

Psychosynthesis Research Foundation Inc.

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

September 20, 1970

Dear Colleague:

We are resuming our monthly evening Psychosynthesis Seminars in New York City. The meetings will be held at 7:30 P.M. on the third Friday of each month. They will begin on October 16, 1970 and run through April 16, 1971. We have again rented the Directors' Room on the mezzanine of the Park Sheraton Hotel, 7th Avenue and 56th Street, New York City.

We plan to alternate the themes each month. One meeting will be devoted to any psychiatric or psychological topic of general interest, and the next meeting cover some aspect or technique of Psychosynthesis. As in the past, open discussion will be encouraged and copies of the proceedings will be distributed.

Details of the opening meeting on October 16th are given below. We hope it will be possible for you to attend.

Please complete and return the enclosed prepaid and addressed postcard so that we will know if you wish to be informed of future seminars.

Cordially yours,

Jack Cooper, M.D.
phone: 914-669-5105

Frank Haronian, Ph.D.
PLaza 9-1480

DATE & TIME OF MEETING: Friday, October 16, 1970 at 7:30 P.M.

PLACE: Directors' Room, Mezzanine floor, Park Sheraton Hotel, 7th Avenue & 56th St., New York, N.Y. (Please consult notice-board in hotel lobby in case of room change.)

SPEAKER: Frank Haronian, Ph.D.

TOPIC: Psychosynthesis in relation to experience, values, and psychoanalysis.

PSYCHOSYNTHESIS SEMINARS

1970-71 SERIES

First Meeting: October 16, 1970

Speaker: Frank Haronian, Ph.D.
Room 314
527 Lexington Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10017

Subject: Psychosynthesis in relation to experience,
values and psychotherapy.

Participants:

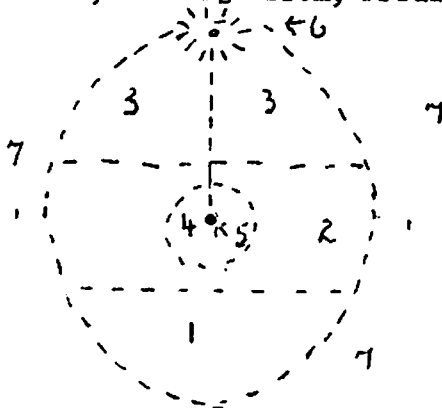
Peter Casgrain <i>psychotherapist</i>	Lucile Kahn <i>transpsychology (W. Wolf)</i>
Jack Cooper, M.D.	Emanuel Kotsos, M.D.
Rena Cooper	Florence R. Miale, Ph.D. <i>psychologist (Rorschach)</i>
Marvin Dworkin, D.C.	George Miale <i>government official</i>
Laura deFreitas <i>dance therapist</i>	Daniel Malamud, Ph.D.
Frances Geer, Ph.D. <i>psychotherapist</i>	Anne Malamud
Frank Haronian, Ph.D.	Bertha Rodger, M.D.
Frank Hilton	Jerry Solk <i>psychologist</i>
Hilda Hilton	Shirley Winston, Ph.D.
Alexander Imich <i>chemist (W. Wolf)</i>	William Wolf, M.D.
Ernest Kamm, Ph.D.	Isaac Zieman, M.A. <i>educator</i>
Murray Kaufman <i>psychologist</i> <i>Columbia student</i>	

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Psychosynthesis; A Personal Overview

Frank Haronian: Roberto Assagioli has repeatedly emphasized the idea that his ideas and methods are all based on solid personal experience. He doesn't ask anyone to take anything on faith. At most, he may ask one to act as if something were true in order to test its consequences before rejecting it.

Today I'm going to begin my presentation with a few descriptions of my own personal experiences as a therapist; experiences which I believe will explain why psychosynthesis makes sense to me. And after that I'll describe my way of functioning as a therapist and why I think that it's a way that's especially psychosynthetic. Then I'll talk a bit about Dr. Assagioli's notions about the structure of the psyche (you can see the well-known diagram here) and how the self, #5 in this diagram, contrasts with, differs from, Freud's concept of the ego.



And then we'll go on to talk a little about the will and its relationship to values. Finally, in order to give a perhaps more comprehensive view, I will summarize what I conceive to be the basic ideas in psychosynthesis, the few basic principles on which it is based.

* * * * *

We are all seeking values by which to guide our behavior, principles by which to make practical decisions in daily life. As children, we are given these values by our parents and our teachers. As adults, it becomes our responsibility to re-examine these old standards and consciously to choose values that fit our expanded and personal views of the world. For this, we use our experiences, from which we try to draw generalizations about life and principles for action. When I look back on my own search for values through my own experiences, one of the most consistent facts that I have discovered is the satisfaction that I get when I see people growing. It may be a child or an adult, it might be a person who is already an effective adult, or it could be an immature, neurotic patient who for the first time manages to pull himself out of a rut. Regardless, I find that to witness and take part in another person's experience of growing is always a satisfying experience, whether I'm an active collaborator or a spectator. This is one of the few experiences about which I can feel completely free of ambivalence, even when the person who is growing is someone who I might think of as my enemy, or someone who strikes me in that fashion at the time. As I see him growing and think about what's happening, I can enjoy it, nevertheless.

I think that this experiential fact about growth leads to one of the most important principles of psychosynthesis, one that is so close to us that we often fail to recognize it; namely, that evolution continues. Evolution is merely a more grandiose term, I think, for growth. We are a part of it, and we each have our own roles to play in it. One aspect of the way in which we do this is in our loving

relationships. To love is to think, feel, and act in a way that fosters the growth of the beloved. So, it might be said that it is love that makes the world grow. According to psychosynthesis, each of us has the responsibility to assess what is happening around us, to ally ourselves with the forces that are working for growth: individual, social, or universal; and to endeavor to eliminate ignorance, selfishness, and destructiveness.

