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Topic: Preparation of the vessel or plugging the holes in  
our buckets - a psychosynthesis approach to working  
with adolescents

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Preparation of the vessel or plugging the holes in our buckets

- a psychosynthesis approach to working with adolescents

Mark Horowitz

INTRODUCTION:

Dr. Frank Hagonian: Having Mark Horowitz here tonight to speak to us represents the beginning of a very significant trend in our meetings. By that I mean that more and more younger people are coming into psychosynthesis and finding ways of applying it that we haven't thought of before, and developing their own methods and ideas so interestingly. Mark is presently a guidance counselor with the Chelmsford, Massachusetts, school system and he's trying to convince the Board of Education that they ought to establish a curriculum for human development which would integrate English, History, Gymnastics, Physical Education, Music and Art, all under the philosophy of Psychosynthesis. More power to him!

He really wants to revamp the school system, and I think something of this sort is inevitably going to happen. So you're looking at one of the pioneers in this kind of movement right now. Mark is working on his Master's at Goddard College, as are a number of other psychosynthesis people, and tonight he's going to talk about working with children at the junior high school level, primarily, using psychosynthetic exercises to get to them. Then he's going on to discuss his energy theory, which he says is the basis of the exercises that he uses and finds so effective.

Mr. Mark Horowitz:

I'm going to try to make this talk as informal as possible. I will trace some of my evolution in the work with psychosynthesis and then talk about some of the work that I've been doing; not necessarily because it's so extraordinary or that I'm doing tremendously creative work, but more to share it with you. If any of you are doing work in psychosynthesis I think that you've found the need to share it with others, find out what they're doing, and use this to reinforce what you're doing.

Earlier tonight I was talking with Jack Cooper about some of the work that he is doing, checking it out with the stuff that I'm doing. It's a tremendous reinforcement for me that there are other people who are doing what I'm doing, because up in Boston, where I happen to be working with psychosynthesis there aren't many other people practising. So I'm going to share with you some of my experiences - both the positive and negative, so you can check in to the different places where I've been and say, "Yes, I've been there, too." Hopefully you'll get an insight into some of your work with psychosynthesis, too.

I want to tell you how I came to be here - which is a real privilege for me. Six years ago, when I was at Brandeis one of my professors, Jim Fadiman, handed me a copy of the book, Psychosynthesis. I read it from cover to cover. It was the type of psychology that I knew and was interested in, but which nobody at Brandeis was teaching at that time, because Abe Maslow was on leave of absence, and the rat psychologists had taken over again. I got very excited about the book and I wrote to the Psychosynthesis Research Foundation in New York.

This was six years ago, and I sent them \$3.00 with a letter saying, "Please put me on the mailing list. I'm in college; I don't have much money. When I get to be

a famous psychologist I'll make a contribution to the Foundation"; so I consider this talk my first installment!

Let me give you some of the background in the work I've been doing. I've been working primarily with adolescents; junior high school and high school age kids. I consider my work to be a little bit different from what the Vargus did a few years ago in California with gifted kids. The kids that I work with, I really don't know that I can call them gifted, although I love them, but they don't show that potential that the Vargus have written about in some of their papers.

I started working at a free high school, a hippie high school in Boston that the kids set up themselves; and this was right at the time when I got started in psychosynthesis. At the same time I was working on myself, using the techniques on myself. I was also working with these high school age kids, with a sort of trial and error, hit and miss thing; they got very excited about it and so did I; and that was my beginning in psychosynthesis.

At one time we were doing some exercises in the training of the will, and the headmaster came into the classroom, and all of us were standing on chairs in the middle of the room. We had been there for about ten minutes, and he couldn't understand what was going on! It was one of the will exercises, which, even when I explained it, he didn't understand.

But after I finished college and went through a few other professions, like running a bookstore and things like that, I came back to Boston and started running groups in Kenmore Square. Kenmore Square in Boston is rather like Forty-Second Street in New York City but not quite as bad! I was working primarily with runaways, dropouts, people who would hang around there all the time. The first groups were run in the Sizzleboard Restaurant. It was a neon light, McDonald's type restaurant and we didn't get much work done there, so we moved into a junior college to work with these kids. There was no setup for a comprehensive followup. They would spend one or two nights a week in the group and then they'd go back on the streets, and I would go back to the suburb. I knew what happened to them during those times, but I couldn't be with them all the time, working with them constantly.

