

Psychosynthesis Research Foundation, Inc.

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December 1, 1970

Dear Colleague:

The third meeting of the 1970/71 series of Psychosynthesis Seminars (held on the third Friday of each month) will be held on Friday, December 18th at 7:30 P.M.

Our speaker will be Dr. John Parks, Medical Director, Comprehensive Care Centers, Lexington, Kentucky; his subject will be "The Will", and following his talk will be the usual group discussion.

We hope it will be possible for you to be with us at this meeting.

Cordially,

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DATE & TIME OF MEETING: Friday, December 18, 1970 at 7:30 P.M.

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

SPEAKER: John H. Parks, M.D.

SUBJECT: THE WILL

PSYCHOSYNTHESIS SEMINARS

1970-71 SERIES

Third Meeting: December 18, 1970

Speaker: John H. Parks, M.D.
1226 Lakewood Drive
Lexington, KY 40502

Topic: The Will - Conceptions and Experiences

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THE WILL - CONCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES

John H. Parks, M.D.

Tonight I would like to discuss two things. The first is Western philosophical and theological concepts of will. The second, actual experiences with patients and friends wherein active conscious training of the will was stressed.

Conceptions of the Will

Throughout the history of human thought, the will has been the object of discussion among philosophers, theologians, educators and psychologists. Reason, understanding, and thought, on the one hand, and will, choice, freedom, responsibility, on the other hand, have commonly been used to describe the human being as he differs from other animals.

Perhaps the oldest, most deeply rooted discussion among thinkers has been the question as to whether or not the will is free. To provide a continuity of thought, we will review some of the thoughts of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, and Duns Scotus. Then we will go into modern thought, and review the concepts of the father of modern philosophy, Descartes, and then Hume and Locke, who are the founders of modern empiricism, because I think much of our philosophical thought on will does stem back to these early modern philosophers. Finally, we will end with Kant.

To get back in the early days, Plato in his Republic divides the human soul into three parts: reason, spirit, and appetite. Reason is the faculty of thought and knowledge, whereas spirit and appetite are principles of action.

Later writers used the word "will" in place of Plato's spirit. Reason guides and rules spirit and appetite. But, according to Plato, reason requires spirit in order to influence action.

Aristotle follows along with the thinking of Plato. He uses the word "will" to designate a motivating force. And he also often uses the words wish, choice, purpose, impulse, appetite and desire synonymously with will. This force is also the factor which turns thought into action. Animals, as opposed to man, lack reason and have no choice, no wish, and no purpose. Consequently, irrational animals have no will.

Augustine holds that Adam was created with free will, able to choose between right and wrong. He chose wrong, committing the original sin. God alone can reform corrupted man. The human will does not achieve grace by an act of freedom but rather achieves freedom by grace. The knowledge and love of God restores man's power to do good works and turn away from the life of sense. Thus, the good will is restored and is free.

In the Middle Ages Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus held the most influential conceptions about the will. Aquinas holds that the will is the faculty of self-determination by which a man may act or not act. The notion of the good determines the choice. Therefore, the intelligence moves the will but does not compel or coerce it. However, the will is the prime mover in the kingdom of the soul. Therefore, intelligence and will mutually determine one another, but intellect takes precedence over the will.

Duns Scotus, the other important philosopher in the Middle Ages, holds that intelligence, imagination, and sensation are indispensable preconditions of acts of will but do not effectively cause the act of willing in the will. The will may

either pursue or avoid an object. If the will were determined by something other than itself, no contingent human event would be possible. No impulsive action would be avoidable, and no advice, negotiations, reward or punishment would be possible. As these statements are absurd, the contradictory of the assumption holds. The will is determined by nothing other than itself. Then Scotus holds that knowledge is an instrument of the will, but will and love, which is a function of the will, are ends in themselves. The will is absolutely free in its action. It is not determined by the idea of the good. It chooses the good freely.

These are the main concepts of the will prior to Descartes, who is the father of modern philosophy. Descartes started the school of the rationalists which led through Leibnitz, Spinoza to Kant. Locke and Hume, on the other hand, initiated the empirical school of philosophy. To understand European philosophical thought it is necessary to understand both trends of rationalistic thought and empirical thought, and as they converge in Kant.

Descartes

It is important to start with Descartes. Descartes is a crucial thinker, and he has one entire section of his Meditations of the First Philosophy that is devoted solely to the will; i.e. the "Meditation IV on Truth and Error." He discusses the will from the standpoint of discerning the true from the false, i.e., error which arises in the determination of the true and the false. Descartes is really interested in the faculty of will in the rational thought process. He says in Meditation IV: "I am conscious of will so ample and so extended as to be superior to all limits.

"What appears to me here to be highly remarkable is that of all the other properties I possess, there is none so great and perfect as that I do not clearly discern it could still be greater and more perfect. When I consider the faculty of understanding or reason, I find that it is of very small extent and greatly limited. At the same time, I form the idea of another faculty of the same nature more ample and more infinite. And seeing that I can frame the idea of it, I discover from this circumstance alone that it pertains to the nature of God."¹

In other words, man's understanding is limited. He can conceive in his mind of a more perfect faculty of understanding. However, will is not so limited.

"It is the faculty of will only that I am unable to conceive of the idea of another that shall be more ample and extended: so that it is chiefly my will which leads me to discern that I bear a certain image in similitude of Deity."² "The power of will consists only in this, that to affirm or deny, to pursue or shun it, or rather in this alone that in affirming or denying, pursuing or shunning, what is proposed to us by the understanding we so act that we are not conscious of being determined to a particular action by an external force."³

Gassendi, in his fifth objection to Descartes' Meditation, argues that the understanding is not more limited than the will, but that each "ranges over an equally wide domain." Gassendi requests that Descartes state to what the will may extend which escapes the understanding. And Descartes answers: "Precisely to everything in which we happen to err or to be mistaken. I deny that what we understand equals what we will."⁴

Gassendi then questions Descartes about the indeterminateness of the will. And Descartes answers: "You next deny certain truths about the indeterminateness of the will. And although they are in themselves quite evident, I refuse to undertake to prove them before your eyes, for these matters are such that anyone ought to experience them himself rather than be convinced of them by ratiocination. But you,

oh flesh, appear not to take heed to what the mind transacts within itself. Refuse then to be free if freedom does not please you. I, at least shall rejoice in my liberty since I experience it within myself, and you have assailed it not with proof but with bare negation. Perchance I shall receive more credence from others because I affirm that which I have experienced, anyone may experience it in himself, than you who make your denial merely because you chance not to have experienced it."⁵

Descartes concludes his fourth meditation by indicating that the non-restraint of the will is the cause of error. In other words, all falsehood is due to false use of the will. "If I abstain from judging of a thing when I do not conceive it with sufficient clearness and distinctness, it is plain that I act rightly and I am not deceived. But if I resolve to deny or affirm, I then do not make a right use of my will. If I affirm what is false, it is evident that I am deceived. Moreover, even though I judge according to truth, which I stumble upon by chance, and do not therefore escape the imputation of a wrong use of my freedom, it is a dictate of the natural light that a knowledge of the understanding must always precede the determination of the will."⁶ This is the rationalist position.

In summary, Descartes understands the will as the perfect faculty, not subject to the limitations and imperfections of the understanding or reason. The will is first and foremost an act of mind that is to be experienced subjectively by each man. The will is to^{be} granted existential primacy together with the cogito ergo sum. "I think, therefore I am." Perhaps the most important function of the will is to forebear and refuse to allow a choice of affirming or denying a conception or thought when the conception or thought is not clearly and distinctly perceived. Clearly, Descartes shows his indebtedness to Aquinas and Scotus with their concepts of the will and intellect.

Locke

Next I want to consider the English empiricists. They have a different method of dealing with the will.

Locke was an early English thinker. He defined will and understanding thusly: "Will and understanding are two powers in the mind or spirit. We find in ourselves a power to begin or forebear or continue in several actions of our minds and motions of our body barely by a thought or preference of the mind ordering or, as it were, commanding the doing or not doing of such a particular action. This power which the mind has thus to order the consideration of any idea or the forbearing to consider it or to prefer the motion of any part of the body to its rest and vice versa in any particular instance is that which we will call the will. The forbearance of that action consequent to such order or command of the mind is called voluntary. And whatsoever action is performed without such a thought of the mind is called involuntary."⁷

Liberty or freedom is understood by Locke as being an attribute of the person which can take and oppose the power of the will and the understanding: "Liberty cannot be where there is no thought, no volition, or no will. But there may be thought, there may be will, and there may be volition where there is no liberty."⁸

To clarify that, a person may be in prison, like Viktor Frankl, and he is not at liberty to leave the cell or go out of the concentration camp, but he has thoughts and he has volition but he has no physical freedom. So that in a sense the way Locke is determining freedom or liberty is the opportunity to exercise muscles wherein it's possible to do what is willed.