There is another experience that I've had that tells me something important about my own nature and man's nature in general. Whenever I manage to achieve something that was difficult for me or to attain a new skill, I enjoy a temporary feeling of satisfaction and pleasure which may last for hours, maybe days, but seldom longer than that. The gratification of accomplishment is momentary, transitory. Shortly after attaining a skill, I find myself using it automatically as another tool in my repertory of behavior, and soon it doesn't mean much to me anymore. Now that I can do it, I don't think much of it. My attention has directed itself to new goals, new possibilities for growth, and of course, new sources of uncertainty and anxiety. I've lost my conscious sense of achievement because I'm so absorbed in the new problems that now confront me.

So, from this experience I came to two conclusions: (1) I think that we deserve to enjoy our past accomplishments, and that we should make it a point, as Pierre Janet has indicated, to take the time to contemplate our achievements with a sense of satisfaction, to go back in memory at times to what we have accomplished, and to remind ourselves that we are not always at that growing edge, that we don't have to be. (2) After we achieve one thing, we always seem to have a built-in need to find new and more difficult goals. It reminds me of a quotation from Whitman which I would paraphrase as: The achievement of any particular goal always leads to the necessity of facing a more difficult task.

How do these observations relate to psychosynthesis? Because psychosynthesis conceives of man as having an inherent need to grow, it gives relatively more attention to the validation of man's achievements and to the support of his positive striving, than to the analysis of his neurosis. Without neglecting the latter, it attempts to enhance the patient's self-image by helping him to appreciate his own accomplishments, whatever they may be, at his level of readiness to accomplish. As the patient's self-esteem grows, he becomes better able and more willing to scrutinize his errors and tries to exchange his automatic patterns of neurotic behavior for more productive patterns.

Finally, I'd like to add a third observation that I've made in the course of my work as a therapist. Time and again I've noticed that as a patient improves, as conflicts are resolved and energy freed, the patient uses this new-found energy in two general directions: (1) He treats himself more kindly, he indulges himself in ways that often were previously forbidden by too harsh a superego. (2) But, more interestingly, the patient seems to need to be helpful to others, not in a compulsive or neurotic way, but in response to his new-found recognition of genuine needs on the part of other people.

These findings I think fit well with the psychosynthetic concept of the higher unconscious. According to this view, as we mature, we become more aware of and responsive to higher, transpersonal, altruistic needs, needs that are autonomous, needs that are not merely sublimated versions of our more basic biological needs of the lower unconscious.

So far, I've tried to illustrate with generalizations from my own experience why the psychosynthetic view of man makes sense to me. I think that you too, in thinking about your experiences, may find other instances that might corroborate mine, and perhaps later we may discuss these ideas and exchange experiences that are relevant to them.

Now I would like to go on to the question of psychotherapy and the process of therapy as I see it. In the practice of psychotherapy, I think the concepts of psychosynthesis are manifested on many different levels and in a number of different ways. Psychosynthesis is more of an attitude, posture, or point of view than a method or a set of techniques. I have already mentioned its emphasis on growth and achievement, on personal enjoyment and helpfulness to others. Now I would like to talk about collaboration in the therapeutic process.

When I work with a patient, I try as much as possible to meet the patient where he is, to affirm his being and his presence as he is and how he presents himself to me at that moment when we are together. I put out of mind all my past learning, my professional training, all conception of diagnostic categories, all specific technical devices that I might be using with this or any other patient. I try simply to experience with my feelings, my impulses, images, whatever comes to me, this person as he is here and now. I try to be as real and as honest about my perception of him, my feelings about him, my impulses towards or away from him, as I possibly can. If I'm pleased, I smile. If I'm bored, I frown. If the patient talks too much or changes the subject, if he seems unproductive, instead of making some pronouncement ex cathedra that he's manifesting evasive or resistive behavior, I am more likely to say that I'm confused by his talk, that I cannot follow it, and I wish that he'd try to express himself more clearly and, if possible, stick to the point.

On the other hand, very early in my work with a new patient I ask him to pay special attention to his feelings about me, about coming to see me, about any specific incidents that occur between us, and so forth. I stress the importance of his becoming as fully aware as possible of the quality of our interaction, of the process through which our relationship develops. I also inform him that he doesn't have to inform me of all these feelings and ideas and impulses and images that arise in him until and unless he is ready and willing to do so.

I have mentioned an important concept, that of the will, which I am going to discuss at more length later; but for the moment I want to point out two other things. I think that what I'm doing with my patients is really not very unusual, as you've noticed. It's really very similar to the work of Carl Rogers, a client-centered psychotherapist, and people who have followed Rogers. But it does illustrate the psychosynthetic approach to the therapeutic relationship. It may be apparent to you by now that my psychosynthetic orientation manifests itself first of all when working with a patient by my attempts to create as real a relationship, as open, as honest a relationship as possible. My aim is to effect a psychosynthesis on the level of the dyad. By that I mean that I try constantly to absorb myself so completely in this face-to-face interaction that's going on between me and that other person as to be fully engaged and to engage that person as fully as possible in the interaction. And in so doing, I think I am providing a model for the patient as to how I would like to see him act, not only with me but with others as well. This means, of course, that if the patient behaves in an ugly way, I'm going to express my resentment. And if the patient withdraws from me, I express my disappointment, and so forth.