After a while, it dawned on me why I was getting such a big turnout, and that was that the kids, coming twice a week, were looking to me as another high. They would come in and get stoned on my groups. They were so bored with Kenmore Square, just hanging around in the restaurant twenty-four hours a day. It was a twenty-four hour restaurant; the police would run them out and they'd come back in, again and again. And I would ask them, "How come you sit here like this?" It was a tremendously oppressive place. "Well, we're waiting. Somebody we know might come in." They were just waiting and waiting, and using a lot of drugs on the side for their energy input.

They would come to the group and we'd do a very intense group; we'd do visualization exercises; we'd do sensitivity exercises; we'd do touchy-feelies, and they'd get all excited. They'd leave feeling very good but they'd forget it all and wouldn't practice any things outside the group. I found out why: because I hadn't laid a foundation or done any really deep ground work with them. I don't necessarily mean deep psychological ground work, but establishing a common bond. I found they were just using me as a high. I was the LSD for the night; I was entertainment. They would come in stoned, and I would allow them to come into the group stoned, as long as they would announce it. I felt I could work with that at the time, even though they were stoned; and we were pretty successful. A lot of times, on the visualization exercises when they were stoned, depending on what drug they were on at the time, some of them could get into pretty heavy trips.

These kids didn't like the situation they were in; they were very depressed, very down; they weren't very happy where they were in life. However, they hadn't hit rock bottom; they weren't so far down that they wanted to change, and I found that this was probably the biggest single criterion which undermined the work that we were doing together - that they didn't have that commitment to do something with their life.

They would stop into the group, if I was there. They would participate in the group but they wouldn't carry any of it over to their outside lives, because they hadn't hit rock bottom and they hadn't been convinced that they wanted to change. They used to joke with me all the time and say, "Why should we change? Our life is so easy. We get three to five dollars an hour panhandling on the street; we get free medical care from the van that comes around; we get free dental care; they provide us sanctuary to sleep, a free bed. And every night of the week some church in town has a free supper. We've got everything done for us; why should we exercise any will in our lives?"

So finally, when things got very heavy in Kenmore Square I started moving out, because there was a lot of crime going on. When the heavy drugs moved in the organized crime came too, so I moved out and lost contact with a lot of these kids, which was too bad, because I had become an ideal model for them, the one thing that they could latch on to that would make them want to exercise the will was myself as a person.

One thing that was psychologically interesting was that you read about group leaders becoming strong father figures; Philip Slater talks about this a lot, and the need to rebel against the strong leader and the strong father image; and I kept waiting and waiting for this group in Kenmore to rebel. That would be the sign that things were going really well; but they never did, because that's what they all wanted. They didn't want to rebel against the strong father image; they had never had a strong father and they were not about to pass up that chance.

So I decided that Kenmore Square really wasn't the place for psychosynthesis. Psychosynthesis was setting its sights a little higher than that. At least, at that time I wasn't prepared to work with these kids.

When I moved to SHARE some of the problems were solved, because I moved into an area that I was a little bit more comfortable with. It was an age group and a social economic group that I was a little more comfortable with--white, middle-class, where I had come from.

I moved to a more organized drug program in the suburbs, called SHARE. I worked for their Education and Prevention Division, which was a nice name for it. I was working with peer groups, which were pretty standard groups of high school age adolescents. We worked with drop-in centers, learning center environments, where they could come and participate in groups, do crafts in a more total environment. Mostly the kids I've been working with have been discipline problems - fairly constant acting-out behavior in the home and in school. Some of them had pretty serious drug problems, but not all, although most of them had experimented with drugs, and a lot of kids had run away from broken homes. That seemed to be the predominant characteristic, the broken home.

Some of the problems that I've run into working with this type of kid, I'm sure some of you have met with, and I'd be interested in getting feedback from you on how you dealt with them.

The basic problem was the tremendous need for laying a foundation and doing a lot of ground work before I could get into psychosynthesis work. The problems were: they didn't always want to be there; some of them were paroled to me from the courts; some of them just happened to be in the drop-in center on the night when I was there with my group. They were not particularly reliable; there was little continuity. They would come one week and then miss the next week; sometimes they would come back and sometimes they wouldn't. They were having very typical adolescent problems and they were trying to deal with them with drugs and sex and losing themselves in those two things.