The ancient Stoics would teach that you can never imprison a man's mind. In other words, man can think what he wants to, even if he's in a concentration camp and his muscles and actions are completely bound and determined. Man always has the freedom of his mind and thoughts.

I next want to go to the consideration of what Locke says determines the will, because we get into the relationship of the emotions and some of the other faculties. Locke would say that uneasiness or desire or emotion determine the will. "What moves and determines the will? The true and proper answer is the mind. What moves the mind? The motive for continuing in the same state or action is only the present satisfaction in it. The motive to change is always some uneasiness."⁹

What are these uneasinesses? Desire to remove pain and uneasiness is the first concern of the mind. "This uneasiness we may call as it is, desire, which is an uneasiness of mind for want of some absent good."¹⁰ "That which determines the choice of our will to the next action will always be the removing of pain, and as long as we have any left as the first and necessary step toward happiness."¹¹

In other words, what he is saying is that there are so many things we're identified with, and most of them are uneasinesses, pains, discomforts, that everyone is motivated to stop these, and the so-called remote good which Plato or Aquinas would say everybody pursues is not apparent in ordinary practical life; that we actually are motivated by the various uneasinesses, unpleasant emotions, and the tension of desires.

In summary, Locke understands the will as a power of the mind which acts in most men under a strict law of necessity. In other words, desire or uneasiness determines the will to act to relieve or reduce pain. However, liberty and judgment are possible in exceptional cases, and in thoughtful men if willed action is postponed, consideration is sometimes given to a more remote good and men thereby become responsible for their actions.

Hume

Hume follows Locke in English philosophy as a strict empiricist. Locke was a curious combination of rationalism and empiricism. "By will," says Hume, "I mean nothing but the internal impressions we feel and are conscious of when we knowingly give use to any new motion of our body or new perception of our mind."¹² He reasserts categorically that the law of cause and effect holds true for human actions. "The conjunction between motives and voluntary actions is as regular and uniform as that between cause and effect in any part of nature; this regular conjunction has been universally acknowledged among mankind."¹³ "Why has all mankind who have without hesitation acknowledged the doctrine of necessity, shown such a reluctance to acknowledge it in words and have rather shown a propensity in all ages to profess the contrary opinion."¹⁴

"When men turn their reflections towards the operations of their own minds, and feel no such connection of the motive and the action, they are thence apt to suppose that there is a difference between the effects which result from material forces, and those which arise from thought and intelligence."¹⁵

"The prevalence of the doctrine of liberty may be accounted for from another cause, a false sensation or seeming experience which we have or may have of liberty or indifference in many of our actions."¹⁶

Hume is a psychic determinist and like Freud asserts that passion of either the violent or the calm variety determines the will. Reason can never determine

the will. Reason alone can never be a motive to any action of the will. Reason alone can never oppose passion - in the direction of the will. And he goes on, much as did Freud, that you may have violent emotions or you may have calm emotions. The calm emotions are what the old philosophers would call reason. Actually they're emotions. They have a valence and an emotional charge. They are true motivators.

In summary Hume agrees with Locke that in the sphere of human conduct, voluntary acts are no less determined effects of prior causes than involuntary acts. Though both are equally necessitated, the difference between the voluntary and the involuntary consists in the fact that when a man acts voluntarily, he does what he himself has decided to do. Although the decision to act in a certain way is itself caused, this does not abolish the freedom of the action, but only the freedom of the will.

Freedom should be attributed not to man's will, but to a man who can do what he wills. Freedom is abridged only by external forces which coerce a man to act contrary to his wishes or constrain him from acting as he wills. In a most important statement Hume argues that we suffer from the psychological illusion of freedom which is "a false sensation or seeming experience which we have of liberty or indifference in many of our actions, motivated by the fantastic desire of showing freedom."

Kant

The most recent European philosopher who had important contributions to make on the topic of the will was Kant. His work provided the impetus for German Idealism and the works of Fichte, Hegel, Schelling, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche. Kant identifies will in its pure state with reason. "The faculty of desire insofar as its inner principle of determination as the ground of its liking or predilection lies in the reason of the subject, constitutes the will."¹⁷ The will "insofar as it may determine the voluntary act of choice is the practical reason itself."¹⁸

The pure will for Kant is a free will. "The act of choice that is determined by pure reason is the act of free will. The freedom of the act of volitional choice is its independence of being determined by sensuous impulses or stimuli. This is the negative conception of free will. The positive conception of free will is the capability of pure reason to be practical of itself."¹⁹

Like the stoics, Kant makes the will the sole repository of moral goodness. Man's dignity as a member of "the kingdom of ends" is rendered possible by the freedom of the will. "Nothing can be possibly conceived in the world or even out of it, which can be called good without qualification except a Good Will."²⁰ "A Good Will is good not because of what it performs or effects, not by its aptness for the attainment of some proposed end, but simply by virtue of the volition; that is, it is good in itself."²¹ "Though not indeed the sole and complete good, the will, good in itself, must be the supreme good and the condition of every other, even of the desire of happiness. Under these circumstances, there is nothing inconsistent with the wisdom of nature in the fact that the cultivation of the reason, which is requisite for the first and unconditional purpose, does in many ways interfere, at least in this life, with the attainment of the second, which is conditional, namely, happiness. For reason recognizes the establishment of a good will as its highest practical destination."²²

This completes my review of the philosophical-theological concepts of the will, but in this talk I do not propose to discuss the will in present day psychiatric and psychological thinking, for you are well aware of the lack of the recognition of the will - in fact, of its denial - by many fellow professionals. Also, I am not touching on Dr. Assagioli's concepts of the will because you will already be familiar

with it through reading his book, Psychosynthesis: A Manual of Principles and Techniques²³ and his booklet "The Training of the Will."²⁴ And in the next part of my talk on actual experiences with patients and friends in connection with the conscious training of the will, I will necessarily touch on Dr. Assagioli's ideas.

Experiences

The first visit of a client to a mental health center is of vital importance, particularly as regards the assessment of the willingness of the client. If the client's total personal self and center of consciousness and will is to be involved fully in the psychotherapy, a high degree of willingness is required. Involved in this required willingness is the recognition of need for help and a giving up of struggling with the problem alone. The Alcoholics Anonymous term this psychological surrender "the surrendering to a Power greater than one's personal self." The quality and depth of this willingness is very frequently the crucial key to the amount and quality of personal growth that is possible for a given client.

In a total family coming to the mental health center for treatment, each individual exhibits a different degree of willingness to accept help. In a disturbed marriage, if only one partner exhibits this willingness, the other partner may continue to perpetuate marriage problems leaving the ultimate outcome of the marriage in extreme jeopardy. However, in time, if one partner does change, the originally unwilling spouse may have a change of heart, and in his or her own time demonstrate a willingness to accept help.

In cases of marital maladjustment, the willingness of each spouse to give up emotional relationships with outside persons of the opposite sex, and the willingness to apply all emotional energies in a personal psychosynthesis, indicates a good prognosis for personal growth and maturation. The willingness to commit time and money is another indication of good prognosis.

In discussing actual cases, the outline I'm going to try to use is presented in the "Psychosynthesis Manual" and an article on the "Training of the Will" both written by Roberto Assagioli. Assagioli's approach trains the client to become more aware of his will. Assagioli presents certain exercises for patients. Patients are then encouraged to devise their own exercises whereby they will become more aware of what it is to will, what it is to form a choice either of thought or of action.

I think many of you have studied Assagioli's writings on will. One of his first points is that the energies must be mobilized. In other words, the person needs to mobilize energy, a strong desire to acquire a strong will and devote time to its attainment and to take whatever effort and means are necessary. One of the methods in mobilizing this energy is to ask a person to sit down and picture in his own mind the unfortunate consequences of a weak will, and then to picture vividly all the advantages which the training of the will could bring. Finally, the person is asked to imagine and picture himself as actually possessing these qualities of a strong will. This method I've used frequently in the last three or four months with friends and patients.

