

Psychosynthesis Research Foundation

ROOM 314, 527 LEXINGTON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10017
TEL: PLAZA 9-1480

REGISTERED OFFICE
TREASURER
602 BELLEVUE RD.
WILMINGTON, DEL. 19809

December 1, 1967

Dear Colleague:

The third meeting of the 1967/68 series of Psychosynthesis Seminars (held on the third Friday of each month) will take place on Friday, December 15, 1967 at 7:45 P.M.

Dr. Frank Haronian of the New Jersey Bureau of Research in Neurology and Psychiatry will speak on "The Denial of the Sublime," followed by our customary discussion period.

The meeting will start promptly at 7:45 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.
192 Brewster Road
Scarsdale, N.Y. 10583
Phone: 914-725-4541

Date & Time of Meeting: Friday, December 15, 1967 - 7:45 P.M. prompt.
Place: "Directors Room," mezzanine floor, Park Sheraton Hotel,
7th Ave. & 55th St., N.Y.C.
Speaker: Frank Haronian, Ph.D.
Subject: The Denial of the Sublime

PSYCHOSYNTHESIS SEMINARS

1967/8 SERIES

Third Meeting: December 15, 1967

Subject: The Repression of the Sublime

Speaker: Frank Haronian, Ph.D.
2807 Princeton Pike
Trenton, N.J. 08638

Participants:

Winnie Colton
Jack Cooper, M.D. & Mrs. Rena Cooper
Martha Crampton, M.A.
Geo Greenberg, Ph.D.
Frank & Mrs. Hilda Hilton
Elizabeth Keane
Evelyn Miyake

Victorija Mickans, M.D.
David Fursglove
Harold Streitfeld, Ph.D.
William Swartley, Ph.D.
Graham Taylor, M.D.
Shirley Winston, M.A.
Ed. C. Whitmont, M.D. &
Mrs. Whitmont

Psychosynthesis Research Foundation
Room 314
527 Lexington Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10017

Dr. Frank Haronian:

The title of my talk tonight, "The Repression of the Sublime" comes from the writings of Robert Desoille. In the course of this talk I am not going to offer you any really new ideas. Instead, I will try to bring together the ideas of a number of others in such a way as to make the concept, the repression of the sublime, so real and compelling to you that you will see it ever more clearly and inescapably in yourselves, in your patients, and in your associates.

I do not think it is necessary to define the concept of repression but I do want to go into the question of what is meant in this instance by the sublime. We can be orthodox-psychoanalytic about it and consider all higher artistic, social and spiritually oriented activities are sublimations of primitive, erotic and aggressive drives. These would be sublime activities, but as sublimations of "lower drives." But we could also consider that these same "higher" impulses, desires or motives exist in their own right, and that they develop whether or not the sexual and aggressive drives are satisfied. In fact, one might go so far as to claim that the higher and more sublime needs of the person are more likely to be awakened and developed if the so-called lower, more carnal drives are satisfied. It is often out of a sense of boredom and dissatisfaction with the gratification of the senses that we begin to look for deeper meanings to our life.

There are still other ways of looking at the term "sublime." In its broadest sense it covers all of man's impulses, instincts, drives, urges to be something more, better, greater than he is. Personal growth and differentiation is part of the picture, to be sure, but beyond that, the concept of the sublime involves several other general areas. It refers to the true, the good, the beautiful. We orient ourselves towards the sublime when we disinterestedly seek to know things as they are; when we nurture others for the sake of seeing them grow; when we arrange an esthetically pleasing concatenation of events which are arranged so as to be seen as beautiful or artistic.

Then, there is the tendency towards community, brotherliness, and caring. It is based on the feeling, the belief, the conviction that we all share the same fate, ultimately. In the thinking of Robert Desoille, in whose writings I first came across the conception of the repression of the sublime, the impulse towards the sublime demands that we be concerned with others, that we feel the need to communicate with others with the best of ourselves, and that we find our deepest satisfaction in service to others. I quote in translation the section of his 1945 book in which he says: "There are many forms of service and among them the disinterested efforts of the savant and of the artist are among the highest." The impulse to act in such ways are the expression of a profound urge to trust life, to give freely of oneself, and to forget one's selfish concerns. These are among the traits of the sublime.

Another aspect of the sublime is that which is confusingly called "the religious," namely, the inescapable need of every person to answer the existential questions for himself and to attach himself to a purpose, a goal, an ideal, that he sees as greater and more important, more durable than his own transient existence and powers. When we sense the sublime as the feeling of communion with and devotion to something that is greater than ourselves, then we are experiencing this basic religious impulse. It may be theistic, agnostic or atheistic; it does not require a belief in God, but it is consonant with such a belief. According to Desoille it is the therapist's job to help his client to become fully aware of this

basic and normal religious impulse and to help the client to clear his mind of any persisting infantile theological conceptions. Finally, the therapist helps the client to develop his primitive religious impulses to the level at which they are converted into reflective thought rather than merely emotionally charged "magic thinking."

Now to get back to the title of this talk, "The Repression of the Sublime," I would like to demonstrate that it is an essential part of being fully human to feel the pull and the attraction of the sublime in the several ways that I have described. And it is typically neurotic for us to avoid the responsibility of trying to answer this call of the sublime, and we often repress it.

There are many ways in which we evade the call of the sublime. Why do we evade, for example, the challenge of personal growth? We fear growth because it means abandoning the familiar for the unknown, and that always involves risks. I recently came across the same idea in the works of Andras Angyal where he says "Abandoning the familiar for the unknown always involves risks. When the changes are far-reaching or precipitous they are bound to arouse anxiety. The view that growth is inseparable from anxiety is shared by practically all thinkers who have substantially contributed to our understanding of anxiety....The anxiety felt at the prospect of dissolution of one's current mode of being has been related by some to the fear of final dissolution, of which human beings have the certain foreknowledge; since growth requires the breaking of old patterns, willingness 'to die' is a precondition of living....Excessive fear of death is often a correlate of the neurotic fear of growth and change."