The second point that I want to make about this procedure is that I believe that as therapists grow in experience, regardless of what their original training, most of them tend to do just these things anyhow. Through experience they tend to adopt just this kind of approach to their work. If so, then psychosynthesis is the direction in which we as therapists move when we grow, when we evolve, when we improve. I think it's the outcome of our improved sensitivity combined with our greater freedom to risk being ourselves as people, as human beings, and not to pose as "professionals" with our patients.

(As I wrote this, I realized that I think one of the reasons I like my work so much is that it's often easier for me to be myself with my patients than with my everyday social contacts. Sounds like I may have a problem!) (Laughter)

Now I would like to go back to the point I made when I said that I tell my patients that they need not feel constrained to tell me everything that's on their minds or in their feelings. As soon as possible, I want my patients to have a sense of being in willing control of their part in the interactive process. They have not come to confess abjectly or to debase themselves, although many of them feel that way. They want and they need to maintain their dignity in the process. But they are generally afraid of being made to feel foolish or of acting in a manner they've been made to think of as childish, and so forth. I want to help them to avoid losing face by what they do or say. But they generally are not ready to accept my acceptance of their behavior. So, I try to give the reins to them as much as possible. I try to give them a sense of control over the direction and the speed of the process. In a word, I indicate that I recognize that each of them has a will and that I'm willing to respect it.

It's amazing how many people aren't willing to accept the idea that they have a say in what we do: "You are the doctor. Anything you say, Doc."

The will is one of the central concepts in psychosynthesis. The function of the will is especially suppressed and distorted in patients. After they lost adequate communications with the significant people in their lives, they also lost a sense of being in control of their own lives. We see this in dramatic and delusional form in schizophrenic ideas of being controlled by outer forces.

It is understandable that the patient will tend to perceive the therapeutic situation as merely another experience over which his control is distinctly limited. Therapy can be conceived of as the process of giving back to the patient his will, his sense of control over his own destiny, or at least control over how he is going to respond to his fate.

So, for this reason, very early in therapy, I try to get the patient to express his will in any and all matters that go on between us. And it may even be so minor a question as the distance between our chairs, the hours of our appointments, whether the windows are open or shut. And in any and all of these matters, the patient has a say. But of course I do, too.

We each have the responsibility of being honest with each other, to express our points of view, to air our feelings, and to decide whether we can work together effectively. And, if not, it is also our responsibility to face this alternative realistically. It would then behoove us to recognize that our present limitations as human beings prevent us from creating a therapeutically useful relationship and to give the effort up, at least for the time being.

So, this first and initial aspect of psychosynthesis as it is manifested in psychotherapy may be thought of as an attempt to effect a working synthesis of two individuals who share a common goal--namely, to facilitate and accelerate the growth of one of these two people. However, it is not to be forgotten that to the extent that the therapist is successful, he, too, grows. I am not surprised anymore when I find myself saying spontaneously to my patient "You're good to me. You're good for me."

In talking about the goals of therapy, I've couched them in constructive terms--"to facilitate and accelerate growth." And in so doing, I've manifested a very important belief of psychosynthesis, namely, that when we as human beings are functioning properly, we are constantly striving to grow and evolve, to expand awareness, to assimilate experiences, to enlarge our effectiveness, to be happy, and to radiate our happiness in a loving way to others. From this point of view, it follows that the process that we usually call "treatment" can be seen as really an unblocking of an essentially normal growth process. It is undertaken in order to facilitate the occurrence of events that are simply blocked or distorted.

Normal growth takes place in two reciprocal directions, inward and outward. We're familiar with these directions, but in a different context; i.e., in the writings of Carl Jung. The individuated, effective, mature person has developed in both directions and can willingly orient himself either externally or internally. The West has given greater emphasis to the externally oriented skills and functions while the tradition of the East has been in the opposite direction. The trend toward synthesis of these two approaches is manifest today in, for example, the fascination of Western youth with a myriad of forms of Eastern religious practices, or the engrossment of Eastern nations in the task of catching up technologically with the West.

On the level of personality and psychotherapy, psychosynthesis represents an effort to integrate both the inner and the outer functions. For westerners, this usually means making special efforts to develop those inner functions that have been left undeveloped, most notably the imagination and the intuition.

As in Jungian psychotherapy, we in psychosynthesis believe that the specific course of action that is most suitable for any given individual can best be determined by consulting that individual's psyche. For this purpose, the analysis of dreams or the evocation of guided daydreams seems especially valuable. When the patient is ready to do so, the practice of relaxation and reflection in order to develop the imaginative function (something that I think is grossly underrated in modern western psychology and psychotherapy) would be encouraged, because it is a source of information about one's potentialities which comes directly from one's inner self.

In psychosynthesis there are also a number of particular procedures for developing the intuitive functions. These generally are used in the latter part of therapy. Intuition is another aspect of the psyche that we in the West tend to neglect, and it is partly because psychosynthesis refocuses attention on these two functions that I think that psychosynthesis tends to re-integrate the outer and the inner, the eastern and the western, within the context of psychotherapy. I do not think that this is done as consistently by other points of view.

We think that it's important that each person have a strong will, but a strong will is not sufficient in itself. It must also be a will that is identified

with the highest and most valuable functions of the individual. The will can become the slave of one's body, of one's intellectuality or of one's emotions. While one should be free fully to experience all of one's emotions, their expression must be tempered by rational considerations. The excesses of expression of sexual and aggressive drives and their appropriate emotions are only encouraged within the context of a cathartic psychotherapeutic experience; they are not encouraged as habitual ways of going about conducting oneself in daily social situations.

In that connection, I am reminded of a letter that I received from a humanistically oriented psychologist in which she expressed her disillusionment with much of what goes on in the human potential movement today. She said that she feels that much of it should be put under the rubric of the "animal potential movement." I think her point of view concurs with psychosynthesis.