Case I

C.D. is a 28 year old unmarried woman who recently returned to a small Kentucky town, her hometown, from a large city where she broke up with an older male friend. She experiences depressions and says her problem is no commitment. Her question to me is "What do I do now?" In her analysis of the disadvantages of an inadequate will, she produced the following:

"I think 'will' might be what I last time gave as my proof of God... that thing within which comes out when I sink into despair and just give up, it appears almost simultaneously with the giving up, points to a new way and keeps me from being swallowed up. This is what led me to see a psychiatrist, and what keeps me working; I guess it is the working toward what I know I want, a healthy mind and a full development of self.

"I think 'will' is an inner knowing of what is right for me and my life, without values acquired from others; and it is the ability to act positively and successfully upon this knowing. It is this knowing that is a problem...this lack of direction. Now, I don't know if I just never developed direction because I seldom thought about the future (it seems like I had enough to do, just getting along with the present) or if the below mentioned things somehow have made direction impossible:

1) Always comparing myself with others; 2) Basing my value or image of myself on the value others place on me - on their reactions to me (horrible); 3) lack of self understanding, acceptance and confidence ; 4) fear.

"These things have been present in nearly all areas of my life - especially in my relationships with other people: 1) not being able to make decisions, 2) pushing 'threatening' people away, 3) pattern with the men I've dated, 4) not being able to make commitments.

"Of course I should develop more 'energy persistence and concentration', but I have proven to myself that I do possess these things when they are needed for something I really believe in: i.e., 1) job in the city, 2) religious science lectures, 3) modeling school at night in the city, 4) just living in the city.

"I can picture and sometimes really feel how great it will be to act positively and confidently in all areas of my life. I realize that I left the city because this lack of direction and these fears made it impossible for me to be interested in a different job or to begin new relationships with people. It was really impossible for me to move so I had to leave, to get it all straightened out."

The result of this evaluation of an inadequate will spurred this client to intensive activity in psychotherapy involving biography reading, group discussion and dream analysis. She progressed very rapidly.

C.D. is now doing one other thing that Dr. Assagioli mentions, i.e., analyzing biographies for the examples of strength or of will and getting an understanding of will in terms of persons that have accomplished a significant work. It's interesting that the first biography she chose was Charles Darwin. But she felt that in thinking about his biography and what made a strong will in him was, despite a lot of physical difficulties and neurotic complaints - Charles Darwin had all sorts of psychosomatic problems - he came to the point where he had to make a choice to take a five-year trip and he was very scared of making a choice and he had lots of doubts and hesitations. Then he went ahead and acted. He made a leap of faith with trepidation.

One can see that before that time he was motivated in that he had a lot of naturalist and biologist friends. They would sit around and discuss biology. But it really came to a point where he had to jump off, get away from this group and do something for himself as well as for the comfortable group. He had reached a crossroads of decision very important for C.D.

Case II

A.B. is a 43 year old male counselor who is trying to clarify his thoughts

on the will, but continually neglects the first and second stages in the use of the will, the stages of goal, purpose, intention, valuation, motivation, and deliberation. This has led to an imbalanced life with involvements in activities that are not highly valued. In his analysis of the advantages of a strong will, he produced the following:

"1. I would be more satisfied that I am to be the master of my home with a positive dynamic attitude towards my wife and children.

"2. I would leave weekends for my family, and stop over-sacrificing myself and my time for my clients. I would stop trying to please my clients.

"3. On weekends I would rest, write, be out-of-doors, exercise, read, and spend time with my family.

"4. I would better structure work activities by making definite decisions involving Board meetings, clients, staff assignments, and overall procedures.

"5. I would make careful step by step plans to enter a teaching career - which is my goal."

The result of the above analysis resulted in a 3 year plan to acquire a strong will.

Case III

F.G. is an elderly unmarried male artist tending to be rather isolated emotionally. During the "useless exercise" of standing on a chair, the question of the use of the will in interpersonal relationships presented itself to him.

"I am strongly inclined to believe that a certain radicalization of the self takes place in any consciously directed work with the will. I would suspect that this radicalization is essentially a maturing process and depends upon a decentralizing move or changing of the human will from the personality center to the soul center. The emphasis is on others rather than upon self. That is, we begin to develop a social conscience. For example, the following: Two instance of drug use by neighbor children come to my attention. One child of fifteen has been hospitalized in a psychiatric ward. The other, a 23 year old ex-Marine, has been arrested on the possession of marijuana. I lay aside my regular work as artist to assist my social work sister with the local problems of these young people. The job of working in the here and now obscures the larger task of tackling the problem in the abstract overall. I ask myself: Where do we apply the will? Once we have it strengthened and under control, how do we use it? This requires the utmost discrimination. It demands spiritual awareness of the highest order.

"We allow society and its inhuman pressures to drive our youth to the reckless use of drugs, and then we relentlessly criticise and hold them responsible for their pathetic plight. We do this even to the cruel point of punishment and imprisonment to try to keep them from hurting themselves in our faulty society. Thus we are guilty of compounding our own sins and failures. As the older generation is it not our responsibility more than theirs to cope with and correct this situation? But instead we resist and try to prevent youth's desperate and faltering efforts to revolutionize and change the way we live. We would substitute 'law and order' for our own incompetence, and require our youth to conform to our stupidity."

The result of the exercise has been that F.G. has made efforts to develop meaningful social relations.

CASE IV

R.S. is a middle aged physician and friend who chose the task of carefully putting 100 matches back in a box. This was done for seven days. The following is a report of the last two days:

"Found still another way to pack them in and found myself enjoying this tidbit of creativity. It came as an added discovery that I really can take any dull, humdrum, tiresome little task and turn it into a creative act in which I find fun and satisfaction despite the intrinsic valuelessness of it. Perhaps valuelessness is not the word though. It does have value in that I willingly accepted it and committed myself to it in the interests of learning something and discovering something I very much wanted. And most of the humdrum, routine tasks with which we are faced have some meaning as part of a larger whole. It is our own unwillingness to do them and to take the time and the thought necessary to do them right or with a flair, using our own uniqueness in the process that makes them tiresome. The same stimulus that brings forth anxiety or fear can stimulate trust and confidence according to how it is perceived. The same sort of thing is involved here, the attitude of the performer is what is important, not the performance itself or the necessity for it. Odd how much more there is to this than one anticipates! And what different things come to light as the exercise is repeated or another chosen!

"Did the best job yet! and feel proud of the neatness, balance and dispatch with which it was done - also the added variety of method found. Yes, it has been a revelation as to what can be done under very simple circumstances that seem so limited yet permit surprising variation."

The result of the exercise for RS has been a renewed vital interest in the psychology of the will.

Case V

S.T. is an unmarried teacher of preschool children who undertook to experiment with the will exercises.

1. "Today was a day during which it was necessary for me to perform an unusually large number of distasteful will acts. I was tired and nervous when I went to my room late in the evening, closed my door, and stood perfectly still on a chair while watching the clock tick 10 minutes away. I found the experience 'calming'. During the time I kept recalling and reviewing past experiences of will training and what it has meant in my life. Admiration and appreciation seemed to be the keynote. I was inspired to make a more conscious effort to continue to train my will.

2. "Again I performed my 10 minute exercise of standing on a chair after a very active and tiring day. Since I am weak in action and strong in endurance the exercise was a welcome one. I meditated the time away and came up with the conviction that my will acts of today fit very well into a larger set of goals. This exercise seems to have value for me in the sense that it keeps me reminded of the need to be practical in these small acts while it gives me the opportunity to relate them to ultimate goals. I didn't feel the joy that I felt last time. What I feel mostly tonight is conviction.

3. "The practice was a little more difficult tonight. It occurred to me today that M... is working extra hard at all the tasks which are easy for her and I'm wondering how much will is involved. Likewise I examined my own actions and discovered that it isn't the time when I can do many things to my liking, therefore, it is a special time to exercise my will. The discouragement over M... and the difficulty of my own condition being present while I stood on the chair made the practice much harder this evening. The feeling of submission replaced the joy, comfort, and conviction of the other two evenings.

4. "The exercise was hard again like last night's. The time spent with it seems to afford me the opportunity of being more consciously aware of the observing 'I'. What I'm feeling tonight, i.e., the sheer hardness of willing, might have been crippling a few years ago - but I'm more than these feelings, so I'll probably go on willing.