Why do we evade the expression of care and concern for others? Often it is because we fear that we won't know where to draw the line and that we will find ourselves used and exploited by others. I think that the fear is related to the fact that as a part of the pattern of modern life, we know too many people too superficially - and we experience too little responsibility for each other. In popular parlance, if you give a person an inch, he'll take a mile. Somehow we lack the stable sense of self which would permit us to have our yes and our no.

I suspect that the loss of the security of a sense of community with others, the loss of the feeling of sharing a common fate, has led us to a state in which we are no longer able to commit ourselves to an ideal whose value, in our eyes, transcends that of our personal existence. This is the opposite of the situation that normally exists in primitive tribes. Today, the old tribal claims for loyalty in return for status and security are gone. We experience no close relatedness to others for whose lives we are responsible and on whom we, in turn, can call for aid when we are distressed or threatened. Because of this loss, the motive for commitment of oneself to something greater than oneself must nowadays attach itself to something more abstract than one's tribe, something harder to define and to keep in mind and heart as a goal.

Let's go back to the idea of repression. Desoille's idea that we repress the sublime can be found in the writings of current American psychologists. For example, Angyal, in his posthumous work, "Neurosis and Treatment", speaks of the defense mechanisms such as repression as exercising their effects not only on neurotic feelings and trends, but on the healthy ones, too. To his way of thinking, two competing organizations or sets of attitudes or systems for attributing meaning to experiences are in competition with each other. One is healthy, the other is

neurotic. Each system seeks to dominate the individual, and to do this, it must repress the other competing system. So when the neurotic system is dominant, the healthy system is ipso facto subdued and submerged, i.e., excluded from consciousness, or repressed. Angyal then says, and I quote,

"This conception is borne out by numerous observations that one can and does repress feelings and wishes that are in no way socially tabooed and are often considered laudable."

He calls this annexation or appropriation or perversion, and he gives an example in an analytic patient who misinterprets his own natural and healthy friendliness as a viciously motivated exploitativeness.

There are a number of other current examples of the repression of the sublime. I would like to draw some from Abraham Maslow's writings. A year ago he gave a lecture in which he included the notion of "the Jonah Complex". To quote from Dr. Maslow:

"I'd like to turn to one of the many reasons for what Angyal has called 'the evasion of growth'. Certainly everybody in this room would like to be better than he is. We have, all of us, an impulse to improve ourselves, an impulse towards actualizing more of our potentialities, towards self-actualization, or full humanness, or human fulfillment, or whatever term you like. Granted this for everybody here, then what holds us up? What blocks us?"

"One such defense against growth that I would like to speak about especially, because it has not been noticed much, I shall call the Jonah Complex.

"In my own notes I had at first labelled this defense 'the fear of one's own greatness' or 'the evasion of one's destiny' or 'the running away from one's own best talent'. I had wanted to stress as bluntly and sharply as I could the non-Freudian point that we fear our best as well as our worst, even though in different ways. It is certainly possible for most of us to be greater than we are in actuality. We all have unused potentialities or not fully developed ones. It is certainly true that many of us evade our constitutionally suggested vocations....So often we run away from the responsibilities dictated (or rather suggested) by nature, by fate, even sometimes by accident, just as Jonah tried in vain to run away from his fate.

"We fear our highest possibilities (as well as our lowest ones). We are generally afraid to become that which we can glimpse in our most perfect moments, under the most perfect conditions, under conditions of greatest courage. We enjoy and even thrill to the god-like possibilities we see in ourselves in such peak moments. And yet we simultaneously shiver with weakness, awe and fear before these same possibilities....

"Not only are we ambivalent about our highest possibilities, we are also in a perpetual and I think universal, perhaps even necessary conflict and ambivalence over these same highest possibilities in other people and in human nature in general. Certainly we love and admire good men, saints; honest, virtuous, clean men. But could anybody who has looked into the depths of human nature fail to be aware of our mixed and often hostile feelings toward saintly men? Or toward very beautiful women or men? Or toward great creators? Or toward our intellectual geniuses? We surely love and admire all the persons who incarnated the true, the

good, the beautiful, the just, the perfect, the ultimately successful. And yet they also make us uneasy, anxious, confused, perhaps a little jealous or envious; a little inferior, clumsy. They usually make us lose our aplomb, our self-possession, our self-regard.

"Here we have a first clue. My impression so far is that the greatest people, simply by their presence and being what they are, make us feel aware of our lesser worth, whether or not they intend to. If this is an unconscious effect, and we are not aware of why we feel stupid or ugly or inferior whenever such a person turns up, we are apt to respond with projection, i.e., we react as if he were trying to make us feel inferior, as if we were the target. Hostility is then an understandable consequence. It looks to me, so far, as if conscious awareness tends to fend off this hostility. That is, if you are willing to attempt self-awareness and self-analysis of your own counter-valuing, i.e., of your unconscious fear and hatred of the true, good and beautiful, etc. people, you will very likely be less nasty to them. And I am willing to extrapolate to the guess that if you can learn to love more purely the highest values in others, this might make you love these qualities in yourself in a less frightening way."

In another paper Dr. Maslow has brought up a different aspect of the repression of the sublime. He calls it "desacralizing":

"Let me talk about one defense mechanism that is not mentioned in the psychology textbooks, though it is a very important defense mechanism to the snotty and yet idealistic youngster of today. It is the defense mechanism of desacralizing. These youngsters mistrust the possibility of values and virtues. They feel themselves swindled and thwarted in their lives. Most of them have, in fact, dopey parents whom they don't respect very much, parents who are quite confused themselves about values and who, frequently, are simply terrified of their children and never punish them or stop them from doing things that are wrong. So you have a situation where the youngsters simply despise their elders - often for good and sufficient reason. Such youngsters have learned to make a big generalization: They won't listen to anybody who is grown up, especially if the grown-up uses the same words which they've heard from the hypocritical mouth. They have heard their fathers talk about being honest or brave or bold, and they have seen their fathers being the opposite of all these things.

