressure, a heaviness; and now it is becoming more a feeling of excitement and anticipation; as if something is going to happen. (C: umm, umm; take the next step then.)

Betty: Now we are up in the area around the heart; there is some pressure there; as if the heart is pressing out on the front of the chest rather than the other way around - like as if the heart is bigger than it was. (C: What does this mean to you?) My heart is very full. (Silence. Ed.) (C: Let us take the next step inward now.)

Betty: The next step I think might be the center because it does not seem to have any divisions or any location; and it is very quiet, and it is rich; it has a quality but this seems to be where I come to rest. (C: Do you experience this visually in any way?) Visually it is dark and amorphous but associated with this is the scent of flowers which just opened on my gardenia. I have been much involved with this gardenia plant; I have been joking about it being my baby and fussing about it like as if it was a new puppy. And the flowers - have you ever seen a gardenia opening on the branch? The petals are all intertwined on each other and then they open out like a rose but they make a kind of spiral pinwheel as they gradually open up. And the scent and the whiteness and the unfolding - it is as if you have something to do with this inside. (C: Let us just try another step now. We may feel we are at the end but it may be possible to go another step further.)

Betty: I can get in further and further; it becomes much more amorphous; not conceptual at all; it is not even located in my body. I see a cavern, but the top of it is carved like a medieval drawing, ceiling; and there is some light at the top of it.

It is really a cavern in actual rock; some association with the inside of the mountain from the Hobbit cycle but it is not Hobbit's cavern. (C: Umm, umm; take the next step inward now.)

Betty: It is pure black; I am going further into the cavern - I am annoyed at these damned associations. It is like they spoil the purity of the experience, but maybe it is easier to communicate through them. It is as if I was going into the dark cave where Golom was hiding, into Golom's cave. (C: How do you feel in there?) The ring is there. Of course! That is what I went in there for! (C: Let us take the next step inward now.)

Betty: I am in the ring. (C: What can you tell us about this?) I am just sitting there, with the ring all around me. (C: How do you feel?) I don't know; I think it is a wedding ring. Yes. Sitting in this wedding ring I feel very, "distracted" I guess is the word. (C: Why?) I don't know why. I keep turning from side to side, looking. (C: What are you looking for?) I don't know. I don't know whether I am looking for something or looking away. It is more like as if there is something in front of me that I am looking away from. (C: Umm, umm.) A very bright light - very bright, very bright. It is in front of me. It is very big, like the sun - although it is not really as big as the sun. (C: Now, let us take the next step inwards.) (Long silence. Ed.)

Betty: I have to go into the sun. And when I do I become the sun. I am, light! (After a long silence. Ed.) I am sitting in this kind of Buddha type of position. (C: Can you tell us anything else about this type of experience?) I feel very tall, I think that this is really - oh no, I was going to say that this is the end but it really isn't. (C: What is next?) I mean this is the end of going inside, but then I have to go out again. I cannot stay here. (C: Now let us take this light, Betty, and let it guide you, let it radiate in your own life.)

Betty: In my own life? (C: Umm, umm.) I thought first of going somewhere into the past but of course it has to take me into the future. (Long silence. Ed.) (C: Where did you see the light taking you into the past?) Nowhere really - just some very confused images of my past, and I know that isn't it at all; it has got to be in the future. (Very long silence, and then a chuckle. Ed.) This typifies very well the whole sequence, kind of summarizes; I feel something like a radiant Bodhisattva sending out beams of light to humanity - while my nose is running! (C: Any other image?) A very strong sensation through here (The heart. Ed.) I can actually feel light streaming out. (C: What happened to your nose?) I wish I had a tissue - my nose is running. I guess if I ever become a Bodhisattva it would be a snotty one! (Said with a chuckle. Ed.) I have trouble maintaining the image. (C: Now about the light, how can it get rid of this snottiness?) It says not to get rid of it. (C: What else does it say?) (Long silence and then a chuckle. Ed.) That was really a very funny thing. There is more of this impishness; comparing the tip of my nose to Rudolf the Rednose Reindeer, guiding the team through the dark. (C: Try to imagine this light guiding you somewhere, to an experience to get rid of this snottiness.)

Betty: I can see it taking me through snow - a snowy night, a street in Williamsburg in Brooklyn. I used to walk at night; there was a church there that was very lovely. I remember walking there on a snowy night and the lights from the street lamps, the snow; it was very beautiful. And there used to be a fountain there; it is a very lovely spot - I think there is a housing project there now. (C: Do you see yourself there now?) I am 14 years old and the year I believe was 1932 or

3; I don't have a coat and I am walking in the snow in an imitation leather jacket. (C: What is happening?) There is a feeling of great anticipation; something wonderful, something very beautiful is going to happen. (C: Let the light continue leading you in this experience.) It takes me back to what happened today, and it made me want to cry. But this isn't the end either because something further will come of that. Why, of course, Martha; it is the man you saw me with in Central Park. (Long silence. Ed.) (C: We had better stop here. Thank you very much, Betty.)

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DISCUSSION

Crampton: Betty, do you want to say anything about this experience?

Betty: It is kind of hard to come down to earth, I am only partly here; this room is much less real to me than the light and all the other things I experienced.

Crampton: This is one of the problems of this method - this re-entry question.

Betty: The thing is that this reality is so much less than the other reality. My first thought was that it must be like this to be schizophrenic; but I don't think so, this is what it is like to be sane - it is as though I have been schizophrenic all my life.

Crampton: Have you had similar experiences before?

Betty: Not quite like this. I have done some visualization, "Guided Daydreams", etc. but nothing quite like this! (Crampton: Have you had the experience before of the inner light, in the guided daydreams?) No. That in the light was really something brand new. It was strange.

Crampton: This is a typical image on which subjects seem to finish. Sometimes they go beyond the light - almost beyond the image, a kind of pearly light beyond the sun image. You seemed to want to spontaneously come out of it. Often I stop with the sun, although the inner image is not identical with each person.

Betty: The feeling was that it was not my job to go further and become a pearly cloud; it was my job to stay in touch with people and I spoke about the feeling - I felt it particularly in the breasts - as if it had come out through the nipples; that was at the time when I was spreading light all around. And then of course it came out. The last thing was the leprechaun - to keep the experience from becoming utterly grandiose; you see that is the reason that I cannot get rid of this snotty nose because otherwise it would be utterly - you see, I must keep that humor to some extent as a check, I hope! (Cooper: The ludic phenomena.)

Crampton: What is the feeling - if you don't keep it in check? What would happen?

Betty: For one thing I could become quite paranoid, which would not be so nice. I could become a manic, which isn't nice either although it's fun when you are getting there; but really it isn't fun. The feeling that "that way lies madness." (Haronian: And the leprechaun is there to stop it.) Yes; the leprechaun and the snotty nose are all part of keeping me from getting too far in the grandiose image.