5. "I stretched myself to the limit, and probably beyond it. The thought went through my head that because of my overdoing, I will probably have a non-functional day tomorrow. These were my feelings as I went through the exercise and they were probably brought on after having had a very unsuccessful day with my sister, and after having attempted to deal with two other hostile people in the same day. I made the conclusion, 'Modify your behavior, and don't get yourself into the same straits again!'"

The result of this exercise for ST was that will training was a means of strengthening the power of self observation and gaining a clearer concept of "willing."

Case VI

L.M. is a married woman with two children who is having identity problems as well as marital problems. She has a marked problem in the handling of aggressive impulses. She used the standing on a chair for will training, and most recently used the technique of replacing matches in a box. She wrote in a recent report:

"Another week is over - the seemingly useless little tasks have been completed. Six months ago when I simply stood on the chair not much happened - felt as free as a bird. With these later tasks my feelings are somewhat different - as a person I am stronger, aware that I can have a stronger will by continuing to remember that to be a whole person this must be done. I will continue each day to select some tiresome type chore as a self-discipline."

The result has been a gradual increasing ability to manage aggressive emotions and make more decisions on her own.

Case VII

J.K. is a middle aged administrator of a small foundation. He chose to experiment with two will exercises seven months apart.

"I chose the attempt 'to make haste slowly' because to get caught up in, and be virtually driven by, tasks on hand has long been a fault of mine - this to a point of ignoring the needs of others close to me! So, last weekend I took an hour to use R.A.'s 'Preparation' (pp. 6 & 7 of his article) and found the importance of writing down the drawbacks to a weak will and advantages of a strong controlled will. This preparation, I think, is essential, putting a ground work under one's plan.

"Then, in the following week I tried to maintain (with moderate success) a constant recollection of my intention to keep detached from and in control of whatever task I had on hand. Often I pulled myself up when I saw a job (or the urge or drive to complete it) dominating me, and climbed back into the saddle, so to speak. Sometimes I stopped what I was doing after recognizing that some other task was more important and should take precedence. In other words, I chose what I would do and not be possessed by what I was doing.

"I found, to my surprise, work flowing more easily, and also human relationships were improved, because the job on hand was not obsessing my attention to their exclusion. Also, I had more energy to spare, as I did not let the tasks on hand drive me to exhaustion. This one week's experiment has been all too short to

establish a new and better pattern of controlled and willed activity but it has been sufficient to prove to me what R.A. presents in his article.

I will, of course, be continuing with the project I chose to set myself. Later, I set myself another exercise on the Will and followed it for 8 days. I chose the task of taking at least five minutes in the middle of the afternoon, no matter how busy or pressured I might be, to write slowly, copying passages from the "Training of the Will" article. I chose this task because first, of my weakness in getting caught up in a job and going on compulsively non-stop despite tiredness, etc. - I willed to stop whatever I was doing and sit down and write as slowly and smoothly as possible. Secondly, my handwriting is atrocious when I am busy or under pressure, which means I habitually write badly and almost illegibly. In the exercise I would will to write more clearly. It was a most interesting 'exercise-experiment,' with unexpected benefits.

The first day, towards the end of the period, I became aware of how tense my body was. So the second day I first of all deliberately (for 30 seconds or so) relaxed my general muscular tensions and then started to write. It came more smoothly. The third day I realized that whilst I was writing more slowly there was still much hand tension and lack of a really smooth flow. The fourth day I realized that at times other than the assigned exercise I was writing more smoothly - almost automatically. After beginning to write notes or letters, I would pause, relax my body, and then begin to write more legibly.

On the fifth day, which was 'one of those days' - everything going wrong, interruptions, pile-up of work, etc. - I found a real satisfaction in "psychologically throwing everything out of the window" for six minutes while I did the writing exercise. The effect was excellent; it helped me to slow down, to relax, and then to pick up my normal office work again without the previous sense of pressure.

Sixth, seventh, and eighth days: nothing of special note - I just followed through on the exercise each day - except that on looking over the pages on which I wrote each day, the last three entries were much more legible and the formation of the letters was more rounded and less jerky. And I think this was reflected to a small degree in my general behavior and attitude - I had not quite as many 'sharp angles' disturbing my interpersonal relationships. Might I say I was less compulsive and more willing! I intend to keep on with this will exercise for a month or two; it is paying off."

Case VIII

M.N. is a divorced, professional, group and individual counselor.

"As an exercise in training my will, I have decided to inspect my motivation for becoming involved in each specific situation that arises - before I make a decision. I have become increasingly aware of my need to seek involvement in programs, lectures, etc., my motivation apparently being to seek truth, knowledge, strength or whatever was being offered. I felt in this way I could grow and in turn help others with the techniques or methods I have discovered. In evaluating this procedure I've become aware of the harm I've done to myself and others by allowing every wind and tide to carry me away. I've lost touch with my inner voice - communicated cliches as truths, influencing people who trusted me to do the same. I have a strong will and I am aware of this - I can do that which I will so it is especially dangerous if I use this gift unwisely. In order to discipline myself, I have set aside 15 minutes at the end of my meditation period to contemplate carefully each project that has been presented or each case that has been recommended to me. I ask myself whose needs are being met if I do this thing, if it is basically my needs I question my

motivation intensely and I allow myself to fantasy what I desire and I respond to this as honestly as I can. Example: if I see an attempt to evade looking for truths or strengths in myself I reject the project; if I see taking the case as a means of self aggrandizement or an attempt to 'please' others I refuse the case. If on the other hand I feel after examining the situation it will be a positive experience or I can accept the motivation as authentic, I will become involved."

The result for MN has been that she is more discriminating in regards to saying yes to any new project.

Case IX

B.C. is an unmarried school teacher, schizophrenic, who has seen many therapists and been in many psychiatric hospitals. She wrote: "I chose Exercise 1 and 2, with gymnastics (Exercise 4), getting up from a chair 30 times (see pp. 6-8 of The Training of the Will). Purpose: to strengthen my will and to see if I can follow the will training every day for a week. Intention: by visualization to become the person I really want to be. Motive: to establish self confidence and mental discipline. Valuation: mental relaxation knowing you must do them every day is good training. Deliberation: I read Dr. Assagioli's article twice before making a decision and chose three exercises that appealed to me. Decision: I was not sure of my decision but was able to make one. Affirmation: positive instead of negative thinking. I agree in the affirmative that will training is necessary to a productive life. Planning: 1 hour each day for exercises.

"Execution: Monday, Exercise One - relaxed and thought about the things that worry me such as fear, hatred, tardiness, lack of interest in things. Visualized myself as riding on a horse in an open field, free from all worry. Exercise Two - book reading - The 100 Most Important People in the World Today, 1952 by Donald Robinson. Person one - Chiang Kai-shek Be Still and Know by Georgia Harkness, 1952, Ps. 46:10. Gymnastics Exercise #4 - I felt funny getting up from a chair 30 times but I am sure it was physically worth the effort for it increases your blood pressure. A good exercise for using up calories.

"Tuesday, Exercise #4 - I felt that my circulatory functions were stimulated and getting up and down from a chair 30 times seemed to give me mental and physical energy. Exercise #1 - I became introspective in my self evaluation and tried to decide which emotions were destructive and which ones were conducive to normalcy. Exercise #2 - Book reading - Magazine "The Plaintruth" Herbert W. Armstrong, Editor, Article "The Atomic Clock". I tried to read slowly with concentration and relaxation. American Scientist, Vol. 44, no's January 1956, p.107. The article appealed to me because I had Carbon 14 dating when I was attending the university.

"Wednesday: Exercise #4 - getting out of a chair 30 times made me realize that my legs are very important to me. If I wasn't healthy I couldn't do the exercise. Exercise #1: Reflecting on my life and trying to decide what my future holds. My emotions are anger and hatred, trying to cultivate the helpful emotions instead of the unhelpful ones. Exercise #2: Reading Be Still and Know by Georgia Harkness, Venture in God's Will by Wayne M. Warner - tried to relax and concentrate on reading material. Tried to retain information that was read.

"God created the human ear that man might hear audible sounds." "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears for they hear." (Matt: 13:16) Learn to listen: "There will be ecstasies of joy, heartbreaking sorrows, trials of thorns and thistles, and flowers - strewn pathways; but we can be sure that God will lead us if we follow." The above excerpts are from my reading exercise.