"The youngsters have learned to reduce the person to the concrete object and to refuse to see what he might be or to refuse to see him in his symbolic values or to refuse to see him or her eternally. Our kids have desacralized sex, for example. Sex is nothing; it is a natural thing, and they have made it so natural that it has lost its poetic qualities in many instances, which means that it has lost practically everything. Self-actualization means giving up this defense mechanism and learning or being taught to resacralize.*

"Resacralizing means being willing, once again, to see a person 'under the aspect of eternity,' as Spinoza says, or to see him in the medieval Christian unitive perception, that is, being able to see the sacred, the eternal, the symbolic. It is to see Woman with a capital 'W' and everything which that implies, even when one looks at a particular woman. Another example: One goes to medical school and dissects a brain. Certainly something is lost if the medical student isn't awed but, without the unitive perception, sees the brain only as one concrete thing. Open to resacralization, one sees a brain as a sacred object also, sees its symbolic value, sees it as a figure of speech, sees it in its poetic aspects.

*I have had to make up these words because the English language is rotten for good people. It has no decent vocabulary for the virtues. Even the nice words get all smeared up. "Love," for instance. A.M. - 4 -

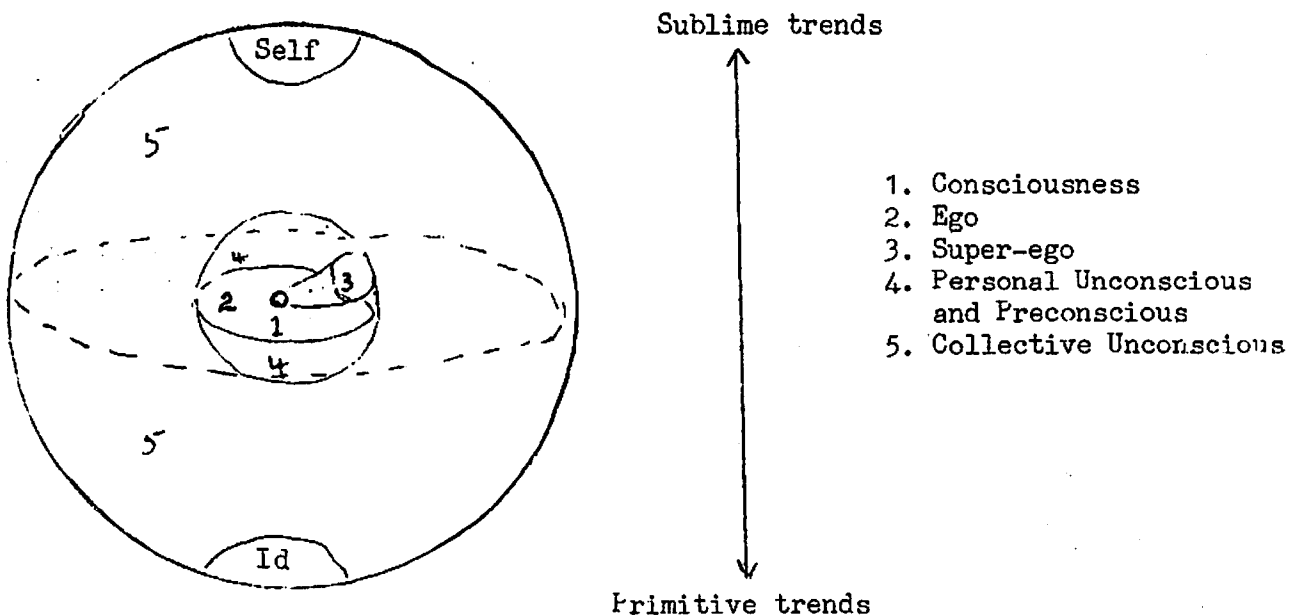
"Resacralization often means an awful lot of corny talk - 'very square, the kids would say. Nevertheless, for the counselor, especially for the counselor of older people, where these philosophical questions about religion and the meaning of life come up, this is a most important way of helping the person to move toward self-actualization. The youngsters may say that it is square, and the logical positivists may say that it is meaningless, but for the person who seeks our help in this process, it is obviously very meaningful and very important, and we had better answer him, or we're not doing what it is our job to do...."

Here is one more quotation from Maslow on another aspect of the sublime; one that is perhaps closer to earth: "The Avoidance of Knowledge, as Avoidance of Responsibility," is the title:

"...the lack of curiosity can be an active or a passive expression of anxiety and fear....That is, we can seek knowledge in order to reduce anxiety and we can also avoid knowing in order to reduce anxiety. To use Freudian language, incuriosity, learning difficulties, pseudo-stupidity can be a defense. Knowledge and action are very closely bound together, all agree. I go much further, and am convinced that knowledge and action are frequently synonymous, even identical in the Socratic fashion. Where we know fully and completely, suitable action follows automatically and reflexly. Choices are then made without conflict and with full spontaneity.

"...this close relation between knowing and doing can help us to interpret one cause of the fear of knowing as deeply a fear of doing, a fear of the consequences that flow from knowing, a fear of its dangerous responsibilities. Often it is better not to know, because if you did know, then you would have to act and stick your neck out."

As far as I have been able to determine we owe this idea of the repression of the sublime to Robert Desoille, the French engineer who made it his avocation to develop the *rêve éveillé dirigé*, or directed daydream, as a psychotherapeutic tool. Desoille has woven theory and experience into a fairly elaborate explanation of how, why, and by what agency the sublime is repressed. He has his own topographical description of the psyche which I have drawn on the blackboard.



You can see it includes the usual Freudian trio - the id, the ego, and the super-ego; but they are now supplemented by a fourth agent, the Self. The area in the center represents consciousness, the ego, the personal preconscious and unconscious, and the further out you go, the collective unconscious. It should be noted that the super-ego does not partake of the collective unconscious.