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As I understand Roberto Assagioli, he is really not interested in systematizing his ideas, in organizing them in some clearcut, symmetrical pattern. He has adopted some of Jung's basic views of personality, but he has modified Jung's concepts in significant ways on the basis of his own observations. There is no definitive psychosynthetic theory of personality, and Dr. Assagioli hopes that there never will be one. We expect to see the system kept open to the possibilities of growth and change, because we believe that it's not possible to perceive and organize all the multifarious facts of psychological existence. Each effort, we hope, will be more and more inclusive, more explanatory, more esthetically elegant. Each formulation, we hope, will lead to a better understanding, not only of how men function but of how more effectively to help men grow to greater social usefulness and personal satisfaction.

The self is one of the central concepts in psychosynthesis. But before describing the self, I'd like to begin by placing it in its proper context--that is, within Dr. Assagioli's model of the structure of the psyche. (See diagram on p. 1)

Starting from the outside, the collective unconscious, marked 7 on this diagram, has permeable boundaries with the personal unconscious, marked 1, 2, and 3. The personal unconscious is subdivided into (#1) lower, (#2) middle, and (#3) higher areas, none of which is rigidly demarcated from the others.

The field of consciousness, #4, represents the limited material that exists in consciousness at any particular moment. This is centered around the personal self, #5, the center of consciousness and of will. The personal self is the focal point of consciousness. It is not the contents of consciousness, nor is it the various functions and roles of the personality. It has these contents, it owns them, but it is not identical with them. In psychosynthesis, consciousness is defined as separate from its contents; as existing independently of afferent stimulation.

Finally, the transpersonal self is represented by the star, #6, at the top of the diagram. This higher, transpersonal self is the link between individual reality and transpersonal reality. The transpersonal self is, paradoxically, both individual and universal, half in the individual and half outside of him. Because it does not generally function on the personality level, I will not discuss it now except to say that the personal self, the center of consciousness and will on the personality level, #5, in the diagram, is thought of as a diminished reflection of the transpersonal self.

The Freudian concept of the ego is a broader and much more inclusive one than that of the self. It includes the mechanisms of defense, the control of the motor apparatus, the operation of the several sensory modalities. In Freudian thinking, the ego is the mediator between the demands of the id, the superego, and the outer world. And, finally, consciousness is also a function of the ego.

In psychosynthesis, we separate the functions of consciousness and of control from the ego and assign them to the personal self. This is merely an extension of the psychoanalytic observation that the ego is able to split itself so as to sustain two or more different attitudes simultaneously. For example, the ego can utilize its defenses while carrying on an activity and also observing this activity. But we find it useful to separate the defensive functions of the ego from the directive and observing functions, and to assign these latter to what we call the personal self.

The censoring functions of the ego have generally been grouped under the name of the superego. We see this as an agglomeration of rules and regulations more or less arbitrarily imposed by authority figures on the growing child. But, as the individual grows in knowledge and expands in consciousness, we expect that he is naturally going to question and reconsider these arbitrarily imposed rules of the superego and gradually replace them with the fruits of his own judgment. It is in this way that the superego is dismantled and replaced by an adult conscience. This conscience is not based on the arbitrary edicts of parents and other authority figures but on the enlightened consciousness of the individual.

One concomitant of this process of maturation is that the defensive functions of the ego will tend to wither away. Another is that as consciousness expands and energy is freed from neurotic complexes, the directive role of the self becomes enlarged.

In French, as you may know, there is only one word for consciousness and conscience. I've long suspected that this semantic fact represents an important psychological fact--namely, that a mature conscience is rooted in and may even be identical with a broad and expanded consciousness.

The will is the name that we give to the controlling and directing functions of the personal self. It is so essential a part of ourselves that we tend to ignore it, to neglect it, even to deny its existence. But its presence and functioning is evident whenever we are faced with alternatives, decisions, or choices between different courses of action, whenever we must consciously and intentionally adopt a course of action and carry it out.

Although we characterize the will by a noun, I don't think of it as a thing or an entity but rather, as a process or a function, the process of deciding, of choosing and renouncing among alternatives. And, because of this, the process of willing depends on the holding of values.

Modern psychology in its attempt to be "scientific" has given up values. But, because willing depends on values and because values have been thrown out of psychology, psychology has for sometime ignored the will. Having thus purified itself or, should we say, sterilized itself, by attempting vigorously to throw out all values, psychology thereby gave up any interest in recognizing or understanding the will.

The essential problem in establishing willing control over one's behavior is the process of putting that behavior within the context of superordinate values, values whose reality and importance are more potent than whatever value inheres in the behavior itself. Assagioli's method for employing the will can be seen as a step-by-step procedure for doing just that. When the willed behavioral act, even if unpleasant, takes on the valence of the higher value, it can be executed willingly. I willingly undergo painful operations at the hands of my dentist because I value my teeth. In a critical battle, a soldier may willingly sacrifice his life in order to save the lives of his buddies.

Wolpe's concept of reciprocal inhibition may also fit into this model. One can inhibit an undesired item of behavior by willingly substituting a more acceptable, more highly valued one which, by its nature, cannot be performed simultaneously with the undesirable one. The more desirable act is, by definition, the more highly valued one.

This process of reciprocal inhibition is essentially negative in character because it involves blocking one act by interposing another. But there is another process of willing which is more positive in nature, which might be called mutual facilitation.