"Thursday: Exercise #4 - Getting up from a chair 30 times. After doing

the exercise, my heart seemed to beat faster and my face was flushed and my circulation seemed to be improved. I enjoy this exercise. Exercise #1: Reflecting and Visualization - I am totally relaxed but I wish my personality was different, I need companionship with other people my own age. Decisions are hard for me to make. Exercise #2: Reading with relaxation, slowly and underlining certain material. I read the life of General Douglas MacArthur. During the Truman administration, he suffered the most. MacArthur was a striking figure, tall and straight, with the imperious look of a Caesar and the dash of a glamorous cavalier, looking far younger than his years, MacArthur had physical and moral courage, idealism, intelligence, leadership, administrative ability, and religious faith. I also read some religious material. Ps. 139:7, "The Grail" from Georgia Harkness.

"Friday: Exercise #4 - Getting up from a chair 30 times. I felt very tired after this exercise and was short of breath. This exercise trains you to be consistent and trains your will. Exercise #1 - Visualization and Relaxation. I thought about religion in connection with psychiatry. I wondered why people become mentally sick. I would like to be an average person but am always thinking of new things to try out. Exercise #2 - Reading with relaxation, concentration and underlining important facts. I read the first chapter of 30 Days to a More Powerful Vocabulary by Dr. Wilfred Funk and Norman Lewis. "The extent of your vocabulary indicates the degree of your intelligence." The book is divided into 30 days and you must spend 15 minutes every day to master the contents of the vocabulary study. A pianist may have the most beautiful tunes in his head, but if he had only five keys on his piano he would never get more than a fraction of these tunes out.

"Saturday: Exercise 4 - Getting up from a chair 30 times; felt silly, but enjoyed being active physically. Exercise #1: Visualization and Relaxation "Introspection" thought about my problems. Exercise #2: Reading with relaxation, concentration and underlining portions of reading material. Read my Sunday School lesson.

"Sunday: Exercises 1 and 2 - read an article in World Book on Australia. Thought about my goals and ambitions. Exercise #4: Wished I had a bicycle of my own so I could get out and ride it. I try to do exercise for 15 minutes each night and jump rope 100 times each day."

The result of BC's will training was that she was able to get a job and hold it for 9 months. She had been unemployed for several years before will training.

Case X

D.E. is a young 22 year old unmarried male with an obsessive-compulsive neurosis. He comes from a farm in Kentucky, is unemployed and waiting to enter military service. He was very active as an athlete in high school, and was on the baseball team, the basketball team. He had quit doing all physical actions and had got into a sort of ruminating obsessive, compulsive state where he stayed home and read a lot of books, and was obsessed with the way his muscles hooked on to his bones; he thought he was going insane.

I discussed with him the need to train the will, and gave him a long list of possible things to do. He picked out one that had to do with physical activity. He later wrote:

"During the past week I carried out an assignment designed to strengthen my willpower. It was nothing too hard, yet it was something that works as an effective trainer of the willpower. In my particular case it was designed not only to stimulate my willpower alone but to help me overcome a fear through my willpower.

"My assignment was to walk three miles a day for seven straight days. It would be unfair to say that this exercise worked wonders for me, but it has helped me to cancel out some of my fears during physical exercise so that I can more fully enjoy what I am doing. I have a fear of muscular activity. Muscular activity of the slightest manner used to be too much for me to take. But I have gradually progressed to the point where I can use my muscles in an effective and satisfying way without too much worry.

"Last week's assignment was helpful to me. Not in a big way did it affect my complete attitude but it was a start. The fact that the activity did impress me was enough to make me set up a schedule of several days of walking during a week's time until my feelings have changed. In time, I feel that the strength of the will can take its toll. Willpower cannot erase the fear all at once, but once the willpower wins out over the fear so many times the fear can lose meaning and it will die down to just a memory.

"Some of the experiences I had during my walks point out the use of a strong will to help overcome fear. During the first few days I was worried more because I didn't think my will was strong enough to overcome my fear of the muscular system. Throughout my first few walks fear was dominant for about half of the three miles. There would be a balanced amount of fear and willpower for a while and it would seem that one was telling the other to quit. First my fear would tell my willpower that he was the strongest, then my will power would tell my fear that I was going to keep moving. Then the last mile and a half my fear didn't maintain its strength so I was at peace for most of the way after that.

"Then about the last three days my willpower was dominant. Fear would hang over my head during parts of the walk but would fade away after a short period of time. I wouldn't have believed it before hand but even in my first week of walking my will overcame my fear on the average.

"I still feel that I will have a while to go before I am completely well but you can be sure that I will continue to train my willpower through periods of walking. I am anxious to get well and I will try just about everything to do so. Even though the past week's assignment has only helped me slightly, I feel that I am finally on to something. I have been confused for too long and if a strong willpower is the answer to my problems then I will continue for as long as I can strengthening my willpower even after I recover from my illness."

The result of DE's will training is that he is more confident of his own ability to overcome his illness.

Case XI

X.Y. is a middle aged public health nurse who had a problem accepting her sister-in-law's jealousy towards her. She was hospitalized at the time she attempted the will training. She gets very involved and identifies with other people's emotions. "In regard to the will I hate and hesitate to go into the homes of patients for the first time regardless of status in the community, but once I am involved and meet the people I seem to go all out - their troubles are my troubles and I have to solve them all. Yes, detachment must be developed."

She did the Will Exercise, standing on a chair for ten minutes; and the following are excerpts of her stream of consciousness as she wrote it up afterwards:

"The hardest part of the procedure was starting it. I put it off for a

few hours, thinking that my legs were too tired and that I would rest for a while. But I did not get rested to the right degree so I took myself by my will, checked the clock so that I would be sure to stay long enough, and perched myself up on a chair with my arms folded in front of me, resigned to staying no matter what. I looked around the room, and politely asked our Lord to help me and then I planned to meditate and choose a subject. I looked at the clock and three minutes had gone by and I had not found a subject on which to ponder. My mind did not want to work that hard. After five minutes I shifted my arms to my back, and in spite of a crippled knee I was relaxed. The last three minutes I had a sense of well being and was surprised that the ten minutes were up. I was not as anxious to come down as I thought I would be. And again, a small amount of will was necessary before I got down. I was very comfortable, much to my surprise. My feelings about the whole procedure were first, the opposite of what I thought which was that I would be picking the paper off the walls and getting the fidgets which didn't ever happen.

"Day No. 2: Dinner was over and I went to my perch, looked at the clock and the time was one minute earlier than yesterday. Strangest to me was the lack of deliberation needed to get on with it. I stood with my arms folded in front of me. During the entire time the shifting of my weight on my legs was less. My intention at the beginning was to relax my mind also as it seemed to do yesterday and to ask God's help and to tell me what I should do about the dissention in the family, to be strong enough to accept their actions and to enlighten me in solving them. The inner voice told me that I could do nothing and even though I knew there was suffering in some of them I must patiently wait for them to come to me and to receive them with love and detachment at the same time. Again I was surprised at how fast the time passed."

The result of the will training was that XY reduced her medications, left the hospital, and finally met her problem with a positive rather than a negative attitude.

Case XII

This is the case of the famous American psychologist, William James. He was subject to moods of depression. In reading Renouvier, James decided to believe in free will and was on the way to recovery from his severe depression when he recorded in his diary:

"I think that yesterday was a crisis in my life. I finished the first part of Renouvier's second Essais and see no reason why his definition of free will - 'the sustaining of a thought because I choose to when I might have other thoughts' - need be the definition of an illusion. At any rate, I will assume for the present, until next year, that it is no illusion. My first act of free will shall be to believe in free will."²⁵

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To summarize, I would suggest that we all need to ask our clients and our colleagues to look at their own actions and thoughts and try to think through carefully the meaning and experience of will and choice. I've been doing this myself the last few months, and find it interesting; and I plan to continue. One thing that it has done for me is to allow me to say "no" a lot more times than I used to say it. I used to try to please everybody; and one of the will exercises is to try to see what's appropriate in a choice. I think one becomes more thoughtful; one then accomplishes the evaluative and the deliberative aspects of will, so that one then chooses "No" more often. So, one thing I noticed for myself is that a lot of things that I would have normally been thrown into and would have to do, I no longer have to do. They don't even come up anymore.

I'm in a vulnerable position as a community psychiatrist. You've got every Tom, Dick and Harry complaining about every problem in the community. The phone is ringing all the time. Numerically more patients are coming, but now it isn't as tiring or fatiguing, and I have more time to think and to deliberate.