Desoille borrowed Jung's concept of the self and modified it somewhat. For him it means a state that represents the far limits of sublimation, a state that is the expression of the highest ideal that a person is able to entertain at any given moment. In this case, the id is the usual concept of the animal expression or our affectivity. We experience it as it has been transformed in rising into consciousness, with all the associations that have been called forth by the stimulation of the primitive instincts. Desoille goes on to emphasize the unity of the psyche. The self and the id are considered to be two extreme limits, two opposite poles within the psyche; they never coincide. Each exercises its own attractive effect on the ego in the center; and this conscious ego oscillates back and forth between these two instinctual limits, the primitive and the sublime.

The super-ego is that arbitrary and infantile outgrowth of the ego that represents the strictures and demands of the parents and other authority figures as they were experienced primarily in childhood. Desoille sees it as a temporary structure that must eventually be dissolved and whose role must be taken over by the Self in the mature personality.

At this point, I would like to digress into a description of the types of imagery that Desoille has habitually found to occur in the directed daydream. As you know, Desoille uses the imagery of ascending and descending in order to evoke images at different levels of the psyche, or different levels in the archetypal chain, as he puts it. The idea of ascending to heavenly heights he finds associated with sublimation, euphoria, serenity, and ultimately, with spiritual growth. But it frequently happens that the patient's ascent is blocked by a monster of some sort, perhaps a dragon. Desoille calls this character the "guardian of the threshold" and considers it to be an agent of the childish super-ego, whose function has been in the past to frustrate normal self-expression, e.g. sexual behavior. It is the patient's task in his daydream to struggle with and to overcome this super-ego figure. If he succeeds in doing this in his daydream he thereby nullifies the arbitrary restrictions set up by his parents and other authority figures, and in so doing, accepts responsibility for directing his own sexual and aggressive strivings according to his own judgments. At this point, the ego becomes animated by an intense aspiration to attain a sublimation which is still only glimpsed. The super-ego, which had been constructed from the introjects of the parents as a bulwark against oedipal desires and the like, becomes superfluous as the individual develops autonomy. The Self, with its higher, more sublime goals, supplants the super-ego.

Desoille quotes from Jung an important point: "Jung among others, has emphasized the necessity of shedding one's own instinctive egotism. On this matter, he wrote, 'By virtue of the ancient mystical precept 'Get rid of all that you have and then you will receive,' which means, in effect, that one must abandon the bulk of one's most cherished illusions. It is only then that something more beautiful, deeper, and more comprehensive will develop in one. For only the mystery of the sacrifice of oneself makes it possible for one to find oneself again with a renewed soul. These are precepts of very ancient wisdom which are brought back to light during psychoanalytic treatment....This aspiration,

which must come to us from a region of the unconscious, arises from a deeper layer than the super-ego. That is why it needs a special name. We will go along with Jung and call it the Self.

"The conflict breaks out between the id and the Self. The Self tries to get the ego to satisfy its needs (for the sublime, its yearnings for growth) and the id, in opposing itself to the Self's desires, takes on the role of the repressive agent (and becomes) the expression of a new form of censorship, the repression of the sublime, in this case, of the urge to spiritual growth."

When the patient accedes to these intense aspirations of the Self which we mentioned earlier and attains certain levels of sublimation, the symbol of the guardian of the threshold changes. It is no longer that of a threatening dragon but takes on a different appearance in the daydreams. It generally appears now as a creature who is both kindly and firm, but still bars the route upward. In this situation the patient no longer feels threatened, but he does feel called upon to make a conscious choice between two equally possible attitudes. According to Desoille this is what is taking place. During the previous sessions the subject has become aware of the possibility of developing something more beautiful, deeper, more comprehensive within himself. There has been an intimation of the sublime, a call to become a finer person than he is. But for that to take place, the subject realizes now that he must renounce old habits and stop following lines of least resistance. He must give up the gratification of impulses from the lower unconscious, all of which have been tolerated and even encouraged by the super-ego in the past and accepted by the conscious ego. But the patient hesitates to take this path upward because he feels that it will restrain his freedom and diminish his range of activities. In some cases, the patient may even feel these suggested renunciations have an inhuman character to them. This is when the guardian of the threshold appears - but no longer in a repulsive form. This time, it may take on the form of an angel, for example. The conflict between the Self and the id for possession of the ego, one might say between the sublime and the base, is no longer unconscious. It is now taking place between the ego on the one hand, whose habit it is to accede consciously to those of the id's impulses that had been accepted by the super-ego, these impulses conforming to the lowest moral restraint of everyday life, and on the other hand, the Self, represented by the guardian of the threshold, the angel, whose call is felt to be ever more imperative.

In this case we see that the id, acting through the conscious ego and with the collusion of the super-ego, struggles against the demands of the Self. But at this stage the struggle is quite conscious; and the ego now seeks to suppress the sublime just as it represses what seems to it to be base and vile.

There are three ways in which the patient may react to the image of the guardian of the threshold with its call towards the sublime:

1. During that very session, the subject may suddenly decide to give up his old habits because they suddenly appear to him to represent non-values. These must be replaced by new values, which must be found and possessed. They are symbolized in the subsequent directed daydreams by such images as treasures that are hidden or guarded. Once this decision is made the patient is again able to see himself ascending to greater heights in his directed daydream.

2. The subject may hesitate and the session may come to a halt at that point. Subsequently, while the subject is alone, during the interval between sessions, he may decide to take on the struggle. In subsequent sessions he is then able again to progress as a result of that decision.

3. The subject may flatly refuse, consciously or not, to give up his illusions. With this refusal he makes a negative transference on his therapist. Generally, it is rather discrete and of short duration, says Descoille, except in difficult cases.