The learning centers provided a place where we could do follow up work. We could have groups two nights a week and then do some follow up with crafts, with sports, with music and dance and things like that. So it allowed us more continuity; it allowed us to work with these kids more intensely. But I got the feeling that even this wasn't enough, because we still had a lot of kids that were just hanging out. There was a lack of continuity, so we limited the groups to people who were willing to make a commitment. I finally required them, in the Gurdjieffian sense, to make a commitment to the group, and the commitment was that they promised to keep a psychological workbook, that they would keep a journal and that they would attend regularly.

This seemed to work pretty well, because if they weren't willing to make the commitment to keep the workbook and didn't participate in the group they couldn't come in. For the kids who did make that commitment, it was a very good exercise for them to keep the workbook; it was a good commitment mechanism. But even this wasn't enough. For me it wasn't an intense enough situation. I kept having the feeling that I really wanted these kids in my house so I would work with them all the time. They were really extraordinary. They all had beautiful souls. If anybody would look at them they'd be completely turned off by their looks, but they were all really beautiful people. I wanted to be with them to keep doing the positive reinforcement which was such an important part of the work. It was just like watering flowers.

So what we did, we took a bus trip. We got an old school bus that we converted into a camper and we (two other staff members and myself) took nine kids to Canada for one month. These kids had never been away from home for more than a week. They were high school age kids, inner city kids who had never seen mountains, never seen forests. We did group work two nights a week; we called them our hassling meetings where we would work out tensions that were generated just by the closeness of twelve people in a school bus. On two other nights per week we did psychosynthesis exercises and Sufi stories. And for an entire month these kids just blossomed. It was the most beautiful thing that I've ever done, and the kids picked up on that.

The motto for the trip was: "The energy you put out is the energy you're going to get back, both as a group and as individuals." We did some work on the energy theory which I'll talk about in a little while.

We rode the most incredibly high wave of energy that I've ever experienced in my life, and the same for these kids; no drugs, no alcohol for the entire trip; out-of-doors; a positive peer group reinforcement. I had a great staff working with me, and it was a very intense living situation and the kids just blossomed. They had to do all their own cooking; do all their own laundry. The first time we went into a laundromat two-thirds of them didn't know how to work the machines. One kid put his clothes in, dumped the soap in, put his quarter into the middle of the agitator and said, "The machine's broken." By the end of the trip they were volunteering to cook; they were trying to one-up each other. Some had never been in a kitchen before, yet they were cooking gourmet meals over a Coleman stove. It was a tremendous experience in building their self-confidence.

Unfortunately when we came home they had to go back to their normal family situations. Their families didn't understand the changes they had been through. Kids who had never talked and had hid behind their hair, suddenly had their hair combed and tied back and were radiant. Their parents didn't know what to do with them. But some of them, because of the work we had done on the trip, the foundation that we were able to lay, were able to overcome that and work with their parents; and those were really beautiful cases. But some, unfortunately, just regressed back to where they were.

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The two biggest problems that I found, and I'm sure that everyone in this room who's been working with adolescents - and most of the people who have been working with adults - have found that the biggest problems with kids are the tremendous negative self-image and the tremendous lack of will; absolutely no will energy, no positive self-image. And that's predominantly the first thing that I have to work with, in dealing with these kids, their tremendous negative self-image and to get them generating some will energy.

Also, most of these kids are not aware of the fact that they can change. They have the feeling that they're stuck in a rut; things can't get better; life is just like that. So the concept of change is almost foreign to them. And when you're working with them you find out that they have no sophistication with psychological concepts. They're non-intellectual, so it's hard for them to read. When you're working with college kids you can assign a reading list to them and they'll go out and get fifteen books, but with these kids, trying to get them to read is like pulling teeth. You have to work with what they are reading, and fortunately a lot of them are reading science fiction, books like "Stranger in a Strange Land," "Dune," the "Foundation Trilogy", etc., where you can get to them through the science fiction and talk about the concepts and then relate it to their own lives.

The main thing is that you almost have to shake them to wake them up to the possibility that they can change. Show them that there are things like flowers, mountains and trees, not only out there, but in here, inside them. Each time they say something negative you have to say something positive to them. Each time they tell me how bad things are I say, "Yeah, but—" and show them something good, that there's a positive side too. You have to show them that there are possibilities in their lives; that there are places to go.

If they will read, you can have them read autobiographies, but if they won't read autobiographies then you have to bring in your friends who have gotten their lives together; you have to use yourself as an ideal model, and show them that there are possibilities for people who have gotten their heads together and worked on themselves - and what happens when they do that.