Crampton: Yes, when you were surrounded by the ring and didn't want to look at the light, some fear was reflected.

Harnian: You are saying, Betty, that there has to be a saving flaw that keeps you from going off into madness or grandiosity.

Betty: Or a sense of humor, a sense of one's own ridiculousness, of one's own absurdities - like with the image where I became something like Rudolf the Red-nosed Reindeer with the light coming out of the nose!

Cooper: Martha, is this method of entry rather typical - through the mouth, and the pineal, etc.?

Crampton: No, it is atypical as far as I am concerned. Most subjects have images which have nothing to do with the body. I recently had someone who opened up his guts, but usually most of the images - I'll read you some typical ones later....

Berrett: I followed this on my own and my experience was very definite; and I was staying with Betty too, going back and forth, and I wondered "What am I?" I liked the experiment very much. (Cooper: Did you find that inner light?) Mine was different; mine was not a light; I experienced almost a oneness. It was a very wonderful feeling - seeing and perceiving in a very new way. (Cooper: What about emotional feelings; what did you have?) No feelings; I stopped myself and came back. (Cooper: Was it ecstasy, or tears?) No; I was very much here on earth but the earth looked quite different. I and the environment were merging. I sensed a fulfillment, I think; not joy or happiness, nothing manic but a sense of "being", of "here I am." (Haronian: Does the word rapture fit?) No. (Hilton: It is a sense of being in the world, a greater sense of livingness.) Yes.

Cooper: Betty, why did you check your tears?

Betty: I think I didn't want to get into just getting emotional about this thing. It is a hang up with a gentleman involved in what went on today; in what he said and what I said; what he did and what I did. You could go on with that and miss everything else. (Cooper: You felt that you could bypass it?) Not bypass it, but go through it and beyond, rather than getting hung up right there. (Cooper: I ask because some people in this experience will hang on to the fear or some emotion and they will play with this for hours on end.) I get so annoyed with my patients who get hung up on an incident or a conflict with a specific person - tearing someone to tatters and maybe this one is right and this one is wrong and it is all so really irrelevant. (Cooper: Did you feel that you were being led through this irrelevancy in a relevant way? Because it would have been nice to have given in to those tears.) No, it is very easy for me to cry. (Hilton: That was just one of the layers.) Yes.

Crampton: I think maybe you feared that the tears belonged to the central part of yourself, whereas the tears are one of the outermost layers. That came at layer No. 4. There were twelve layers, so the tears are really very much on the outside. This is one of the advantages of this method, I think. It can illustrate that the frightening aspects of our self are really very superficial. Depth analysis does not usually go deep enough to go through this layer to contact the inner center, which is always positive and radiating.

Taylor: To make just one observation: I wonder if our knowledge of this method

today is such as to justify labeling a case as "typical" or as "atypical". I should be inclined to say "no", that it is premature generalization in my opinion.

Cooper: My next question to "Betty" would be: "Have you had any training in meditation or in any type of inward searching such as this in your lifetime?" You spoke of Buddha, and you got into a very erect position with your hand palms upward.

Betty: I haven't had real training in meditation or Zen - apart from a little when I was a trainee, but I am very much aware that there is a connection.

Cooper: The pineal has always been considered to be "the seat of the soul". When you actually look into the brain, open it up and look down at the pineal, it looks like a miniature penis and testicles; it is a most interesting little gland. In some schools of meditation the pituitary and pineal are used as centers of concentration or contemplation.

Betty: That is very interesting, I did not know that. Of course, I am familiar with the Cartesian theory of the pineal being the seat of the soul, and so I saw a little man sitting on the pineal.

Hilton: In some of the Eastern religious teachings they speak of "the cave of the heart"; have you heard of that? (Betty: No, I haven't.) The reason I asked was because of you describing the cave in your heart in your experience.

Cooper: It is fascinating - these correlations of Eastern schools of thought; and even this gardenia that came out in Betty's experience. I remember my patient "Mel" when the rose he visualized developed a thousand petals. (Crampton: And the spiral symbol in the gardenia!)

Betty: I know of course of the mandala symbol but I was not thinking of that; it was just that for the past week or so I have been fussing with this gardenia plant, watering it, mothering it.

Hilton: Martha, what was your reaction to Betty's sense of danger in the grandiose.

Crampton: This is very, very frequent....(Betty: I have been accused of being grandiose many, many times, so I am well aware of this as a possibility.) One patient experienced this as being on the edge of a vortex or whirlpool in a tiny boat and he was terrified of being sucked in. I think it is partly the fear of loss of identity in this mystical type of experience of merging.

Betty: I went through that in the sun, I became identified with the sun, but then I felt I had to separate myself because that was my role, because that was what I had to do and that was what I was there for.

Berrett: But if you didn't separate yourself from the sun and had stayed with that further? I am curious? Here I think of it as being as if rationality had stepped in and spoiled something.

Betty: No, I don't think that; it wasn't rationality exactly, it is really something about myself that somebody told me recently - that I was bodhisattva-like because I was able to "turn on" a lot of other people - with this particular individual to the point where he felt it was nirvana - without being able to get there myself. May be I am not supposed to be there, but to help other people get it.

Berrett: That is what I mean, that you restrict yourself that way.

Cooper: It is nice to know that we can control it. (Berrett: And stop?) Yes. It isn't just theory that you can burn yourself up in this.

Betty: No, I really had the feeling that it isn't just being rational.

Berrett: No, I didn't mean rational in the sense of you saying "no", but something within yourself that says: "Ah, ah! don't go in there."

Betty: It was not a sense of danger; it was almost a sense of destiny, like "This is where I have to go, this is what I have to do." Just as when I got into the cave I had to find the ring. By the way, the symbolism came from various literary allusions. Tolkien (the author of the Ring books. Ed.) disclaims any symbolism at all in his books, it is surprising how well the images fitted in the Tolkien stories - the Golom, the cave, the ring; and then having to go into the fire which is where a Golom had to go. In the book it was Golom who was annihilated in the fire, so may be you are right there.

Cooper: In working with carbon dioxide therapy the patients will have this type of reaction but when I ask them "Why did you not stay in this reaction?" they will say consistently "Because I have something to do." They have a feeling, there is something there that pulls them back; there is a destiny, just as Betty said. They would prefer to go on to these greater glories or feelings, but they have the feeling that they have something to do, which they must complete. Then when they come back they say "Now I understand it, this universal consciousness; now I understand why I am here and it doesn't worry me quite as much." And you will have people with all kinds of psychopathological problems; yet after this, although they still have the problems they are not as concerned. Apparently they experience an answer to them; and the answer is not something that is definitive, something that you can put into words, but they sense it and from therein out they usually say something like "I no longer feel, I know."

One further point: it is important that the therapist have some personal experience of the inner self in order to be able to guide the patient to this experience.