Psychosynthesis makes much of the fact that we suppress and deny our impulses toward the sublime. One possible reason why we do this is because the more that one is conscious of one's positive impulses, of one's urges toward the sublime, the more shame one feels for one's failure to give expression to these impulses. There ensues a painful burning of the conscience, a sense of guilt at not being what one could be, of not doing what one could do. This is not super-ego guilt but rather the cry of the Self for its actualization.

But we have available an "easy-out," an escape from this sense of guilt, if we accept those popular intellectual arguments which reduce the call of the higher unconscious to nothing but sublimation of the impulses of the lower unconscious. In fact, in the currently fashionable theory, there is no higher unconscious. Jung decried this reductionism in Modern Man in Search of his Soul more than 30 years ago, but we still find it soothing and comforting to deny these instincts of the higher unconscious and to settle for a degraded self-image because it is an easier one to live with in some ways.

This is the self-image of the well-psychoanalyzed man; he has undergone a sort of psychoanalytical lobotomy of the spirit, a deadening of his normal sensitivity to the higher unconscious and to the possibility of spiritual growth. The key to this denial is probably to be found in Freud's concept of sublimation with its emphasis on aim-inhibited sexual and aggressive drives as the source of the kindly and generous acts of men. This emphasis denied the existence of autonomous impulses towards goodness, toward community. This dogma was especially useful for the reduction of anxiety because it automatically relieved the patient who accepted it of all sense of responsibility for spiritual growth, and of the normal anxiety attended on this quest.

Thus the psychoanalytic theory of neurosis can be seen as a truncated theory of personality which, in an ideological way, tends to relieve neurotic symptomatology by amputating or anesthetizing a portion of the psyche, the highest and most valuable functions, those which urge us on to be the most that is within our potentiality.

Perhaps psychotherapy is right in saying to the severe neurotic that he should temporarily put aside his impulses to the sublime. These impulses, if misused, can lead to ego inflation and solidification of one's pathological self-image. I think one classical picture of this is rigid self-righteousness. It may be that the severe neurotic should be prohibited from dwelling on thoughts of the sublime until he has uprooted the core of his neurosis, just as the aspirant is not initiated into the secrets of the society until he has developed the discipline with which to respect the facts and skills with which to use them.

The problem that psychosynthesis faces, and which I think that psychoanalysis in the classical sense avoids, is to provide a therapy for both the lower and the higher aspects of the unconscious. The needs of the lower unconscious are met more or less successfully by conventional forms of psychotherapy. Religious guidance seeks to enlarge the scope and effectiveness of the higher unconscious; Psychosynthesis provides a philosophy that aims to reach both levels and thereby to effect healthy changes in the expression of both the id and the Self. Psychosynthesis aims to help man to recognize all of his impulses, to accept the responsibility of deciding which to express and which to renounce, and to live with the anxiety that is an inescapable aspect of the struggle for self-actualization.

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Discussion

Swartley: Frank, I assume that most of your diagram, and so forth, is from Desoille's 1945 book. (Haronian: Yes, it is all from the 1945 book.) What happened subsequently?

Haronian: Desoille wrote five all together of which this was the second. I haven't seen the third one, but in the 4th and 5th books one cannot find reference to this material at all. I don't recall the 4th too well, but it seems to me that the whole concept of the Self was soft-pedalled and there was a strong attempt to explain what happens on the basis of Pavlovian theory. I think Desoille wanted to make his approach more palatable to people trained in current psychological thinking. So you won't find this diagram or anything like it in his last two books.

Crampton: It may have been his Marxist persuasion which made him want to make his writings compatible with Pavlovian theory. (Swartley: You mean he made his psychological theory fit in with his political one?) Yes.

Haronian: I found Desoille's first two books far more congenial and interesting to me; not that there is anything wrong with the later ones, but he does omit this theory. It may be that he was simply putting this theory aside because he did not think it was essential to the expression of his main ideas and that it would stand in the way of the acceptance of his practical procedures.

Swartley: From what I know of Desoille, in his later years he became very rigid, and his own behavior was inconsistent with what you have presented. There was a gap of many years there; the book was published in 1945, immediately after the war, although it had been written several years before that, so that the writing is from the late thirties or early forties. Really, I suspect that he wasn't thinking this way in 1945 when the book was published.

Taylor: That he had become more rigid may have been the case; but certainly, when I saw him a year or two ago in Paris, at no time did he attempt to superimpose any particular frame of reference, so he was not openly rigid. (Swartley: But he stifled his disciples.) That may be, but I do not know if he was really rigid.

Crampton: It seems as if, in the last few years of his life, he had stopped growing; and did not produce anything new, for whatever reason. But apparently he did have a great feeling of possessiveness about his system. (Swartley: He did not want anyone to change a word.)

Greenberg: Are these notions in any way connected with some developmental ideas or are they just kind of a finished diagram that is offered without any past? It is all fine to criticize the notion that the sublime instincts are derivatives from the id, but at least from that Freudian point of view, you get some developmental notions as to how the whole story is put together - although it is complicated and nowhere nearly as crisp as this. Are there any developmental ideas animating this notion? It is stated that you get your super-ego from the parents, and that's about it, it seems to me.

Haronian: With regard to the super-ego, what I did try to stress (I am not trying to answer your main question yet) is that the super-ego is not a part of, does

not partake of the urges towards the sublime. Quite the contrary; the super-ego is something that stands in the way of the ascent towards the sublime.

Greenberg: But there isn't a developmental idea in there. My point is that with the so-called "ugly" account that all sublime instincts come from sublimation of lower drives, at least you get an idea of something evolving.

Haronian: I think the closest that we have to an answer to your question is in Maslow's concept of capacity being a need in itself. Dr. Maslow's approach emphasizes many of the things that we are talking about under the rubric of the sublime. What he speaks of as the traits of the self-actualizing person would largely fit into this concept. And he sees these traits as developing on their own in people who have had the advantage of having the lower needs satisfied, and who have been able to get a glimpse, an intimation of the possibilities of higher needs. These intimations have grown out of their own experiences, out of their own lives, not as sublimations of lower needs. So, the answer to your question would be partly in this direction: One must first come to terms with one's sexual and aggressive needs, otherwise the process doesn't happen properly. When one does come to terms with these so-called lower needs and they are satisfied, then one is free, one has the energy and the perceptiveness to respond and to experience other capacities within oneself.