Then what I stumbled across was that if I could help them lay a foundation for their work on themselves, once I had planted that foundation, once I had planted that seed, when they're ready it will blossom. Two years later I've had kids come back to me and say, "Wow, that energy theory you turned us on to, is really great the way it works on my life, now, and I'm doing this and this with it." But I have come to see that mostly what I do is plant seeds here and there with some of these kids who haven't been fully committed to change. You plant a seed here; you plant a seed there and you can't be ego-attached to the results, because they don't always come overnight - they never come overnight. They don't always come in the time period when you're working with them, and if you're ego-attached to the result, usually that gets in the way of your doing your best work. So I plant the seeds, and hopefully somebody else can water them along the way, too.

Any time you want to stop me and ask questions, do.

BERRY: When you talked about the wonderful bus trip, did you see they got the right food?

HOROWITZ: No. We started that, but first of all, it was very hard to get that kind of food in Canada, and very expensive. They wouldn't eat salad. It's hard to describe what they liked—potato chips, peanut butter and jelly!

SEIXAS: You got them to eat grainola?

HOROWITZ: My brother owned a bakery and sent us 25 pounds of grainola before we left. He made some of the best grainola in the world. They got to like grainola and yogurt; of all things, yogurt! We couldn't get them to eat salad; we couldn't get them to eat brown rice; they'd eat white rice.

CANNON: You mentioned that two of the big problems were lack of positive self-image and lack of will energy, and you said you had to tackle that first. I wish you'd elaborate a little on what you do.

HOROWITZ: Some of the techniques I have used are ones I have taken from the book Psychosynthesis. The only difference is that the book is very intellectually oriented, and I've had to take the exercises and translate them down into a language that they'll understand, and you'll see this in the energy theory that we talk about later.

Usually I work in groups. The group aspect is important for pretty standard reasons. They have peer group acceptance in the group; they have other people of their age in the group. They can recognize a commonality of their problems. A lot of these kids are laboring under the false assumption that they're the only ones that have these problems, and to find out that everybody else in the group has the same problems is a big thing for some of them; it's a liberating experience, and they develop communication skills.

With most of the kids at this age, the main thing that they need is to develop communication skills with their peer group so that they can get some positive acceptance, which they need; to develop some of this self-confidence so they can open up. Also, they get positive reinforcement both from myself and from the guidelines that I set in the group. I'm a very heavy-handed leader. It's not an open group in any sense. I bring in exercises every week because I find that they have very short attention spans. You can do encounter material with them, but usually they shut off and I find that that's not the most effective way for these kids. Kids don't need to bad-mouth anything to anybody any more than they're already badmouthing; but as I said before, they need to talk about their good qualities, and they need to have other people talk about their good qualities.

We do exercises: "Tell us three good things about yourself, things that you like about yourself." Have a person in the middle of the group and let the others in the group say good things about him; let them say good things about themselves. These are all among the standard group exercises that you've read about in other books. But they're very important with the kids, because they need to be reinforced; they need to be brought out; it's a gentle process. That's the first thing we work with in the group.

The second thing is the journal. The journal is very important. It's essential to get them to write down the psychological material to get it out of their head. Instead of letting it go around and around in a vicious circle in their head, write it down on paper. Everything that Assagioli talks about in the book about keeping a psychological workbook is definitely true with kids. It's crucial, both as a catharsis and to follow their progress; and also I use it as a commitment mechanism. It's also

the first exercise that they have in training the will, to keep the journal regularly. When we finally get to the work on the will in our group, they say, "I can't do anything like that"; but I say, "Look, you've kept a journal for nine weeks, so far"; and they say, "That's true." And that's always the first step for them to see that they have done something consistently over a period of time.

Another technique that I use, that the kids like the most, is the relaxation exercise—any relaxation exercise: breathing, standard hypnotic relaxation exercises, etc. So they can unwind. They never unwind during the day. They take downers; they take barbiturates if they want to unwind, but they don't stop and try and do it themselves. This works too with adult groups. I start every group with relaxation exercises. This is also a lead-in to meditation work, which I do with them later in the group, because the relaxation exercise that we do is focussing on the breath, and when the mind wanders off you return it to breathing—which is a pretty standard meditation exercise.