Forty years ago the Russian psychologist Luria demonstrated this mode of the will in work with victims of Parkinson's Disease, paralysis agitans. Luria asked his patients to squeeze a rubber ball for an indefinite number of times--just squeeze it, keep squeezing. Because of their neurological disability, the task was an extremely difficult one for them. Then Luria changed the task slightly but in a manner that was very significant because it put the task under the direction of higher symbolic mental processes. He said, "Squeeze the ball five times and count as you do it." When the patient was instructed to count while squeezing, the formerly difficult task was greatly facilitated. When the patient willingly employed his higher and intact symbolic functions, he was able to exert greater control over lower, defective, psychomotor functions. This appears to be a remarkable illustration of the role of the will acting through verbal symbols in order to control behavior.

The act of willing includes the focusing of consciousness in any one of several directions. It is also expressed by the intentional employment of any one of several functions of personality. The will needs to use little energy of its own. When it functions properly, it controls the energy of the organism. But it itself is not that energy. The will can be likened to an agent who can either provide or deprive the various functions of the personality of energy, as it chooses.

The act of willing may be either imperative or acquiescent in character. An imperative will seeks to create certain effects and to put energy to work towards a given objective. But when the will is in an acquiescent mode, it seeks to permit or to allow certain events to occur, such as falling asleep. The imperative mode of the will controls the senses and the body's response to them, forms figure-ground relationships, defines form, enumerates objects, manipulates concepts in abstract thought, and seeks to influence events toward preconceived directions or outcomes.

On the other hand, the acquiescent mode of the will attends to inner sensations, to the physical expressions of emotions, and to the emotions themselves.

The acquiescent mode of the will observes inner imagery in any of the sensory modalities without attempting to control or direct it. It can turn away from external stimulation. It can refuse to act. We use the acquiescent mode of the will to relax, to calm our emotions, to stop our thinking--in a word, to clear our consciousness and to invite what may present itself.

The will can direct consciousness along any of three dimensions. First and most familiar is the polarity of the outside world versus the inner experience. Secondly, there is the dimension that ranges from the sublime or higher values to lower or material values. And, finally, there is the time dimension of past, present, and future.

The first of these three dimensions is the well-known extroversion-introversion polarity. The second was offered by Assagioli under the label of supraversion vs subversion. Supraversion is the direction of interest towards the higher unconscious, towards more transpersonal, altruistic interests, towards positive values, towards activities of an esthetic or of an intellectual sort. Subversion (which I prefer to call infraversion to avoid the obvious reference to subversion's usual meaning) may manifest itself as a fascination with the lower unconscious, with the material, the carnal, the sensual.

Concerning the third dimension, the dimension of time, to be absorbed in memory is to focus one's attention on the past, while an interest in the future is often manifested by the production of anticipatory fantasies. This polarity might aptly be called retrospection vs propection.

Assagioli has pointed out that it is erroneous to think of a person as being consistently extraverted or introverted; during the course of one's life there are normal developmental shifts from one direction of interest to another. Moreover, at any given period, one may manifest some functions in an extraversive fashion and others in an introversive mode. One of the goals of maturation is to develop and to have at hand both directions of interest, to have both at the command of one's will, and to be able to use each when it is appropriate.

Although Assagioli's opinions are not on record with regard to the other two dimensions of interest, supraversion vs infraversion and retrospection vs propection, I believe that he would express similar opinions regarding them. There should be a balance in the directions of interest and a capacity to shift willingly from one pole to the other in response to the demands of one's changing life situation. When those rare instances occur in which all three directions of interests are balanced, I believe that we are experiencing a fully interactive relationship. To put it briefly, a full relationship between two people can be conceived of as a momentary meeting at the interface of I and Thou in the here and now. This is a shorthand expression for the simultaneous resolution of the tensions that are inherent in all three dimensions of interest, these resolutions occurring in two people who are together. I will try to explain that more carefully.

To me, to meet at the interface of I and Thou means that each member of the pair is willingly and consciously as close to the other as is possible; so close that for each person, the subject-object dichotomy is blurred and more or less dissolved. Ego-needs are not operative. Self meets self, and these disinterested aspects of each individual merge for a moment in a sense of union and brotherhood. This synthesis is the resolution of the Jungian polarity of introversion vs extraversion. In the moment of relationship there is a sense of community of

interest or at least of absence of conflict of interest. Hence we feel that the inner-versus-outer, self-versus-other distinction is meaningless for us at this moment, in this relationship.

I said that the relationship takes place in the here and now. By "here", I mean to indicate the resolution of higher and lower interests, the breakdown of the polarity of supraversion versus infraversion. In a full relationship, both the carnal and the spiritual are present. I used to be surprised at the mild feelings of sexual arousal that I felt at times of close spiritual communion with others, whether male or female. I now believe that this physical response is a normal part of my total responsiveness to another person's being, a response that is both spiritual and carnal, both idealistic and sensual. The most obvious example of this is the loving relationship that exists between a man and a woman who are truly respectful of each other. When both the carnal and the spiritual find expression and fulfillment in the relationship, there is a resolution of the polarities of supraversion versus infraversion.

Finally, there is the resolution of the temporal dimension of past versus future. This occurs by the focussing of attention on the "now". When we are fully involved in a relationship there is for us at that moment no past or future, only that moment. Time stands still; but more than that, all memories are put aside and all anticipations are suspended. In this way, the freshness and uniqueness of the moment of relationship is fully experienced. At such moments, one is free of all thoughts of future personal advantage and of past resentment and hurts. The moment exists for itself and is its own justification. One could conceive of the long range goal of psychosynthesis as the establishment in each of us of a full, permanent sense of such a relationship with all other beings.

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So far, I have spoken about some of my personal experiences and what values they have led me to. Then I tried to describe my view of therapy and how I do it, the concept of the self and its difference from the Freudian concept of the ego, the concept of the will and its relation to values. Then, after describing the various directions of interest in psychosynthetic personality theory, I defined the relationship in terms of these three dimensions.