Greenberg: But that is still leaving all the "evolution" kind of explanation pretty much Freudian. I guess what I had in mind was, for instance, a poet like Thomas Traherne, who speaks about joy and goes on and on in every poem about rhapsodic and sublime feelings far beyond anything that ordinary words can convey. He talks about the evolution of capacity (I am thinking of a poem called "Dumbness") - when he says that when you learn to talk, it really disrupts the sense of the sublime. In effect, one should be able to tell some developmental story, starting out with the original nature of the sublime along with the nature of other instinctual forces, the id forces to make this kind of diagram complete.

Haronian: I am sorry, I don't think I can answer any better than that. Perhaps somebody else can.

Miyake: I was wondering about the exploratory drive. I have done some work on that, and this would fit in in terms of the sublime growing out of the exploratory drive.

Haronian: ...the orienting reflex, the exploratory drive; they would fit in with the notion of knowledge and the fear of knowledge about which I drew the quotation from Maslow.

Streitfeld: When Dr. Greenberg speaks about the development of the sense of the sublime, I get the feeling that he implies it must start around age 2 or 3. Why can't it start in adolescence or in the forties? Why do all these have to start or have their origin somewhere around age 2 or 3 or 4...? It can emerge as you get older. I think the Freudian notion has clamped down on anything developing later. (Cooper: There must be a maturation, a maturing, an evolution.)

Haronian: What about all these cognitive functions that we see developing in infancy and right on through?

Greenberg: Going back to Traherne's insights about the sublime, what really seems to happen is that the development of cognition interferes with the perception of the sublime. And the real kind of sublime that we happen to have in infancy is a great union, and that when we start to talk, we lose it.

(Cooper: And then possibly it goes underground and comes up again.) Yes. It seems to me that the people who work this way - I have never worked this way - would be in a position to evolve a developmental account of what goes on.

Winston: I was thinking of children's play in terms of reaching the sublime, but much of children's play is activity for the sake of creating something that in itself is beautiful or pleasant. These are not the kind of games that adults play later, where the objective is to win something; but games like circle games, which we used to play, in which it is more the acting out of a ritual. Certainly the feeling of unity that children have - not only the intrauterine, but that of being one with nature - may not be recalled until much later in life when they are able to go back and be conscious of this. I wanted to say that adolescence seems to be a crucial point at which many people feel the need to go on to the sublime, and yet at this point society crushes down on them, saying "Forget all that and settle down, settle for an ordinary life." I think that an awful lot of rebellion of youth is their resentment at being told to forget about the sublime.

Haronian: I think, George, (Dr. Greenberg) that I may have an answer to your question. There is a three-step process that you find in nearly every developmental theory. Take Heinz Werner, for example. The early embeddedness of the individual in his environment may have a quality of the sublime about it, but it is an ego-less, will-less, "self"-less kind of creature that functions at that level. It does not really have any autonomy; it has not yet brought itself to that stage at which it can direct its own affairs. It is a wonderful state of childlikeness, and this is the sublime that you were referring to, I think, when you spoke of Thomas Traherne - the paradise that we sometimes dream of going back to. This must be given up and normally is given up in the process of development of perception and cognition. It isn't given up completely, but is temporarily submerged so that we develop an ego, an executive that can perceive and in fact, do all the job of cognition. Then, there develops a will, a self-consciousness, a consciousness beyond self-consciousness, if possible. And then, as a final state, there begins to be a sense of the inadequacy of this isolated self, and a reaching back again for a sense of community, for the sense of embeddedness, intimations of which remain in memory. And at this stage, I think you find a condition in which people are then able consciously to shift from being themselves to being part of something else, and to play both roles alternatively, depending on the situation.

Mickans: You mentioned Freud, the id, the super-ego and the ego; you mentioned Jung and the collective unconscious, but when I think of the self, I think about Horney, and her "real self," that grows from the very beginning. I would think that the sublime is included in our desire for self-realization. If it were not for outside influences, we would not repress this sublime; but we have the sublime in us from the very beginning. We don't need to look outside, we have it, we are born with it, in our "real self." This is how Horney looks at it.

Cooper: One of the things about dealing with sublimation is that you run out of words and feelings and thoughts very rapidly; there is not very much written on it.

Miyake: You mentioned the rebellion of youth against authority, and there is this trend towards LSD and heroin, etc. So we seem to have two things: running away from anxiety and running away from authority. And yet, these young people are coming together in these communal-like groups; there is this tribe movement. They have a purpose; they seem to be looking for an expansion of consciousness and a sort of oneness with the universe. So could you comment on these people who are using drugs and grouping together, and so on?

Haronian: I think that what is happening is something like this: let's think of the three stages of development as proceeding from the first primitive state of embeddedness and the sublime qualities of the child and infant state through the second adolescent stage of separating oneself and differentiating oneself out of the mass of humanity, finding oneself, one's conscious self, towards the third mature state of having both roles possible to one: a self with a will and a mind of one's own that is able at this stage to identify with other people, to feel with other people, to take part in community.

Now this is an ideal pattern of what could take place. But what is happening in the people whom you describe is, I feel, that there has been a failure, particularly at this second level in the development of an individual self. There has not been enough discipline exerted by parents. (Maslow called them "dopey parents" who do not have values and standards of their own.) Consequently, the child in growing up has never developed enough sense of self. He gets to this second stage and he cannot really learn its lessons and progress. So, he reverts back to this primitive level again. Regressively, he seeks a sense of community as a child again, instead of as a responsible adult; I think that is what may be happening in these drug-oriented groups.