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DISCUSSION

SALBERG: I just have the comment that the exercises you mentioned or that whole approach to exercises for the will seems to be identical to that of Rudolph Steiner, the founder of the Anthroposophical Movement. And also I noticed a strong similarity to Scientology. I think that there are probably any number of these things. No one seems to have a corner on this. It gets around. (PARKS: What kind of exercises did Steiner prescribe?) He said to do any sort of nonsensical exercise every day, an exercise of the will: e.g., to pick up a pencil and turn it around or pick up a chair and turn it around. These are quite similar to Assagioli's exercises, I think - i.e., to make a conscious decision to do something and to carry it through.

COOPER: I think what Assagioli adds to it is the aspect of willingness; to do it until it becomes easy for you. I don't believe that other people have picked up that aspect of it.

KAMM: We have, of course, the old adage, "Where there is a will there is a way." On the other hand, I have found both in my own personal experience as well as with experiences with my patients that way and will go together. In other words, you can do something a lot more easily and will it more effectively if you can, as I like to put it, see your way clear to do it, fit it into one's frame of reference.

The other question that I have is, would you care to comment on the relation between will and creativity?

PARKS: One of the crucial things, for myself anyway, is the fact that I've been thinking a great deal more about this, and consequently I'm very much more aware of when a client describes things in terms of will. I see where he is motivated. There may be several areas in which he is motivated. Important in psychotherapy is this quality of understanding what a given client is willing to do. For example, I saw a boy for the first time just yesterday; he appeared to be schizophrenic. He had been mimicking animals in school for about three years - a baboon, a dog and a cat. He would get the attention of teachers and the other children and they would laugh; but he was very isolated.

He told me he liked to read books, and read 12 books a week; but he mimicks only three or four animals. I tried to see if he could mimick a duck but he wouldn't listen to the suggestion. He said he would be willing to read a book and discuss it with me but he dismissed animal mimicking as irrelevant. This was the only way I saw at the moment of contacting his will - to enter his world of isolation.

Reading was the one way that he could affirm - so I agree with Dr. Kamm - "Where there's a will there's a way." There has to be the inner thing within which affirms a way. The problem comes up as to how you can promulgate the greater good when the client is not interested in such a good. As Locke says, we're more liable to do the things that get rid of our pain and uneasiness than the things that represent the greater good - the therapist builds a willingness into the therapist-client relationship from the first contact with the client.

Assagioli's reading technique and writing technique seem to point to the delaying function of the ego, where the client gradually increases the valance. These techniques apply only to certain people, for many people do not respond to the greater good.

COOPER: I can give an example out of my practice at the penitentiary concerning creativity and will. We see how the will of the correction officers versus the will of the inmates conflict continuously. One of the inmates who came in was steeped in violent Black Muslim propaganda. He was placed in an isolation cell only because he was attempting to proselyte other people. I went to see him almost on a daily basis, but he would shut me out entirely. Finally, one day he put down the book he was reading and participated in conversation. When I recognized that he was willing to go along, then I asked him, "Is there anything I can do for you?"

He said, "I want a clarinet." He was testing me out. After getting him the clarinet, plus the music, which had happened to come in a few days earlier, he started practicing and working. From that point on, he went into music and art, and has since contributed a great amount of work in that field. My contact with him was just to open him up, to open up his willingness, and to get him moving in a positive direction. He was soon able to leave the isolation cell and return to the prison community. He was so busy working with his art and his music that he had no further time for his Black Muslim activity, and he became a model inmate. We had a lot of his art on show, and he contributed a lot of it to the penitentiary.

KAMM: Actually in that case what that really points up is what existentialists have been saying, and that is the importance of the purpose. When you give yourself a *raison d'etre*, a goal, this is what will galvanize, will energize, a man.

PARKS: With regard to creativity, I have one client now, a schizophrenic girl who has been to numerous mental hospitals for many years. She refuses to come out of an apartment which is provided her by her sister. Her sister would buy groceries, friends would visit, and an active telephone line kept her in touch with several friends. People could force her out of her room but then she would pout and resent any resulting experience. She has a very definite defiance, stubbornness, just ordinary willfulness. I decided I would go to her apartment once a week for interviews.

On the positive side, she has two motivations. One is the intellectual definition of her purpose. The second is a waxing and waning interest in painting. I said, "I would like you to try to express your purpose"; and I showed her paintings to some artists who said it was very exquisite work. It seems she has never had training in art but the stubbornness, the staying in that room can be interpreted as giving her time and place to perfect a positive talent.

We've spent the last three or four months talking about purpose. Recently she decided to come out. She now buys her groceries. In the past she had shown a tremendous defiance and stubbornness; whenever she was locked in a mental hospital or committed, nothing positive would happen. She had a talent for art which is the key to a goal or purpose for her.

MORANO: Dr. Parks are you familiar with Thomas French's definition of hope? In it he describes some of the things that you're talking about. I'm interested in what, in your personal experience, has been the relationship between hope and will. French describes - besides the confident assurance of obtaining a certain goal - the capacity for sustained directed energy towards specific goals. This is how he handles the concept of hope. And I would be interested in hearing your comments about what you feel might be the relationship between the will, as you've been employing it here, and this concept of hope.

PARKS: Yes, I'm sure that the perseverance aspect is very important, because - to return to this particular patient: She is now about 36. She's not married. She has always had a persevering quality. She would sit holed up in her apartment; she would call her family on the phone but she would never go out. But she did have hope. She's a fairly devout Catholic person. She had the feeling that some purpose was going to manifest itself for her someday and that it had to do with what she would do on this earth. You could say that the negative quality was that she was stubborn and wouldn't do anything. But she had this positive quality of hope too. She would put it in Catholic vernacular and theology.

She says things are working out; now what she knew all along is happening. She now thinks she's conceiving of a purpose which she couldn't even conceive of before. When I first met her, I tried to get her to think about it. Well, she couldn't do it. When I asked her to write her life history she just produced a flood of loose disorganized associations. There was no organization to them at all. She could talk about her purpose, which is hope. Now she has formulated: "I think I've got to write."

She did take a writing course about three years ago which continued two full years. This shows a perseverance, a willingness to persevere. She never went to college. She took this course for two years, and she now says "I should write something that would be important to the world." I suggested that she get a job on the local newspaper. She doesn't want this. She must write in some other way. She now feels she has a hope and a purpose to write.

WOLF: I'm wondering what you think of this: When you train an individual to develop the will by, let us say, these useless exercises and by other means, can you find a common denominator in all these things - one that includes hope and a number of other things? Take the case that you mentioned about the physician who had difficulty deciding what to do. The great value in therapy of training the will, it seems to me, is to loosen and reduce an anxiety which is a diffuse and unending thing, gathering it up and focussing it in a definite direction. We thereby accumulate useful energy for a particular action and a particular way of doing things; and thereby calm the mind and also at the same time relax the muscles. If you get rid of physical tensions, you get rid of emotional tensions, and emotion is, of course, movement. I was wondering whether we cannot make that the common denominator in all these various approaches, including even the old philosophers that you spoke of - Descartes, Hume and the others. Can you not bring that into the frame of reference - that what you are accomplishing is a focussing process? And by the focussing process you produce an effectiveness and also a relaxing process?

HARONIAN: I would like to add something to what you're saying, because every time we talk about the will and the use of useless exercises I am reminded of the spontaneous development of compulsive behavior. It's as if the useless exercises are willingly undertaken as a compulsive act - "compulsive" with quotes around it - whereas the neurotic compulsion is an involuntary act that looks like a willing one. I wonder if this is related very closely to what you're saying, both of them being ways - one automatic and one willing - of focussing energy that otherwise would be diffused into anxiety.

WOLF: Yes. I would add that in a compulsive, you have these extreme tensions which would then be relieved through focussing.

PARKS: In the Ouspensky-Gurdjieff system, there are very complicated dance movements which involve the moving of muscles in a coordinated, harmonious way.

I believe Descartes misses the boat because he is sitting there like a monk trying to meditate with the mind above; I don't think he is moving many muscles, and I would adhere to a motor act as an important concomitant to the total process of focussing, performing a motor act with a concomitant muscular relaxation.

During all of the many physical movements we do, even when writing or talking, our body either is in harmony with the situation or it is not. This brings to mind William James' theory of attention. As one entertains a variety of images which flow by on the stream of consciousness, one focuses on one image; this image then has motor concomitants that will move muscles of the body. This image is no doubt predetermined - there is probably a reason why that particular image is in your mind - but that little bit of extra effort that one expends in focusing on the image is the effort of attention on will.