I would like to draw to a close with what I think is as succinct a statement of the essentials of Psychosynthesis as I have been able to distill for myself. They come to about seven or eight points.

First of all, there are autonomous, so-called higher or transpersonal drives, and these are not merely aim-inhibited or sublimated versions of lower drives. When sublimation deprives the lower drives of their energy, this energy can be diverted for the expression of higher drives. But these higher drives exist in their own right.

Secondly, there is a higher unconscious--#3 on the diagram--that counterbalances and is just as important in our lives as our so-called lower unconscious. This is a source of inspiration, of intuition, and of a kind of pre-rational knowledge of the ineffable, if we know how to tune into it.

Thirdly, the personal unconscious is contiguous with the collective unconscious as described by Jung. There are no hard and fast boundaries.

Fourth, consciousness is a reality that exists in its own right. It is not merely the product of afferent stimulation. The seat of consciousness is the

personal self, and that is to be distinguished from the ego.

Fifth, cultivation of the personal self strengthens both the willing and the integrating functions of the psyche. This is done by a process of dis-identifying from one's body, one's emotions, one's intellect, one's personality.

Sixth, the personal self is a reflection on the personality level, on the level of everyday consciousness, of the transpersonal self, which is the individual's spiritual link to all other beings and to the cosmos. This higher self is an inner source of wisdom, of altruism, of growth, of creativity, which, when we are able to reach it, is a better source of guidance and direction for us than either the advice of others or the decisions at which we arrive in a more intellectual way. Regardless of how disturbed the person may appear on the surface, this inner center of sanity, wisdom and value is there and can usually be evoked.

At this point, you may quite reasonably challenge me with my own earlier statement that psychosynthesis is based solidly on experience. If that is so, you may wonder how I have dared to bring in such a fuzzy and mystical concept as the transpersonal self. I think this deserves an explanation.

Most of us have, at one time or another in our lives, experienced moments of truly transcendent bliss, joy, serenity, security, or happiness; moments that were not explainable logically on the basis of our life situation or our physical condition. These experiences may have been of cosmic insight, of complete spiritual union, or of perfect security. The religious mystics call them illumination. Bucke used the term "cosmic consciousness" for them, and more recently, Maslow has popularized the concept of "peak experiences." Most people hesitate to talk about these experiences - partly because they are so hard to describe and partly because they definitely contradict the common wisdom about reality. But we secretly remember these moments and cherish them as clues to the existence of a deeper meaning to our lives that definitely transcends our day-to-day understanding. Any model of man that attempts to be complete must include these experiences and offer an explanation of them.

To put these experiences in terms of psychosynthesis, one would say that for a brief period of time, the close but normally hidden link between the personal self, the seat of consciousness, and the transpersonal self, one's link with reality beyond the self, that this relationship was momentarily revealed, that the veil was briefly parted. Psychosynthesis attempts to incorporate this rather common but difficult-to-express experience of the transcendent in its model of man. It does so by postulating the existence of the transpersonal self.

This naturally leads to our seventh point. Psychosynthesis postulates that our several destinies are all entwined, or as John Donne put it, "no man is an island entire unto himself." Therefore, for our own welfare, it behooves us to learn to live congenially and cooperatively with all others.

And, finally, the universe continues to evolve, and man with it. There is an intrinsic unity that undergirds and holds together the apparent diversity that we see about us. Each man can choose either to work with and for this dynamic synthesizing process that is the evolutionary trend of the universe, or he can resist it. Each man finds the meaning to his particular existence in the way that he responds to this synthesizing, evolutionary direction.

Psychosynthesis is one mode of manifesting one's awareness of this cosmic purpose: In this case, by working to integrate body, mind, and soul into an organically coherent and functionally harmonious human being.

This is just about the sum, as I see it, of psychosynthetic doctrine, such as it is. Psychosynthesis gives consideration to all serious efforts to understand man and to treat his psychic disturbances and finds that all are useful at some time and for some kinds of patients. Psychosynthesis does not conceive of its message as replacing existing methods but rather as supplementing and extending them beyond the purpose and treatment of psychic disturbance and into the area of personal growth and unending development.

In conclusion, psychosynthesis emphasizes the value of a will that is versatile in capacity and flexible in response to the demands of the changing scene. The mature person is seen as attentive to both external reality and inner experience. He remembers and uses the past just as he plans for the future. He gives due attention to both his physical nature and his spiritual strivings. In effect, he has learned willingly to shift the focus of his consciousness and the direction of his efforts readily and rhythmically from one legitimate direction to another. And, beyond that, he is able to establish a position of poise in the here and now at the interface with another human being. This ability to join with another at the interface of I and Thou in the here that reconciles higher and lower values, in the now that reconciles memories of the past and anticipations of the future-- I think this is the hallmark of a genuine synthesis of psyches, and an indication that a true, if momentary, balance has been reached among the directions of interest in both parties. At this moment, each is completely open to the other, completely absorbed in the other. An experience of synthesis is occurring and is being shared. At this moment, each knows something of what the full potential of a relationship can be. Each now has a touchstone, a standard with which to gauge the quality of all future personal encounters. And henceforth, each is prepared to be a more genuine person in his future relationships.

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DISCUSSION

Wolf: First, I want to congratulate Dr. Haronian and ourselves for having had this very excellent overview of the principles that have to do with psychosynthesis and incidentally with other viewpoints. There are a number of questions or remarks that have been stimulated.