Cooper: Casriel makes a very big point of this in discussing Synanon, Topic House, Daytop Village, where they are conducting work along this line with LSD users and drug addicts. He feels that what has happened is that they have added a defense, which is isolation or insulation from their environment. They insulate or isolate themselves rather than participate; so that in the therapy or treatment at these centers, what they try to do is to start from babyhood again.

Haronian: Yes; they give them in Synanon exactly what they did not get at this second stage. They give them hell and scold them just like children; and they scold each other and provide each other with the parental discipline and criticism that they failed to get at home. Then, hopefully, they can go forward again instead of falling back to the primitive level, that remembered paradise of infancy.

Cooper: Some of them appear to manage it and to continue to progress and gradually reach a point where they begin to take an interest in the community, in community efforts and affairs. They are now graduating numbers of them - perhaps only a few--but some of them are coming out of Synanon and Daytop; and as they come out, some of them start other groups. They tend to work in a group way rather than in individual efforts. So Frank's three-stage process tells us a whole lot about what is going on in the drug colonies.

Miyake: Do people go there (Synanon) by choice?

Cooper: Not always, because the pressures are getting greater and greater upon the drug users who are now beginning to be pushed into the Governor's Program

or into other similar programs. Also, sources of drugs are beginning to dry up. So they are responding more and more. Synanon is full, and they are expanding; Daytop is starting in Sullivan County now and they are laying the groundwork for another group; Topic House was started in Nassau - they have 75 there and are going to expand tremendously. At the Penitentiary, we are getting a number of them coming in, claiming that they are not even taking drugs at all (so that they can avoid Article 6), but sooner or later it will catch up with them, and this is what they want; they want the pressure put on them to the point where they will feel this need for parental control.

Whitmont: Is this frame of reference just Desoille's or do you accept it in psychosynthesis? Is this your own frame of reference or is it borrowed for the occasion?

Haronian: I think every theory is wrong in some sense (Whitmont: Could you be more specific? What bothers me about it is "Self versus id." Do you buy that?)

Haronian: At this point I am so wrapt^{up} in it that I will say yes, I will buy it; but that does not mean psychosynthesis buys it. This is my personal view. (Whitmont: Does psychosynthesis buy it?) I don't know whether psychosynthesis would buy this particular concept just the way it is; I have found it useful for the particular purpose of this evening's talk; that is, to explain the mechanism of the repression of the sublime.

Taylor: I would answer very much in the way Frank did. This is a tool for heuristic purposes, but there is something about the actual opposition of the id and the Self that I don't think is theoretically sound enough. Perhaps if we followed it up further, we might finally accept it, or modify it somewhat. But for diagrammatic purposes at this stage, it seems worthwhile.

Haronian: Perhaps a partial answer to Dr. Whitmont's question would be that the situation that Desoille's diagram postulates may represent one phase of the developmental process. Eventually, when individuation comes to its blossom and is pretty much completed then the opposition of id and Self no longer exists. There then occurs an integration of all the impulses under the Self so that the id is no longer in opposition to it.

Cooper: I would like to add that the Self itself would not be apparently concerned with the conflict; which would be at the id level rather than at the Self level.

Swartley: There are certainly more than superficial similarities between Roberto Assagioli's diagram of the person as given in his book and Desoille's diagram. This is no coincidence, because Desoille in 1945 was drawing heavily on Jung - his diagram is a minor modification of Jung.

Whitmont: But Desoille's diagram is in full contradiction to all practical therapeutic experience on which Jungian psychology is based.

Swartley: I would say that there is a major difference between Assagioli and Desoille. Without giving any value to the term, there is more balance in Desoille - his diagram is more balanced than Roberto Assagioli's diagram. What I mean by that is - from my experience in talking and working briefly with Desoille and with Assagioli - Desoille had a greater place for the id - in the going up and down, the ascending and descending. In this therapeutic procedure

at least, he appears to have paid equal attention to both; you go down one day and up the next day, and there is equal emphasis on both directions. This is not quite the same as with Roberto, with whom the overwhelming direction of effort is upward.

Then, thirdly, I don't think from what I do know of Desoille, that it is really proper to speak of an opposition between the Self and the id, but rather a dynamic, ever-changing, balance between the two. As Frank put it, the ego is constantly moving between these two poles in a natural sort of way; there being no value judgment as to whether it goes up or down.

Whitmont: My concern is not with Desoille. I am going to address you next month. Therefore I want to assure myself as to where psychosynthesis stands in respect to Desoille's ideas.

Taylor: Because he will be speaking to us on "A Jungian's View of Psychosynthesis" next month, Dr. Whitmont is asking for clarification as to the point of view of psychosynthesis, and not Desoille's.

Hilton: The point that you made, Dr. Swartley, is, I think, important: that we are not as concerned with defining a rigid concept as with finding an approach to man; and we can get bogged down by thinking in terms of a fixed diagram which is only a very rough approximation of the energies and forces in the psyche. We can get into trouble if we start trying to define psychosynthesis too rigidly - I think you mentioned that at our first seminar, Dr. Taylor, where we talked about definitions. Dr. Wolf pointed out that immediately you define, you limit, you exclude something, whereas psychosynthesis is attempting to take in all possible aspects of man. So I think that we do have to be on guard against too rigid a definition. As regards diagrams, we must not "mistake the map for the territory", in General Semantics terms.

Swartley: To put that in other terms, I think Roberto Assagioli (if you want to speak of him as being psychosynthesis) has fought a good fight, saying in essence that all theories have killed themselves and that the more rigidly you adhere to a theory the deeper you are, or you are on the way to becoming. Is that a fair statement?

Haronian: Probably, but other people would say, if you don't formalize your theory, how are you ever going to test it, how are you ever going to demonstrate the validity of your procedures?

Whitmont: Or how are you going to communicate?