Crampton: Yes, the therapist should know the path himself in order to lead another. Also, it seems to me that the patient could absorb something indirectly - as though by osmosis - from the therapist who has had the experience.

Haronian: Well, Jack, you talk of using this with people with intense psychopathological problems. Would you use it from the beginning of treatment? Or is it something that you will bring in later after exploring the problems themselves?

Crampton: Often with deeply disturbed subjects you get hung up on the outer layers and you have to work through that a little bit before you can get in. But I find it helpful to get in as soon as possible. (Haronian: You would start with the technique early in treatment?) Oh yes. (Cooper: As soon as you possibly can.) As I said, it is very helpful in outlining the work to be done in therapy, you can really see the various conflicts and defenses clearly delineated.

Betty: This has done it for me....(Next two minutes of discussion not decipherable on tape. Ed.)

Haronian: ...where supposedly a person's mission is completed, he gives up perhaps "the running nose," the thorn in the flesh; he has no purpose in life any more and he may be in the best of health but he goes into samadhi and he dies.

Berrett: How about another concept on that: that that is the life itself, and you go on from there. The mission is over, you have accomplished your goal; then there is another stage.

Cooper: I think I have seen situations like that too; they have been most surprising. I have seen people in what I would call "a resting stage."

Berrett: Yes, and it is marvelous; and I was thinking that if you gave that up you may go to another stage. I think that so many people are afraid. To put it another way: you remain "insane" in order to remain sane.

Cooper: And these people who are apparently "resting"; they have done their job and now they are resting, and yet in the "resting" they accomplish a tremendous amount.

Berrett: Actually, from the few that I have met who have gotten this, I have learned a lot. Fritz Perls is one person who goes into it occasionally, and then his cruelty or something comes up and he doesn't stay in it enough, unfortunately.

Hilton: The "resting" is a plateau before the next ascent. (Cooper: Yes.)

Berrett: And I think this is where Fritz is going to kill himself one of these days. And when he is in that you see a different person - which permeates everyone around him.

Haronian: But didn't you say, Betty, if I understood you, that you went past the leprechaun at that particular point that led the way to madness.

Berrett: But if you let yourself go through that madness - this is where we put the brakes on.

Cooper: The interesting thing was that at one stage you (Betty) sat up very straight and this was not Betty. All of a sudden your hands were palms upward and if we could have measured your spine at that time it would have been as straight up and down as it possibly could be. (Berrett: But that is also Betty!) You were radiant, transfigured.

Betty: I don't know what you people were seeing but I was quite confident that I was beautiful at that point; I know! Not conventionally pretty, may be, but whatever it was I was beautiful.

Crampton: It might be helpful to meditate on this image of yourself as the sun when you are at home, to experience this as your true self, and I think you'll find you don't really need the runny nose.

Cooper: This is like some of the exercises we did with Assagioli. We would take the sun and then by assumption walk right into it. It is interesting that it came out of you, Betty, spontaneously.

Crampton: With completely naive subjects who have never heard a word about symbolism

or philosophy they come up with all these classical symbols. It is like a textbook. This is part of the superconscious.

Haronian: Would you use this with psychotics? Berrett: Or with children?

Crampton: Children get to it very rapidly.

Berrett: I am going to try this with a child - a welfare case. The Rorschach test showed him schizophrenic and no institution wants him but he was assigned to me for therapy, so what does one do? I am seeing this child on a once a week basis and I am going to try this.

Cooper: I had one schizophrenic, a 30 year old man who had never worked, and we managed to get this kind of an experience through the "dialogue with the wise old man" (in the I.S.P. method). He built up confidence with the "wise old man" in the dialogue and as a result of that he finally got a job, working down on the New Jersey waterfront. He has managed to hold the job now for some five years; and now every time he gets into any sort of trouble he carries on a dialogue with this wise old man. He has a new identity. So it can be used with schizophrenics. And there was the case of Mel which I presented, who was at the bottom of Bloomingdale with hundreds of electro-shock treatments; he was violent and tore up the place; he could not even take his dirty laundry down to the store to have it cleaned; yet now he is competent and moving at a level which seemed virtually impossible. Now he is in Italy and visiting Assagioli and is loving life.

Crampton: I know that we do not have time to go through very many other case histories but I can read you a few typical ones from my own practice. And then we can discuss certain practical issues in the use of this method.

I will start with the case of a man aged 38, an engineer, in conjoint therapy with his wife. Actually it was his wife who came in to therapy because of her anxiety symptoms, and there were some marital difficulties so that he came in to therapy too, and soon discovered that he had problems himself.

His first layer - at first he could not get a picture at all; he found it quite difficult to visualize. He got a feeling and said "There is a picture behind there somewhere", and got an impression that there were very powerful regulators in the way, acting as a block or control. And finally this developed into an image and he saw a whole floor of machinery there. This is very common as an outer layer; I demonstrated this method for the "Center for the Exploration of Human Potential" today, and one of the men there had a machine as an outer layer.

My patient had as the second layer, underneath the floor of machinery, a hazy picture of a man. He was naked, and jailed by the layer of machinery. Then he came to a block for quite a while and came out of it and opened his eyes. After he opened his eyes he got the feeling that there was a door there that he could not open. So I asked him to close his eyes again and to open the door. He did this and came across a room with books in it, with bookshelves all around and a feeling of quietness and warmth.

The fourth layer: There are hills and mountains in the distance, a clear sky. Cows are grazing in the fields. It is the outdoors.

Fifth layer: A summer cottage on the ocean when I was a boy. I can

remember some of the happiest times of my life there. It was a place where we felt very free - a place where you could express yourself.

Sixth layer: Myself as a young fellow with a paper route. This gave me status - a feeling of independence and accomplishment.

7th layer: I see the other kids, bobsledding down a long hill. I was never allowed to do this, though all my friends did, because my parents thought it was too dangerous. (Long silence)

8th layer: I've reached a layer of pain and frustration. There are any number of things here I wanted to do and experience that I didn't and couldn't. This layer just looks like a big, black pool - I knew what it was as soon as I saw it. (Incidentally, some subjects are able to interpret spontaneously the meaning of these images. M.C.) As soon as I touched on this thing, I retreated as though it were a red-hot iron. I feel that I might go around it but could never go through it. It was like a black cloud or a storm. It represents sadness and disappointment. Every time I feel myself getting near this I feel sad and draw away.

9th layer: I had a feeling of almost being in an elevator going down past this layer of frustration through a series of subterranean caverns until I reached the bottom and stopped. Ahead of me was a picture of shining bright light - radiating. I almost didn't trust this picture because I have known for a long time that this light was there somewhere within me and it was like recognizing something I already knew and yet seeing it for the first time.

10th layer: (long pause) I can't understand it. There was a picture almost of a spirit without form. Then there was a pool of water and when the spirit came near it rippled the water like a stone does with the circles going out from a central point.