One of them--it was interesting when he said as he wrote the paper he began to see that he likes to do the work because it's easy for him. And that brings up the importance of what I call, and have spoken about, "the wisdom of ease and the ease of wisdom." In other words, wisdom almost connotes ease, and ease almost connotes wisdom. In other words, if we fiddle around too much and make things difficult, it becomes less and less wise, and I think many of us have noticed that.

Another thing that he mentioned was this experiment by Luria about the squeezing of a ball. He found that when this fellow with Parkinson's Disease would try to squeeze the ball, he couldn't do it very well until he was focused on a certain thing, such as counting. In other words the suggestion was made to him and he did not know how often or for how long; and because of this a great deal of anxiety is produced by that uncertainty. By suggesting a certainty, he would gather--his anticipation would gather--a great deal of energy and strength that was previously dissipated in anxiety. This again is, I think, a broad principle that is very well known and I think should be kept in mind. For example, where so many indefinite anxieties are being shot at us by news media, and by indefinite innuendoe and threats and so on that are being disseminated, as soon as one focuses things into a definite direction and into a definite limitation, a great deal more energy is mobilized for a particular purpose; and I believe this makes for inner peace--plus all the other suggestions that were made to develop the inner self.

Mrs. Miale: I want to know the address of the "Animal Potential Movement." It sounds like an extremely important direction that probably should be expanded and developed. (Cooper: I think it's 42nd street!) (Laughter) I mean to make a real point about the ease with which we accept that that would be a negative thing; and I think much of what you said, Frank, was an assertion of the importance of the positive aspect of the animal potential as well as the human.

Haronian: I said that certainly in a critical way. I don't mean to minimize the animal, but I do think there are things that are going too far and I think some people are stuck on the "animal" side.

Mrs. Miale: I feel, listening to you, as though in a way I've come home. I've been struggling without any group of fellow thinkers in developing Jung's ideas in relation to existential ideas and my own unlabeled ones, and now to actually find myself wanting to counterbalance an accentuation of the positive has me feeling very strange; but I do want to counterbalance it at the point where you speak of the necessity to emphasize the positive resources of the person and balance the anxieties, the fears, the negative feelings. I would like not to criticize that, but simply to emphasize the importance of accepting the authenticity of suffering.

I think it's terribly easy when one gets carried away with the positive meaning of unconscious forces to tend to undo and counterbalance the reality of suffering.

Haronian: I'm glad you brought that up. I hope I didn't give the impression of suggesting somehow or other we should focus the patient's attention away from his suffering. In fact, in my own work I try as much as possible to help my patients to confront as much of their suffering as fast as they can, to shove their noses in it and go along with them. Sometimes a patient will start hallucinating during the hour; and I'll say, "Come here," and I'll grab hold of them, and while they're hallucinating they're telling me what's going on. "Look at it. Tell me what you see and what's going on exactly."

So, I believe very much in preserving the authenticity and enhancing the reality of the suffering right then and there.

Kamm: I would like to comment on two things. Number one, you brought out dreams as one of the tools through which we can get to imagination, and enhance the intuitive side of the individual. This is one road, but I am sure you will agree not the only one. I myself in my own therapeutic experiences have--happening to be a music lover--found haunting melodies, for example, just as valuable; and, in my case, even more valuable. Of course, this would not be usable by a man like Freud or Jung, because Freud hated music and Jung was indifferent to it. That's why they didn't use it. They neglected it, actually.

The other point that I would like to bring out--and in another group that I attended in Washington this same point was brought up--is that there are some therapies, and Freudian analysis is one of them, that more or less concentrate on the young. In other words, Freud was interested in people primarily under 40, let's say, or even preferably their twenties. Whereas Jung, for example, broke away from that and focused his interest in the middle aged and even the elderly. If I understand correctly, Assagioli and Psychosynthesis is the same way. They are interested in more or less all ages, including the middle aged and the elderly. (Haronian: Yes)

Imich: Speaking of growth, what does psychosynthesis see as the end for the growth, or Dr. Assagioli? Does he consider the subject at all?

Haronian: There are many different manifestations. If I may, I will resist the word "end"; the end is death. But there is no end to growth, hopefully. We keep growing until our last breath. The end of growth, the ends or the purposes or directions, can be expressed on many different levels. I'll take three. The inner-personal level would mean a respect for and an ability to use one's body, one's mind, one's feeling, and one's intellect, in an integrated, synthesized way towards goals that transcend one's own personal needs; hopefully, towards trans-personal goals, if you will--what we call spiritual goals, in common parlance.

On an inter-personal level--beyond the inner-personal--the capacity to empathize with, understand, and relate effectively to other people and to be understood by them--again, a kind of synthesis.

And on the transpersonal level, the acceptance of and the finding of values beyond one's personal or inter-personal relationships, a relationship of a larger sort to what is evolving in what Teilhard de Chardin would call the noosphere.

Hilton: To my understanding there is no end to growth whatsoever. If we look at the growth of man, his consciousness, from primitive man to someone like an Einstein.

why should we assume that there's an end, because humanity is still evolving. And I think the growth is infinite.

Haronian: In that connection, somebody said, "It's foolish to go around looking for the missing link. We are the missing link,...between the animals and the kind of human being that there is going to be--that is coming into existence."

Cooper: Frank's statement about the end is death is interesting too, because now they're beginning to study death--thanatology. In England there is a hospital in which people can now go to die in peace, and be studied comfortably rather than tied up with needles and syringes and things of this nature. I believe that we can study these experiments and find probably a tremendous potential for further growth--infinite, as Frank has said. I don't see death as an end. Maybe it's a part of a process, as probably you know from your study of parapsychology.