Swartley: I would distinguish between two things: building a theory and clinging to it. Roberto has constantly built theories, but has also warned against clinging to them. . . I'd like to raise something that we haven't got into yet: I have had patients, with whom I had very good rapport and great apparent therapeutic movement, etc., suddenly enter a phase of negative transference, like a volcano. I was literally overwhelmed because it came with no warning, no rumblings, not even a sign of an obvious explanation. But now I understand, as the result of your paper. (Haronian: What do you understand?) I understand that I had led them to their sublime - that is a bad way of saying it - my relationship with them had helped guide them to their sublime but they were not able to accept it for whatever reasons and they had nowhere else to go. They had limited direction in which to escape, and at that point the most appealing one

to these people was negative transference - all their inability to accept the sublime was projected onto me.

Haronian: In editing this little talk, I omitted a section of Desoille which is relevant to what you are saying. Since you bring it up, perhaps you'd like to hear it.

Swartley: Yes I would, for there have been a number of these patients, and they have all been, for me, almost traumatic experiences, for they fit into no other category.

Haronian: Desoille says that when the individual is brought to the point of having to make his choice, "If the call of the Self is still too weakly heard by consciousness, the conflict may build up to a very dramatic pitch because the subject does not understand what is going on. Under these circumstances, he may be led to project images which arise from the collective unconscious onto his therapist - and this makes for a transference with a special style.

"Here is how Jung describes projection of the images from the collective unconscious in relation to this kind of transference: 'Suddenly the doctor is seen as endowed with frightening qualities, like a magician or an insane criminal. Or, on the contrary, he may be endowed with the very opposite good qualities; i.e. he may be seen as a messiah. Later, he presents an extraordinary mixture of these two aspects to the patient. Of course it must be understood that the patient does not consciously distort his image of the therapist this way, but his conception of the therapist is distorted by the upsurge of fantastic imagery from the subconscious. If, as quite often happens, the patient does not understand on his own that the form in which the therapist appears to him is conditioned by projections from his own subconscious (the collective unconscious in this case), he may become wildly agitated. It is often very difficult for such patients to understand that these phantasms arise quite truly on their own, and that they have little or nothing to do with the character of the therapist. This tenacious error stems from the fact that the patient does not possess a fund of personal memories on which to base these projected phantasms....It is therefore apparent that at this more advanced stage of the transference relationship, during which the patient experiences imagery which does not arise from personal memories, we are dealing with the deeper levels of the subconscious, levels on which there slumber ancestral images that are shared by all humanity. These images are the archetypes of the collective unconscious."

So, that quotation may help to explain what you (Dr. Swartley) have experienced with some of your patients.

Swartley: I could diagram it, for now I see my mistake. I took the person and helped him to build his ego higher and higher, like a pyramid. But I built more up than sideways, if you can follow the crude analogy. So the whole thing kept getting more and more top heavy, and finally, when the base was not broad enough to hold the towering structure of the ego, there was a sudden and violent shift, and a collapse. (Haronian: What did your patients see you as?) As a mad criminal!

Streitfeld: What is this base that you neglected to build?

Swartley: I haven't thought that out yet, but there are two things: going along with Maslow's hierarchy, I could say that there were some more basic needs,

possibly love, also security needs, which were still unsatisfied; or if you want to talk in terms of pathological complexes, there were neurotic complexes that were unresolved, leaving big holes in the structure, and it fell over because of the conflict and the gaps.

Streitfeld: I would say that the base is essentially the body. If you don't enable the body of the person to tolerate this approach to the sublime, then it is going to collapse - if you don't have the feeling and the energy underneath it.

Swartley: I would agree with you completely. Most therapists don't use the bodily base; and I would also say that because we are more concerned with the sublime, it is more important for us to work on this bodily base than the typical psychoanalyst who is ignoring the sublime, anyhow.

Winston: Could we also say that if the id is intolerably frustrated, that it will not permit the building of the superstructure, and therefore you never get a productive polarity...?

Heronian: I think that this is certainly implied, I had neglected it because I could not get everything into my talk tonight. There is also a point at which the will comes in, and we did not discuss it.

Cooper: That will be the next point, and in a paper which we will have for you shortly: Assagioli's "Psychosomatic Medicine and Bio-psychoanalysis." He goes very clearly into the necessity for the training of the body - the autogenous training - and the necessity of carrying out these activities as you go along with this approach to the sublime. As you make the ascents upward, you have to have a stronger base on which to work. So we are actually back to this question of bio-psychoanalysis. We are always forgetting and leaving out the body mechanism.

Streitfeld: Yes, and we neglect both ends - both the body and the upper regions.

Cooper: And by the use of the will we can do these things, and we can work with the body at the same time that we are making the ascent, if you want to speak of it that way.

Swartley: To build a bodily base obviously you need not only non-verbal but non-mental techniques. As I see it, the middle therapeutic process is intellectual repartee and a Freudian type of analysis; as you go up, the techniques use more fantasy, imagery and symbolism; and as you go down, the techniques are more physical in nature. For a variety of reasons, these last have been avoided. A medical model does not permit touching; the Victorian rejection of the body, and so on. So we are just not familiar with them. And another thing is that people who are intuitive types, types who are especially preoccupied with the sublime, tend to forget about the importance of the body. I would say that this is true of Roberto, at least when I worked with him. He has to work at keeping the body in mind.

Cooper: He states here in this paper "awaken the latent energies, particularly in the higher unconscious...develop the constitutionally weak functions and those arrested at an infantile stage" - which comes back to the body - "and then transmute the abundant bio-psycho energies that cannot be discharged or

expressed in direct ways. Discipline and regulate the manifestation of all psychic energies at every level; harmonize the various functions and energies by constructing an integrated human personality...and promote the integration of the individual into society by means of harmonious interpersonal and group relation." That is a big order, and to do it, we will need the cooperation of everybody in this room. It looks to me that it really calls for a team approach. (Keane: What are you reading from?) Assagioli's speech to the Rome Psychosomatic Week Conference last September. We are having it printed and it will be issued in a few weeks' time to you all.

- end of discussion -