11th layer: (long pause, whistle of surprise, shudder) I started to see sunshine - the sun - then I got a feeling of rays of light coming from beyond my field of vision above. Everything started to go dizzy on me - like a TV screen when the image is blurred and I cut it off and opened my eyes. I was afraid I'd go away somewhere and never come back.

12th layer: The subject was encouraged to try to go back to the visualization and to allow himself to experience what was happening to him without being afraid. He saw the rays of light coming from above again, interplaying with the image of the spirit he had seen before. The rays of light seemed to be more solid and the spirit more formless and moving in and out around them. He described it as like the play of sunshine on water. However, he was not able to overcome his feeling of fear and pulled back from the experience whenever his feeling of tension built up too much. It seemed likely that he was on the verge of a deeper type of mystical experience beyond the mediation of symbols, but it was clear that he was not fully ready for it yet. The subject was told to meditate on the various positive images of the self which he had experienced, and when he learns to relax the various outer defenses of his personality - especially the outermost layer of rigidity represented by the floor of machinery - he will be ready to let himself move on to a deeper experience of merging with the universal self.

The subject's reactions to this experience were interesting. His

immediate reaction was one of great happiness in the knowledge that there is something deeper within himself than the black layer of frustration. The black layer seemed less threatening and he no longer felt it was something he had to run away from, having derived strength and inner security from a contact with the positive core of his being. In the next session he reported that he found himself much more quiet, less boisterous since the session, with less need to impress people. He felt more relaxed and less prone to develop resentments and feelings of inferiority. He reported an awakening to a new feeling of freedom, though it is as yet weak and easily lost, but he knows it is there and that it will continue to grow. Being a typical engineer with a hard-headed empirical approach, he found it hard to believe that things could happen so fast and that an experience taking place in the "imagination" could have such a profound effect on his life. He feels it will take him some time to really make sense of it all - an attitude which is reminiscent of R.M. Bucke's finding that persons who had undergone spontaneous experiences of what he termed "cosmic consciousness" generally took many years before they were able to fully integrate the experience in their lives.

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Kraus: How many sessions does that represent?

Crampton: It all took place in one session. The visualization took place may be in 40 minutes, and the reactions he reported the following week.

Kraus: (He spoke for about a minute but was too far from the mike to be recorded on the tape. He quoted some psychiatrist as saying that machinery is a symbol of hidden homosexuality. Ed.)

Crampton: Symbols have different meanings with different people. (Kraus: But did this homosexual problem come out?) No, not at all. He has never had any - he is a happily married man and has had a good sexual adjustment all his life. It had never been a problem for him.

Kraus: Is he an obsessive-compulsive?

Crampton: He has some such tendencies, but not to a marked degree. Often these patients find it very difficult to accept the whole experience of visualization; they will say "well, this is just imaginary"; and you often have to work with such patients with other methods to get through the rigid compulsiveness before you can use visualization - although not necessarily.

Haronian: One of the points that Leuner makes about his approach is that this is non-interpretive. When the patient is involved in his imagery, the imagery takes on an autonomous direction of its own, and feelings are aroused spontaneously in response to the imagery and the therapist does not have to interpret or worry "why do you say this or see the other?" To ask him to interpret is to ask him to think.

Crampton: I use interpretation in my therapy, but not always. Sometimes I find it useful.

Berrett: Yes, and I will use it when time is going on; but if I have the time I keep out all interpretation and find I am much better off; and when it is discovery on the person's part the therapy is much more meaningful.

Haronian: I find myself doing less interpreting and concentrating more and more on getting the patient to elaborate the imagery as much as possible, and elaborate the feelings that are associated with the imagery - letting the process follow its own direction.

Kraus: But how do you get him from one stage to the other?

Cooper: The question is "how does he get from one stage to another?" I have reached the stage now where when people start talking about interpretation I begin to get a little irritated because I dropped it so long ago in the past, that I don't even have to concern myself with it. When we have a seminar and someone starts talking about "what is the interpretation of this?" I have to go back 15 or 20 years in my thinking to early psychodynamics. These methods grow, and they have a life of their own; and you are sitting there observing them rather than trying to direct; they have their own life and they move.

Kraus: But how would you describe the dynamics that occurs in this process?

Berrett: I might be able to help you. Stay with the feedback technique and you won't have any difficulty in keeping away from interpretation; just sort of feed back what a person is giving you. (Haronian: Non-directive.) That's right. (Cooper: Rogerian.) Yes.

Kraus: So you reinforce the image. (Berrett: Yes, bringing out more feeling.) And he will understand and go on? (Berrett: Very much; you just let him unfold.)

Cooper: The patients will become irritated if you start and try to take over the direction in any way; they will become upset and want to push you away. Many times as soon as you start entering into it they will just block. Sometimes I will ask them: "Where am I?" (in their imagery) and they will answer "Oh, you are sitting over there under a tree" or "You are around somewhere". So you have to stay there - wherever they have put you in their imagery. So the less you do, other than just provide a setting, the better it goes.

Crampton: I am afraid I pushed Betty too much tonight because I was quite conscious of the time factor, which is always a detriment.

Haronian: Yes, I had the feeling that you were asking more; and she spontaneously interpreted a lot.

Crampton: I think it is helpful to ask the patient what their feelings are; and the interpretation comes through their feelings but you don't even have to rationalize it.

Haronian: It seems to me that this technique will be especially good with hospitalized psychotics where you don't have to interpret if they do have any tendency to use fantasy at all - unless they use it in an extremely defensive way, such an obsessive and proliferated way that they run away from their feelings. I don't know what your reactions are to this.

Cooper: Well my reaction is this: in a psychotic hospital the patients have already run away somewhere and our problem is to pull them back into something that could be called reality. And what I try to do is to take such simple things as having them look at a postcard and to tell you what is on it, or have them listen to music

and pick out one instrument and try to follow the instrument; or have them go down the street and look in the store windows and note what is in them. The aim is to try to establish some kind of communication, and then after this is done and they are cooperating and I have some point of contact, then I can start using this method; but if they just sit there staring out into space then all I can say is "more thorazine." Or I'll put them on three grams of niacin plus and tell them to come back and see me in three weeks' time, and then we can start from there. When you cannot contact them at all then you have to use some of these other things.

Crampton: Often the problem with psychotics is that they have had an experience of the transpersonal self but they have misinterpreted it. And they may identify with this and get thinking "I am God" or something of that nature.

Cooper: Yes, but it is difficult to come back to the "snotty nose" and to what their job really is. You see the same thing with the LSD phenomena or the marijuana addicts: they want to stay with that. In some way they hit, shall we say, this transpersonal self and they want to stay there; they don't want to leave it.