Imich: It was mentioned that psychosynthesis is a synthesis more western than eastern. (Cooper: And eastern!) Well, you see, eastern wisdom has much more to say about death and the final goals. I am just interested to know how much consideration is given to that by the official representatives of psychosynthesis.

Cooper: Very much; we don't necessarily see death as an end. It is still a part of the total of human existence. We want to research that too.

Malamud: I would like to ask a question about selves in relation to personal self and higher self. How do you see Fritz Perls' conception of selves, for example, the top-dog fighting it out with the under-dog, or the three-faces-of-Eve kind of selves, or the Eric Berne parent-child-adult kind of selves? Do you see them having some place in the scheme that you've outlined?

Haronian: My first reaction is that in each of the instances that you've mentioned, whether it's Berne or Cleckley or Perls, what each of these people is dealing with, I think, are either different aspects of personality or different personalities (in the case of the three faces of Eve) and that is all on the level of the personal self or the ego or a combination of these functions. I don't see anything significant here for the higher self, for the transpersonal self.

The top-dog, the under-dog situation somehow or other strikes me as being largely two faces of the ego or different aspects of the ego and not really very much related to what we're concerned about in terms of self, personal self.

The three faces of Eve would be three distinct and more or less pretty well integrated personalities, again on the level of the ego and the personal self but having nothing to do with the higher self.

Cooper: In role playing, which I think we're talking about at the moment, Berne of course recognized that people were playing games with his book; it was one of the problems that he had. And, to me, the closest thing to psychosynthesis in Berne's book was the little paragraph or two in the back on autonomy, where he was beginning to talk about reaching the stage where you're above playing games. I think at that point he was on the verge of saying something akin to psychosynthesis.

To go back to what Dr. Miale said before; when I first came in contact with Assagioli, I too said, "This is it! This is what I've been thinking towards also." And I think Berne also reached the same stage--in re-reading his few

paragraphs on autonomy they seem to me to be related to psychosynthesis. All the rest I assume to be role playing.

Roberto Assagioli spent many sessions with me in talking about role playing, and playing it in such a way that you can dis-identify from the role--and dis-identify from the top dog, the bottom dog, and the various games that are played. So I believe that in psychosynthesis the emphasis lies on the autonomy, the ability to see our own role playing and evaluate it as such. But most important is the question: "How are you as an autonomous individual?"

Haronian: Another way of putting it: If you're able to observe, to stand back and watch yourself playing these roles, then you're functioning autonomously at that point, or you stand a chance of taking charge of and controlling your parent, adult or child roles, as the case may be. And that's when the personal self is coming on very strongly.

Winston: Could you say anything about the techniques of moving the individual toward the transpersonal self?

Haronian: The techniques of spiritual psychosynthesis would be involved in what you're talking about. I myself do not discuss with or approach the question of spiritual psychosynthesis with any client or patient that I am working with until there seems to be the urge on their part to really do something in this direction. I am reminded of the clergyman who said that although he did a lot of pastoral counseling, he never talked about God until the client started talking about God. And I'm inclined to deal with spiritual psychosynthesis in the same way.

When, however, there is really an interest aroused in the patient to move in this direction--and not everybody wants to go in that direction--there are a number of exercises that we can use that are very effective. I think that an exercise that we use in personal psychosynthesis, the visual "Who Am I?", for example, that you're all familiar with, can automatically lead into spiritual psychosynthesis if the patient is ready. They may stay on the personal psychosynthesis level or they may move beyond that spontaneously without realizing it.

Certain exercises, like the disidentification exercise, again works on both levels. The exercise of the rose, however, is an exercise that is designed more clearly, I think, to reach to the spiritual level and beyond, and there are other such exercises that evoke answers from the higher unconscious. I think, Dan, that in your exercise on the flame, for example, there is a tendency to push upward, forward, beyond the personality level to the transpersonal self. So, there's a wealth of such exercises.

Cooper: Apropos your question, Shirley, in working with my class of people at the penitentiary, I'm impressed with the spiritual development of these people. In many instances, by using the Assagioli questionnaire (which is given in the Manual) you can see that their interest in this is much more intense than you would first think. They don't want to discuss it with you; a lot of times they will be quite shy and worried and frightened that you--as a psychiatrist--might think that they're nuts if they start talking about intuition and things of this higher nature.

So, I go the other way from Frank. I try to open up this channel as soon

as possible. I'm impressed that what we're doing mainly is uncovering. It's there; it has been there for the longest; and it's just a matter of allowing it to come out and having them feel free to discuss it.

Last Thursday afternoon I was sitting with 30 hardened criminal types discussing just this very thing. We started at 12:30 and we wound up at ten minutes to five. We would have gone on, but they had to break off for supper. But it's an intense experience to see people wanting to do this in the penitentiary where I'm working.

Hilton: I'd like to comment on that, Jack. I think both your and Frank's approaches are tied together. Shirley, you raised the question of making contact with the star at the top of the diagram, or a true spiritual psychosynthesis, which is what Frank was speaking about. But I think that what Jack was talking about was an intermediate step which is tapping or releasing the higher unconscious. As regards the star at the top of the diagram, this is something that I think very few people will ever fully contact.

Cooper: To go back to Dr. Kamm's remark about music. When you release the music that is within the individual, it's amazing. To watch a person who has never played an instrument before just sit down and try, and all of a sudden somewhere along the line there is a kind of Montessori breakthrough in which they are playing music that is there inside their consciousness. Or to have them begin to discuss spiritual things that they've had there inside themselves all along but for some reason or another had been pushed back.

Wolf: This is, incidentally, also part of the autogenic training of Schultz, where this resistance is broken rather readily.

Mr. Miale: May I just say that I would like to thank Dr. Haronian for introducing me to the higher unconscious!

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