It's the little extra effort that one expends in concentrating that is the will. I adhere to this theory of the process of will. How to mobilize the little extra effort is the act of psychotherapy.

WOLF: When you do that, the anxiety is reduced because the diffusion is reduced. Anxiety and diffusion are almost synonymous in a way.

PARKS: Going back to my patient in the apartment: when we first met she couldn't concentrate on anything. Her mind was just a bundle of confusion - no focus. A focusing developed as she developed a positive transference; as a therapist I must not feed her anything artificial to focus on. She must learn to capture and utilize her own effort to focus. Previously people would attempt to give her their objects to focus on and her defiance would set in: "I won't do this and I won't do that." But I have to mirror back what I can understand as her own focus of energy.

COOPER: Assuming that there is an inner focusing point and intuitively one may pick it up, Frankl did the same thing when he used "paradoxical intention" with his obsessive-compulsive patients.

This apparently is a function of the will. It is present, if we can just release it and focus it. I like your phrase, "focusing," Dr. Wolf.

WOLF: You said the word "willingness." Could I propose the word "willness"? In other words, it is a state of active willing rather than willingness, which is a sort of negative thing. And "will" in itself is too stubborn a word. I was wondering whether that would be in any way acceptable. (PARKS: Willness as opposed to willingness?) Yes. You see, willingness is a sort of wishy-washy thing, while willness is - (PARKS: Yes. It would connote maybe more concentration.) Direction. (PARKS: Direction, yes.)

COOPER: I'm not sure about that, because in some of these very strong willed people whom I see they're "willing" to go right to jail and be locked up. (PARKS: Compulsive?) The compulsion is tremendous. When they begin to work with willingness, not willness, which they're already using - tremendous changes occur.

WOLF: But then I would like to differentiate between the two. (COOPER: Okay. Lesser will.) It's less than will and more than willingness, sort of an in-between.

HILTON: You mean that "the readiness is all?" (WOLF: Yes, that is right.)

PARKS: Regarding faith, hope, and charity, both Hume and Freud would analyze hope thusly: one needs a past experience as a symbol of a starting point for willness;

one focuses on this symbol and develops new images that could be carried out today. One moves from an old false image to a new truer image, more in accord with the reality principle. As one changes images from past to present the grief necessary to give up the old image may paradoxically give rise to increased hopelessness for a while. Then gradually the new image takes hold with the necessary concomitant motor acts related to the outside world.

MORANO: The thing you were talking about, in terms of the acceptance into whatever the feeling was at the moment, is where you move, at least in one particular way, where you move from the kind of initial hope you referred to to a more valid type of hope. That's why I'm very impressed with French's way of describing it. The initial comment was the unfortunate triad - thinking of hope merely in terms of the faith, hope and charity triad - rather than a concrete, basic, human experience and phenomenon.

HILTON: I'd like to touch on the question that Dr. Kamm raised on the will and creativity. It seems to me that the will may or may not be involved in creativity. I think we've seen artists whose work is almost wholly compulsive. And in other cases - particularly in the great artists - will is definitely involved in the controlling and the disciplining and the directing of the psychic energies and the physical capabilities. I think this is the distinction between the poor artist and the true great artist - the use of the will.

GEER: Would you care to comment on the relationship between the unconscious willing and conscious willing?

It occurs to me that some of the schizophrenics I've worked with are very much afraid to do anything at all. They are afraid that they'll be violent, or that something very bad is going to happen, and that there is a kind of unconscious willing that may get out of control. So that if you develop the skill of conscious willing, then that, in a way, combats this feeling that things are going to happen that will be very frightening.

KAMM: In line with that, I'd like to make a comment on a case that I am treating now, a 42 year old man who has been married and divorced twice. He has superior intelligence. He is quite cooperative, and there was one thing that he focused on, and which was a kind of liberating experience for him; that is, pointing out the possibility that he might be in charge of his life.

This is what I think you are saying, that there is the fear that they are not in charge. Whereas if a person can conceive of the possibility that he may be in charge of what he's doing, that he may be in control, in the driver's seat - in that connection I disagree, despite my genuine admiration for him, with Maslow, who says that a Taoistic acceptance or passivity is necessary for a peak experience. I think it is an active inviting, opening oneself up rather than just lying back there and having it come.

PARKS: I think that is a significant point, the attitude of the therapist should always be that you are in charge, and you may have to put it into words because hearing it in words may be significant.

I noticed Frank Haronian, in the first Psycosynthesis meeting this year, said he constantly told his clients, "You're in charge here." Of course, his actions and the various interactions also demonstrated the therapist's attempts to contact the willness of the client, but I believe it is helpful to say it.

There exists a crucial point where the therapist and the client together make a conscious decision. I interpret what Dr. Wolf said as the focusing and conscious channeling of the energy into a particular act being crucial. The fear of being out of control is present in some degree with most people. For example, schizophrenics, oftentimes more sensitive to the human dilemma, may perceive the fact that multiple outside factors indeed determine all their behavior, and this threatens them.

However, if the schizophrenic can, in the process of psychotherapy, realize that he can focus and he can decide to act, a gradual process sets up with an increase of his practical functioning in the outside world.

With my patient she has developed a more positive emotional attitude that allows her to function better in day to day activities.

COOPER: There is another aspect of this conscious-unconscious thing that Roberto Assagioli talked about quite a lot - the conflict of will and imagination. When Dr. Kamm is giving us an image, of being in the driver's seat, he is presenting another image. He is presenting an image which may counter the image held before. So, in working with the will you have to look very carefully at what the patients imagine things to be, what their images are. You may have to work with some of the images, converting them and changing them, before you can work with the will itself. If their image is that they will get out of control, or kill, etc., then certainly a controlling image, such as Dr. Kamm's, if they accept it, will be better.

But the images must be taken care of first. It's primary in treatment. Then you can go and work with the will.

PARKS: One thing that occurs to me on the topic of creativity - and I think that we see it in any kind of therapy - that the client must learn a new language to really change. I mean, in a therapy situation, in an I-Thou relationship, a new element, a new image must come in that, when you put it into words, becomes a new language. The new language could be conceived of as a cluster of new thoughts. For example I possess a strong image that you have a will inside of you, and I carry into the consultation room the image that a patient has an active focussing will. My image is projected onto the patient whether or not I say it in so many words. Everything that results is new. This is what Tillich was getting at, the idea of being accepted even though one feels unacceptable himself. There is an openness to an outside new image which in a sense is creativity, getting out of the old rut, so that there can be a new action. That has to involve new words and new approaches. A new thing that has never been conceived by the patient has to happen. It's hope. It's a new thing. It's a quality of the I-Thou or therapy relationship.

COOPER: It's still based on images.

MORANO: In regards to the image of hope, I wonder what happens to the person in terms of his hoping when you work through the aspects of imaging, in terms of the basic sense of hope in his own possibility to will.

PARKS: William James talked about looking at images which are entertained by consciousness. In choosing one of the images on which to focus, one can choose by means of the will to believe. He said one can decide that one has free will - "I act on the basis of this belief." This is a leap of faith which represents a more basic center of self underneath all images. The choice is free but the image is determined.

COOPER: Yes, this is what I would like to bring out about working with images alone. One image replaces another, and one continues in this imaginary kind of life. If one doesn't bring the will aspect into it, imagination continues. The person is at the mercy of the next image that comes along, each image being always stronger than the will aspect. So, I think this is the problem. As I see the answer to your question, you must move into will as soon as possible; try to neutralize the negative images and then go into the use of the will.

GEER: Wouldn't you in the first stage of therapy work with the imagery before the will?

COOPER: If it blocks the process, but if doesn't block it, then you don't have to worry about it.

GEER: Maybe there's a need to clarify the imagery.

HARONIAN: In my own experience with images, if the patient lets them flow they evolve themselves. The images go through a sequence which is salubrious, healthy, and I don't often have to talk about the will, not necessarily. In other words, the images will not necessarily stay at a certain level; they will evolve to higher levels. (COOPER: They change.) Yes - without bringing in will consciously.

COOPER: Because you're in a therapeutic relationship, possibly. When you're working with images, I think that you'll find that they're going to vacillate and change. (HARONIAN: They improve. They're healthier, they're happier.) With you, yes. (HARONIAN: They evoke hope too, as they improve.)