Crampton: But the place people seem to want to stay in seems to be an intermediate level before you get to the true self. In Betty's case the dark place she got to: she described it as "very rich, very quiet, dark and come to rest." Perhaps this is an intra-uterine equivalent. I think this is the level where people get hung up. I have one interesting case along these lines and perhaps I should just...(Kraus: In getting "hung up" what did you mean by that?) Where a patient comes to a layer and would like to stay there. (Kraus: So you do interpret?)

Cooper: I was just going to take a crack at her interpretation of "intra-uterine" (Kraus: That is what I was thinking too!) Really, the intra-uterine place is not very quiet; it is as noisy as can be; the heart is going thump, thump and the intestines are gurgling, so I am not so sure that it is as nice a place as some people think. More like the background music of a go-go joint! (laughter). But can we go on to another case now?

Crampton: This subject that I mentioned had at the age of 16 a transcendental experience of looking at a tree when he suddenly experienced the life force within every capillary and leaf of the tree. It was a tremendously moving experience which ever since he had tried to recapture. He would go back and stare at that tree for hours on end but he could never quite get the experience again. Once he came very close but he tried so hard that he lost it. He is 37 now.* Here is his description of the layers:

Layer 1: A sphere which looks like the surface of the moon-craters-grey, cheerless, hostile, cold and dead.

Layer 2: Going down through the crater I come to a pastoral world of sunlight, rolling mountains and meadows, very green grass, blue water, small villages

Layer 3: Going through the water I see a magical underwater scene - the sandy bottom, the coral reefs. It's very warm and exciting-buoyant - I'd like to stay here.

Layer 4: I enter a cave in the coral bank. It's pitch black. In the distance is a point of light. I swim down the tunnel. I come to an archway.

* insurance salesman; symptoms of anxiety, low productivity on the job; marital problems.

Layer 5: There is another scene of a countryside - the early morning sun is casting its beams through the mist. It's very quiet, cool, peaceful.

Layer 6: I just went down a well. I came out at the bottom into an enormous scene with a grey sky and a sun hanging in space - the surface of which is boiling - brilliant gold. The bubbles on the surface look like the craters on the moon - boiling like porridge. I feel no heat as I fall towards the surface of it - just a comfortable temperature. The gold is almost reddish at the surface and very soft. I splash into it. It's a lovely warm foam. Every bubble has a light of its own. I can swim through it effortlessly, breathe it. It's just delightful! I'm excited, pleased - a feeling of great comfort and warmth. (He did not want to leave this. M.C.)

Layer 7: I come to a floor on the bottom of the foam ocean - very smooth and unbroken.

Layer 8: A scarlet landscape with a huge golden city - metallic gold. The architecture is Gothic with many spires.

Layer 9: Blue sky, white beach, green grass. Very tranquil.

Layer 10: A seagull flying.

Layer 11: An immensely tall, white, cylindrical building - like a series of crowns stacked one upon the other. It's made of white masonry - many arches and intricate designs.

Layer 12: A column of white stairs.

Layer 13: A vortex - like on the du Maurier cigarette package.

Layer 14: A great, huge swirling maelstrom - very sinister and frightening.

Layer 15: A small boat on the rim of the whirlpool - like a motor-driven fishing boat. I'm in it and I want to get the boat away from the whirlpool - a huge thing about a mile across. (He was frightened of this and found it sinister. He was afraid of being sucked into the maelstrom. And I think for him it represented the fear of losing his own identity and that it was a regressive type of experience. Then he came back to the sea gull, etc. M.C.)

Layer 16: A myriad of things: a sea gull, a bright white light; dark water.

Layer 17: The top of the cylindrical building. There is a funny cone-shaped structure on the top of it with a flashing ruby perched there.

Layer 18: a sea gull again.

Layer 19: A very bright star in the sky.

Layer 20: I see the cylindrical building and the ruby again from up above this time. It's very warm - a beautiful place - blue sea and sky and the snow-white building.

Layer 21: I'm two feet from the ruby now. It's about the size of a football - flashing all sorts of colors like a diamond in bright rays - blues, greens, etc., though the overall color is red.

Layer 22: A very modern circular room which is located just below the parapet with the ruby in this building. A man is sitting behind a desk there and another man is sitting beside it. The guy behind the desk looks like me. He seems to be the authority here - the boss. He's very neat and orderly - doesn't seem to have anything to do - just sitting there, I don't recognize the other guy.

Layer 23: A scene from outside this building - sun, sky, grass below.

Layer 24: A small bay surrounded by land. It is shaped like a fetus-in-utero.

Layer 25: I see the fetus-in-utero. Now I see a plastic golf ball - the kind with holes in it that you use to practice.

Layer 26: A small very brilliant diamond.

Layer 27: Flashing lights emanating from a common point - white and yellow with changing conformations - like a diamond would reflect. This is the end of the line. There isn't any further.

Crampton: I think this was the end of the line for him this time but it was interesting for there had been the red light of the ruby which was another false ending for him. And I found this with one other subject who had visualized on her own until she saw herself holding a red ball of light. But you continue and this red light is purified until you get to the white light of the inner self, which is the last symbolic level.

I have cited this case as it presents certain interesting and atypical aspects. For one thing it will be noted that most of the images are of an impersonal and abstract nature, compared to the images produced by most subjects. This seems characteristic of detached, introverted personalities such as his. Another factor of interest is that the subject had a very intense "peak" experience at the age of 16 of a rather mystical nature, though he does not seem to have integrated it with his life. The visualization here suggests a possible reason for this: that the subject has very strong regressive tendencies - reflected in his reluctance to leave the warm underwater scenes and his more direct image of the fetus-in-utero. Perhaps he uses peak experiences to attain a state of oneness and pleasure in a regressive, intra-uterine sense rather than as a source of energy and inspiration that can be translated into daily life. His great fear of the whirlpool here probably reflects a fear of his wish to return to such a passive state where his own identity would be lost. Another interesting aspect of this case is that it illustrates the fact that there may be many false end-points in this experience (with this subject they were the boiling sun in which he floated and the ruby which finally became a diamond) and this is one of the reasons why the guidance of an experienced therapist is important. A parallel with this red light eventually becoming purified to a white light was found in another case which will not be quoted in full for lack of time. The other subject, a woman, had tried the visualization on her own and stopped when she saw herself holding a flaming red ball. She went through eleven steps after that with the therapist and eventually saw herself merging with a star - a feeling which gave her great strength and peace.

Berrett: Have you had any one go through the light?

Crampton: Yes; I have one patient here who in the deeper layers goes beyond the sun.

Layer 1: A circular path leading to the center - a spiral form. At first I saw a set of concentric brass rings. Now I see myself walking on a path through the woods. The sunlight is streaming through the trees. It seems to be an exploratory path - not too well-marked, but I seem to feel I'm on the right track.

Layer 2: I'm in the garden of Eze - seated there with a large drafting board. I seem to be working on an architect's general plan of the universe - trying to demonstrate the place of man in the total scheme of things.

Layer 3: A cloud. Greyish-blue and now it becomes a pearly or silvery color. All of this seems to have emerged from a volcano which appeared for just a moment. The cloud is all there is; it is not a discrete object. The feeling is one of wonderment. The cloud seems to be flashing or flickering, as though there are dots of light in the center of it. It may represent the whole universe either prior to creation or at the first stage of creation or then again it seems to be a sort of warning or indication of something to happen - a kind of riddle.

Layer 4: An eagle with wings outstretched as though ready to take off in flight.

Layer 5: The same bird in flight - climbing as though into the sun. The bird is black with the golden light of the sun reflected on its wings. The sun is a deep gold or orange-red color.

Layer 6: This one is hard to understand. It's as though I'm looking down from a mountain on a vast expanse of sunny plain. On the plain is an array of geometric figures which seem to be made out of silvery metal. There is a triangle, a double helix - as though the two helices were intertwined like two snakes standing upright - and a sphere. They are grouped in a triad at the bottom left corner. In the top right corner is a purplish background with a white swan or egret - some bird with long legs which is standing up. The bird represents peace or serenity. The triangle seems to represent truth - it rings true when struck. The sphere represents beauty to me and the serpents or spirals might represent love or goodness - I should say wisdom which would combine both of these. The helices seem to preside over the other geometric symbols. It is the dominant theme. If these three symbols remain there, the bird of harmony or serenity will remain ever-present against this regal background.

Layer 7: A colleague and I and R.A. are meeting for the last time on the shores of a sea. Above us is a huge V sign spreading out like two arms of a rainbow. It seems to suggest that R.A. is transmitting a final message to us. The two arms of the rainbow indicate that our work is to radiate upwards and outwards.

Layer 8: A golden plain or surface. This time there is only the helix or dual serpent of shining silver. At the end of the plain there is a sun - more golden now - casting its light upon the helix which in turn is casting a shadow. The scene is motionless and has an eternal aspect.

Layer 9: A boundless ocean - the sun sparkling on the waves. The sun with different helices like silver coils coming out of it as a corona. Just then the silver cloud came back and the glitter of the ocean left. The cloud and sun seem to have merged. The cloud is brighter than it was - like a throbbing mass of light with pinpoints of additional light. It is somewhere between gold and silver - with the warmth of gold and the light of silver - a pearly gold. This pearly cloud is all there is - a warmer feeling now - a feeling of joy.

Layer 10: I just see the same process of synthesis occurring in the last step happening all over again.

Crampton: This second series of visualizations with the same subject (the second having been done about 1½ month after the first) is of interest because it seems to indicate a progression in the direction of greater development of the symbolism of the self. It may be that the original experience has facilitated this development.

Winston: What happens if you have a patient go through this experience more than once?

Crampton: I am glad that you asked the question. This case that I just gave you was a repetition. I only tried a repeat on one person but what seems to happen is the person contacts much more rapidly the inner layers on the second time around.

Berrett: Suppose at the point where Betty ended she were to go on from there? I wonder what you think of staying with the light, going through the light.

Cooper: That's a rough one!

Crampton: Well there you usually get beyond images into that direct merging - which is something like the experience you, Marilyn, had.

Cooper: This is a new frontier; when you get a few cases let us know! We have pressed it this far, but what is the next area we are going into?! Frank, what is beyond it?

Hilton: More light!

Berrett: There is a point, as Betty said, where there is the fear of not quite being here with us.

Crampton: Some people feel more secure in a group, or at least with another person.

Hilton: Martha, did you find that these people are in closer touch with reality after such an experience?

Crampton: Definitely. (Hilton: There is no danger of losing yourself in the light then?)

Cooper: When this question is spoken of in medical groups of psychiatrists, residents, etc., they always speak of the danger of precipitating a psychosis.

Berrett: Yes, it is their own personal fear that they are projecting. One finds this over and over again. They are afraid.

Cooper: Every session or seminar that I am in people question this. They do this with real concern and say "You are going to make them psychotic!" and yet we have presented psychotic people and shown how they were made sane!

Haronian: Are there any types of patients that you would strictly avoid with this method?

Crampton: I don't know enough about the method to give you a very good answer. I have never tried it with a psychotic patient, so I just don't know. (Haronian: How about depressives?) It is excellent for depressives.

Mrs. Hilton: This ties in with what I wanted to ask. Dr. Assagioli in his book in describing his techniques always gives a warning or "contra-indications" as well as directives. At what stage of this technique have you found it necessary to sound a word of caution?

Crampton: Well, as I mentioned, often in the outer layers you will come very rapidly to very disturbing repressed material. One subject came in touch with his homosexual problems which he was completely unaware of, his latent homosexuality, and was terribly disturbed by this. So we just had to stop and work through this before we could keep going. Whenever a subject is too disturbed, you don't want to end a session leaving him there.

Mrs. Hilton: Am I correct in assuming that all do not go through to this inner layer and if so, is it safe to leave them when they are not there - in one session?

Crampton: Perhaps I should go on now with my concluding statement before time runs out in which I discuss some of the contra-indications.

These cases I have given are a few typical examples of subjects who have completed the exercise in one sitting (i.e. in a time-period which might range roughly from 30 minutes to an hour). The number of steps involved in the cases cited varies from 10 to 27. It is the exception rather than the rule, however, to find cases in a clinical practice who can complete the experience in one sitting of this length. Probably more "normal" subjects could do so - at least judging from my experience with the Y.M.C.A. self-realization group - though there are not as yet sufficient data on various populations to be able to make an accurate statement about this. Most patients in psychotherapy, with a moderate to high degree of psychopathology, will probably require several sessions with this method before they are able to reach the inner self. I have some patients who have gone through as many as 40 and 50 "layers" without contacting any supraconscious contents or having any experience of the self. It is an open question whether such patients would be able to do so if we continued long enough. I suspect that they probably could, though for practical reasons it seems preferable in such cases to take time out to work through some of the fears and conflicts encountered along the way before continuing the voyage inward. This helps to maintain the patient's morale and in the long run probably speeds up the work with the visual W-A-I (as we shall call this method in shorthand form). It is important to give such patients a good deal of encouragement as they frequently feel that there is "nothing good" in them and their difficulty in contacting positive images may tend to confirm them in this belief. They must be reassured that if one digs long enough, there is always water beneath the mud; that all subjects in working with this method must traverse a negative region before they can contact the true and positive self and that to experience one's deep fears and conflicts is a sign of progress. One can speak of

what Jung called the "shadow" - those unaccepted parts of our personality which we must learn to face and integrate to achieve wholeness; and one can speak of what Perls calls the "death layer" which must be traversed in order to reach the inner core of life and spontaneity. For those poetically inclined, one can speak of the path leading through the valley of the shadow of death before we are led upward toward the mountain peaks or of Dante's visit to Hell and Purgatory before he was able to reach Paradise.