COOPER: For a hundred years of penitentiary work, the image of a correction officer, so far as the inmates were concerned, was that they're bums. Yet in a few months of working with new images plus will, we have been able to convert and change a number of inmates. They have responded to this new kind of way of working. However without working simultaneously with the will, progress would have been impossible.

HARONIAN: I think there are patients who, without any conscious effort to train the will show an evolution in their imaging activities which is healthy.

COOPER: I think you are right, with the therapist present.

GORDON: In the work we (Ira Progoff's group) are doing, as you put a person in contact with these images, which are both dream images and those in the waking state, and have access to that dimension, hope will naturally, in many, many cases, evolve; because a person gets a sense of really what his deeper needs are, and where he is going in his life, what his dynamic is.

COOPER: I think you're right, but please understand that the images still will shift and will move and will change in a negative direction if the situation changes. This is why I keep wanting to bring back the necessity of working with will and being willing to change your image once you learn that the image is really having an effect in your life. (GORDON: Images are always in flux, always in motion.) Exactly, always in flux.

GORDON: And you're going to get negative images just through the sheer process of living, because you have your peaks and your valleys. (COOPER: Exactly. It requires an active will to deal with the negative images in some way.) Don't you think that as you get into it, hope is built up so that you are then more able to work with negative aspects as they come along? Once you've been through that valley then it's easier to be there again.

COOPER: Isn't that a quality of the work with the therapist? It's the interpersonal situation. (GORDON: I think the therapist certainly opens the person up to this whole way -) If it were a naturally evolving process, we wouldn't need the therapist. (GORDON: No, I don't think it's naturally evolving)

HARONIAN: I'd like to suggest that the use of the will in the imagery situation is a little different from our usual conception. When I spoke a couple of months ago, I mentioned an imperative and an acquiescent mode of the will. To me, when we're using imagery and imagination, we invoke and use the acquiescent mode of the will, which is a more passive and receptive mode. We accept what comes. We let the inner dynamic of the person (and I think that if Ira Progoff were here he'd support this notion) work its way out and express itself in images that we do not consciously and intentionally manipulate, control, or change. Now if we adopt this receptive, acquiescent mode of the will as a posture towards the imaging process, the images that come through will often evolve spontaneously towards a more hopeful, a more healthful aspect of the person.

MILLER: I think I would like to take Frank's last point and push it and see what happens to it, because I had this kind of thing happen today in the office and it sounds like a very positive move on this particular patient's part. She suddenly found herself very effective at her job and in control of things. She had thought she was very much out of control, but now was finding a lot of people backing her up and being very secure. So, she came in with this image of her feelings about five men around her who were very important to her: one of which was me; and she could imagine all of us in a circus ring and she was the ringmaster with a whip in her hand and we were five elephants and all she had to do was snap that whip and we would move around and do whatever her bidding was. So, this becomes a problem, I think, in terms of the use of the will and it becomes a different kind of dynamic in this kind of a battle scene. I'd like to have some elucidation about it, if possible.

HARONIAN: The temptation here, of course, and the usual way of working with such stuff is to start to analyze the picture. I don't do that. What I would do in this particular situation would be to have the patient move into that fantasy right then and there in her waking daydream. Have her lie down, relax, close her eyes and then say "go ahead, you're the ringmaster, you have the whip, and there are those elephants. See it as clearly as you can. First, tell me what you see. How big are those elephants? Tell me about it. What are you wearing and what kind of audience? Let it become as vivid as possible. What do you hear? What's the band playing? Do you smell this and that? And then let the imagination take over. Go into an acquiescent mode of the will. What's happening now? The picture is going to change. What happens next?"

You're not analyzing anything. You're helping this person to live out the fantasy as if it were a dream, and the process, which is a part of psychosynthesis, is that the inner dynamic of the person will express itself and it will become plain. It may not become plain in an intellectual way at first, but the emotions that are aroused by the fantasy, as it develops, will (based on a symbolic level and a very intense affective level) express the patient's need for control or whatever it is in relation to these other people, and then work it out. If this thing is done successfully, the patient emerges from this fantasy at a new level of understanding and integration.

HILTON: On this first exercise of Assagioli's, visualizing the advantages of a strong will, I suggest this isn't a false image but that it will lead in to the recognition of a reality, because I think that Assagioli asserts that the will is an aspect of the self, the self which can stand aside from the psychic contents and

the drives and begin to manipulate them. So we're not building another fantasy. We're building something which is true to reality, and then suddenly it dawns on us and we say, "This is it, I am the willing self." I think there is quite a difference between this and certain other types of images that we can get lost in.

COOPER: It's the linkage of the imaging and will, the love-will relationship. It's this linking up that is so necessary, that is a synthesis - assuming there is a point of will, pure will, inside us that you can identify with.

GEER: I notice in working with adolescents who are struggling to develop their will, in contrast to their parents' will over them, that this exercising the will is very helpful. Very often they are confused in their imagery. Their imagery is blocked and it doesn't come through, so that if you work in the beginning with their will they can develop this sense that they do have a control that their parents can not take over. That is very important to them. (HARONIAN: What exercise did you use?) I used the chair one - standing on a chair.

COOPER: This discussion is excellent because it shows how you can move from one extreme to the other, from one modality to another, or one method to another with impunity.

PARKS: It would seem to me that with imaging, the crucial thing is in clearly defining the image and experiencing it; in disidentifying from it and getting back to the willing function. Even though the image portrays, say, anger or whatever, there is a part of you that can stand back and not be controlled by the image. Last night I had a dream that I was in a school. I was going to present a talk on the will. There were Militant Black Panthers over in a corner of the room. The question presents itself, what do I do? Do I carry on with the task or retreat from fear of the image? I just keep going despite the fact that it doesn't look good. There is a certain thing I have to do despite all obstacles.

The image was a negative image of fear. On the other hand, that doesn't stop me. There is something besides the image. It is the whole; it's beyond the image. It's the part of you that can disidentify from the image. Most of the disidentification we must do is from negative emotions, such as fear and anger. Locke would say it's these emotions that drive and motivate us, portrayed by images; emotions will give us tigers, lions, Black Panthers, sexual and aggressive things. But there's a part that stands despite these things; and it seems to me that is the crucial point in this question of images. It's the part that stands off and watches them or decides to not watch them.

GEER: I think particularly of an adolescent who had very brief imagery and at a certain point refused to continue because it was too painful. Then I moved into something she couldn't be so frightened of. (COOPER: Certainly, if you have strong images, you work with images and then with the weak will. You try to balance it.) Right.

WINSTON: My questions concern both will and imagery. When I have somebody who has completely weak imagery, then I'll say, "Okay, you see this room and it's drab and it's dreary and it's horrible. Let's start redecorating it. What are you going to do first?" I did this with a gal who was really suicidal. The room that we were in was not my own office and it was pretty awful. She told me, "You know this room is bleak." I said, "Okay, redecorate it." She felt a lot better when she had it fixed up.

HARONIAN: This point that Shirley is making I think is a very important one - how the conscious mind can willingly choose pleasant, attractive, aesthetic, and beautiful

images, and feed them to the unconscious, and thereby affect the general undertone of feeling in the personality. The use of willing, conscious intention to improve one's mood.

RODGER: When we were talking about creativity, something came to my mind. I asked a small group to do the exercise on the will. They chose different things. There was one young woman with six children, and, as she reported, she felt she couldn't find time to do the exercise; but did choose one - going around a room touching different things - and soon found herself doing it imaginatively. At first it was sort of dumb; and then she began to waltz around in time to a tune that she whistled. The next thing the children were joining in and having a delightful time in a follow-the-leader thing. They did the Can-Can on the way, and they did some other kinds of dances. In the course of that week she got out a guitar which she hadn't played for a long, long time and she made up a delightful song which had to do with some of the things that we had been working on in the group. And there were several others in the group who began suddenly to do things that they just hadn't bothered to do for a long while. Somehow they found a willingness to do them.

COOPER: Or found time. The time suddenly begins to change, so that they can do these things if they want.

GEER: May I make one little comment on that, and that is I wonder if the will is involved in allowing yourself to have pleasure. Maybe it is.

WINSTON: In the doing of purposeless activity, I see an analogy to play, and that telling a person to do a purposeless activity is like saying "go ahead and play"; and that may be why people who cannot do a purposeful activity can do a purposeless activity because it's play; it's fun, in a way.

COOPER: Then it will lead to a purpose.

GEER: Or that it's okay not to have a purpose and therefore the next step would be it's okay to have play.

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