We will need to acquire much more experience with this method to be able to say very much about its indications and contra-indications, the types of people with whom it is successful and the types with whom it would be inappropriate. Preliminary observations suggest that it is most suitable for use with subjects who have sufficient intellectual and cultural background to understand its principles, with subjects of some intuitive ability and who are not overly threatened by revelation of depth material. Certain more literal-minded types will protest against the whole principle of visualization, maintaining that it is just "imagination" and refusing to admit any possible validity for it. Such types must be treated with other methods until their intuitive faculties are better developed. The efficacy of the method is limited to some degree by the subject's ability to experience feeling about the images; if there is little emotion involved, the experience would seem to have less impact, though it can still be of use to illustrate the existence of a positive inner self and to outline the various problem areas.

The method does not seem to be particularly suitable for group work, except perhaps as a demonstration. It generally takes too long to sustain the interest of the other group members, if it were to be done with each member in turn. But it can be very helpful to go through the method with a "good" subject so that the other group members can glimpse - at least vicariously - the reality of the inner self.

One practical point of importance is that the practitioner of this method should be an experienced therapist and should also have a good background of knowledge of the symbolism of the supracconscious and the self, in order to guide a subject safely through to the goal. Frequently the subject will feel he has reached the end before he has in fact done so, and it is necessary that both therapist and subject have a sense of closure before stopping. It is good practice to go one step further than either believe necessary, just to check, as our "science of the self" is still very young and we have no very definite rules to follow in this area as yet.

One point we should consider is the relationship between the visual W-A-I (as we will call this method in abbreviated form) and the verbal W-A-I. Preliminary explorations suggest that the visual form is both more powerful and more risky than the verbal form. As when using a highly potent drug, one must be aware of potentially dangerous side-effects. Unlike the verbal W-A-I, the visual W-A-I is not a method to be used by a disturbed person alone; it cannot therefore be assigned to work on between sessions like the former. In the presence of a skilled therapist, however, it can probably bring deeper and more vivid realizations than the verbal method. And this depth is not only in terms of material from the lower unconscious, but it would seem to go much farther in the exploration of the supracconscious as well - or into the area of what has been called "height" as opposed to "depth" psychology. The verbal form of the W-A-I method seems more likely to bring awareness of the personal self - of oneself as a

separate individual - while the visual W-A-I would appear to be more geared to bring awareness of the transpersonal self and the supraconscious. It is, however, possible to use the visual form indirectly to foster awareness of the personal self, as when a subject encounters an obstacle - a closed curtain or something of that nature - and realizes that he is the one who is keeping it closed, though I have not as yet encountered in my experience with this method a direct image of the personal self as such. This perhaps adds weight to R.A.'s* contention that the personal self has no intrinsic reality of its own, but is simply a projected fragment on the personality level of the permanent center which is the transpersonal self. But again we must conclude by saying that all of this requires much further study.

I would like to underline a final point, and this is the question of the transformation or stepping-down of these higher energies of the transpersonal self into a form in which they can be integrated in daily life. Psychodynamics has studied the laws which govern the sublimation of the sexual and aggressive drives into higher forms of expression such as artistic and scientific achievement and altruistic love. What is now needed is a formulation of the basic laws which govern the transformation of the higher spiritual energies into forms which can be utilized on the personality level. Not only must we learn to remove the 10,000 veils of Maya - as they say in the East - to perceive the reality of the self, but we must learn how to release this inner light so that it can shine forth into the world. I have referred to various means I have employed in my own practice - using meditation, visualization, body movement, and encouragement of creative social and artistic expression - and would welcome any thoughts along these or other lines.

End of Session.

* Robert Assagioli

Five cases which were not presented at the Seminar owing to lack of time.

(The numbered paragraphs represent the successive steps or layers in the journey inward.)

Case of G.C. (Series I; male, age 47, physician, member of a self-realization group)

1. I see myself playing tennis.
2. Now I'm sitting in a rocking chair on the porch with friends discussing various things over a drink - a light, pleasant conversation.
3. Now I'm talking with the woman I love in the Garden of Eze - just walking up and down.
4. I see myself reading a book on Leonardo.
5. Now I'm on the roof of a Florence hotel looking out over the city at the cathedral, the stars.
6. Three images appear simultaneously: a bright star, a golden daffodil; and sunlight sparkling on water.
7. Now I seem to see a whole universe of velvety darkness. Gradually everything seems to become of a pale, pearly light - an opalescent quality. This would seem to represent two aspects of the same thing - coexisting like night and day.

(The subject at this point felt that he had reached the end of the line but was encouraged to go on and see whether he could take another step.)

8. I'm looking at my wife and she is looking back at me. This is an encounter and also an apprehending of beauty and Love in the absolute sense - like the Platonic ideas. One might describe it as a sort of escalating resonance; I perceive more in her and she in me and I in her again until we are both orbited, so to speak, into the absolute plane. In this encounter I seem to derive the inspiration to go on beyond.
9. Huge curtains appear in the sky as though that's that. But they are half-opened and now I can see a vista beyond them. It reminds me of the backgrounds in Leonardo's paintings - a sense of merging shapes - the content is not important. There is a suggestion of mystery, of something unfathomable - perhaps a beckoning.
10. (It is suggested that the subject attempt to open the curtains.) The pearly light comes back. I disappear and there is nothing but a concentrated pearly luminosity.

After completing his "journey", the subject is asked how he can help this inner light to shine forth through the outer layers. He answers: "I see myself lying in a hammock beside a mountain lake with my wife and the children. It is essential that there be time just to respond to the rhythms of nature - some leisure time with no fixed schedule. The swing of the hammock seems to represent a balance between programmed time or outer action and leisure or contemplation of the sun, the stars, the mountains, my loved ones, and the universe at large.

Case of M.C. (male, age 32, executive; marital difficulties, depression)

1. I just get the feeling that I don't want to be forced to visualize. I see the words "Don't do it." I see a box - a metal box. I'm sitting here inside and on top of the box it says "Don't do it."

2. There is no way to go beyond this layer. The box is on the floor and you can't go through the floor. It is a layer of solid steel - a floor you can't go through. It goes from here to eternity. There is just more and more steel - no end to it. I can't break through it.

(After about 15 minutes spent in trying to get through the steel floor, it was suggested that the subject not try to break through the floor, but simply imagine himself on the other side of it. This broke the impasse.)

3. I'm a speck of dust. Below the floor I become powder - human powder. I'm just a little piece of dust within a great pile of dust. The wind blows you and you fly. Somebody swept the broom and I moved.

The voyage inward has not been completed with this subject and has had to extend over many sessions. This excerpt is quoted as an example of the tremendous resistance one can encounter sometimes in the early stages of this exploration. It also serves to illustrate the fruitfulness of this technique for making the patient vividly aware of his own self-images and defenses. This is a patient whose outermost mask says to the world "I am big and powerful; just see if you can penetrate me." And the image of the infinite expanse of steel made it very real and concrete for him, as well as the feelings of nothingness which the outer facade was attempting to hide.

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Case of P.B. (female, age 30, mother of 2, former airline hostess, member of a self-realization group and in private therapy for marital difficulties)

1. I see myself with a nun's habit. I look sad.

2. (nervous laugh) What do you call those girls? Yes, a prostitute - standing there with a cigarette and her hand on her hip.

3. Myself in a white uniform like a nurse. It looks like I'm going toward someone. It's my husband. It's as though he were sick. I want to go and help him - have the feeling that he's leaning on me.

4. I see a bird - flying away from something - wanting to be free.

5. Myself as a child praying - a prayer of thanks. I feel uplifted.

6. My grandmother smiling. She represents approval. I feel happy being there with her.

7. My mother - scowling, severe. I feel unsure of myself with her. At the same time I see my father like a shadow in the background. He never had any say. I feel pity for him.

8. A dog wagging his tail. He wants companionship.
9. The mountains with the sun on top. I'm down at the bottom. A feeling of tranquility.
10. An ocean with a storm - a feeling of aloneness, emptiness, fear.
11. A horse. My husband is sitting on it. I feel annoyance because I feel that he is more interested in his horse than in me.
12. A bottle of liquor. I think of my husband and his drinking - feel terribly upset.
13. A path with green trees. The beginning of a road.
14. The same scene. Green pastures. It's sunny now.
15. A great facade of stone going straight up across this path.
16. I have gone beyond the stone now - an obstacle has been passed.
17. I see my husband. The words "I love him" come to my mind.
18. My children - two helpless little faces looking up at me - a very warm feeling.
19. I see another woman. (The former wife of the subject's husband) I am able to feel warm towards her now.
20. I see my husband again and he's happy. He has his arms out to me.
21. I see the two of us walking together (The subject bursts into tears of joy at this point). The sun is shining down on us.
22. The blazing sun.
23. My husband and I are on top of the sun. We're going into heaven.
24. We are still up there. It's as though the whole world - all mankind is around us - united in our love.

The subject felt that this was a real "peak experience" for her and was extremely moved, as were the other members of the group in front of whom she had volunteered to do this as a demonstration exercise. In later sessions of private therapy we have interpreted the various defenses and conflicts on the personality level, and we have worked with the symbol of the sun in various ways. For example, in a visualization in which she identified with a barren tree, she was asked to imagine the sun shining on this tree and saw it coming to life and blossoming in an outpouring of fullness and joy. She also acted this scene in physical gestures and experienced her arms moving forward and upward in a gesture of embrace and affirmation rather than sticking out woodenly to the side. She was also asked to follow this inner light (imagining it to be seated in her heart) and it led her to her husband. She saw him looking frightened because of her moods and rejecting aloofness. She was told to ask the inner light how it could help her reach him and she saw the words "warm" and "humble", realizing for the first time how much these qualities were lacking in herself.

Case of H.R. (female, age 38; member of self-realization group; in private therapy for depression and marital difficulties.)

A good sweet girl. I see myself always giving in and being nice.

2. My recent emphasis on sex. When I was interested in that man I became conscious of my figure and the fact that men admired me. I felt guilty and cheap.
3. I don't see much. I'm really quite mean and nasty. There's a knife in my hand.
4. I'm playing the piano - an undeveloped artistic streak.
5. I'm cooking. I don't cook much. In my country we had servants to do the cooking and I found it hard in Canada. When I was depressed, my mother did the cooking for us.
6. I see myself as a girl walking into the choir in church - wearing a surplice. I loved the music in church. The other night I woke up and heard the hymn "The Church's one foundation."
7. I seem to be on top of a dome looking down on the marriage ceremony of myself and my husband.
8. I see my father praying. He never was a religious man. I myself don't pray much except when I am in trouble.
9. I see a well. I see the reflection of the sky and the white clouds in the well.
10. The sun, it's very bright. I am happy.

This case is interesting as it illustrates the difference between the supraconscious and the experience of the Self. The level representing artistic inspiration was only #4 - relatively close to the outside - in a series of ten layers. So, as Roberto Assagioli says, an artist can have contact with certain contents of the supraconscious without having had the experience of the Self - and this is the case with most artists though there are some who have had both types of experience.

We have subsequently worked with the symbol of the sun, the light, in various ways. She was asked to imagine the light as centered in her heart and guiding her somewhere. It led her to a little house in which she saw her former lover - a married man who had no intention of leaving his wife. She saw a frown on his face and realized that there was no happiness in this relationship for them and that she would have to stop thinking about this man if she wanted to make a new life for herself. Then she followed the light into a church where she felt quiet and peaceful and where she saw an image of the Sacred Heart. This image was interpreted to her as a symbol of the Christ consciousness within and it was suggested that she meditate upon this symbol at home - an exercise which helped lift her out of her depression enough to look for a job. In another session, she was asked to visualize on the question of how this inner light could shine through and dissolve the outer facade of her personality - the "good little girl" layer. She saw herself climbing a mountain in the company of her sister-in-law - a dominating woman with whom in the past she had felt intimidated. In this visualization, she felt warm feelings toward this woman and her family and saw herself as helping them over the boulders and other obstacles along the way. She experienced herself as a source of help to others for the first time rather than as a helpless little girl.

Case of J.H. (female, age 40, done by herself at home. Member of a self-realization group.)

1. I was in a room full of noise and confusion feeling calm and content. This me walked over to another me which had become like a statue and put it in a glass case and locked the door.
2. I saw my daughter Caroline talking on the phone. I am filled with love and joy for her - perhaps some envy too at her ease in making friends.
3. My parents playing cards. Mother looks happy, father very quiet.
4. My father sitting on an easy chair. I thought "What a waste of great talent."
5. My husband. Here is a lesser talent who through hard work has reached his potential.
6. My husband close up. He's looking at me intently with love. I seem to be floating as in a dream.
7. My son - the one I have difficulty with. He comes to me with outstretched arms and I turn away from him.
8. I'm in tall grass. A snake flashes by. I'm curious and follow it. I look at the snake's nest and am frightened. The whole scene seems to be as though in a dream - I'm floating in the air as in a dream - taking large steps that seem to be in slow motion.
9. A castle on a hill. It is clean and white. There are many flags and banners.
10. A closeup of a flag waving in the wind.
11. The flags have become a field of golden wheat as far as I can see. It is swaying in the breeze. I throw myself on the ground - panting, exhausted, exhilarated.
12. I sit up in the field. I realize I'm alone here and don't like the feeling. Again, I seem to be running in a sort of airy slow motion.
13. I see my family running toward me with arms outstretched. My husband hesitates for a moment and I stretch my arms out to him and to all the children. I feel complete now. This is my goal in life. I am completely happy.