But we don't call it meditation in the beginning because they wouldn't relate to it; it's a simple relaxation exercise that takes ten minutes, and they wake up and their faces are glowing; they're smiling; they feel relaxed. I don't talk to them about using it outside the group, but they come back and say, "Wow, I did that exercise three times last week, and it makes me feel good every time I do it." They see that when they calm their mind and when they calm their body it releases energy that they can use for other things. They have to calm their minds when they're doing any work with their self—with their essence. Usually they've got so much going on in their heads, so many words, unless they start calming down they can't begin to see the center.

Then usually I lay a foundation. I set out a whole structure for them to work with, and that's the energy theory. We'll come to that soon. We also do work with theories of the Self. We do the "Who am I?" exercise. This is a very tricky thing with these kids, because it's a very heavy exercise. It always turns out to be very depressing, the first few times that they do it. They need constant encouragement; constant reinforcement to keep working with this exercise to get through more of the negative layers so they can start seeing the positive self.

One of the ways that I reinforce this is by having them do the "Who am I?" visualization exercises, where you close your eyes and visualize the answer to the "Who am I?" in a drawing. Then we share the drawings in a group, and there's always a positive aspect to the drawing. Never yet have I had any of the kids come up with a drawing that you couldn't see a positive aspect in it. It may be a tiny flower down in the corner on an eight by twelve sheet, a flower, a star, a sun, a tree, something in there, and you reinforce this. You can tell them, "How come when we talked about your drawing you didn't mention this positive part?" And we point out the commonality of some of these positive symbols in the visualization exercises and get them to keep working on the "Who am I?" and go deeper and deeper with it.

Also, there are the Dis-identification and Self-identification Exercises which are very good with these kids. But there is a caution, and I've had to adapt the exercises somewhat because some of these kids have been so heavy into drugs, or in drug experimentation; not necessarily disidentify in the sense that we mean, but they disassociate with their body, with their feelings, with their mind.

So I need to emphasize the affirmative parts of those exercises, too. "You feel your emotions, and you experience your emotions; you have emotions, but you are not your emotions." It's the same thing with body. They treat their bodies miserably with drugs, with diet, no exercise, VD—everything you can imagine, and it's really



coming from disassociation from their bodies; and that's the negative side of dis-identification. So you have to watch this; and that's the caution that I have in working with these kids, who have been into drugs a lot. You need to first get them identified; and then they have to disidentify in order to self-identify; it's a three-step process.

We do free drawing. We do work with dreams. This is a very good thing with the kids, because a lot of them have dreams that are very repetitive which they don't understand at all. We teach them how to remember their dreams and to work with them in a Gestalt way. We do some Gestalt chair work with the kids, in relation to dreams.

The other thing that was really surprising to me, and I stumbled across it, was the work we did in poetry. I don't know very much about English or poetry or the language arts, but we started doing it, and one of the kids brought in a poem to read to the group; and all of a sudden everybody was going through their journals and their note books, saying, "I want to read one of mine!" It was amazing that everybody writes poetry at this age. I had forgotten that I wrote poetry at that age. The toughest kid in the group—with the leather jacket, the tattoos, etc.—gets out his wallet, takes out this tattered piece of paper, unfolds it four times and reads a poem he had written to his girlfriend!

So we worked with the poetry for a long time, both as a diagnostic tool and as a therapeutic tool. I have some examples, but I'm not going to read all of them, because some are rather long. But in some of the work we used the poems like others use free drawings, as diagnostic tools. They're very expressive with their poetry; they don't talk symbolically, they put it right down. Then you can use it therapeutically, and this is one of the therapeutic poems:

#### The Flower

Sunflower, sunflower blowing in the breeze;  
Sunflower, sunflower, so much at ease,  
Bringing forth a pattern of gay  
zigzagging this and that—a way,  
Happy, light and carefree too,  
In any light that shines on you.  
Sunflower, sunflower, yellow and brown,  
Sunflower, sunflower is never down,  
Bringing your warmth to my table however  
you are able,  
You're different from a pansy that catches  
all the children's fancy,  
Catches all the adults, too, because they  
see all the love in you.

This was an assignment for one of the girls in the group. She kept coming up to me and saying, "I'm so depressed, I'm so depressed; I'll write this poem about suicide." So I said, "Write me a poem," and she got all excited that she could do something for me. "Write me a poem about a flower," and this is what came up. We did a lot of work with this poem. Focussing on where this flower was inside of her; and it was very therapeutic.

Also, there is the visualization exercise. This is probably the one that you'll use the most with kids. They pick up on the visualization exercise like it was ice cream. I use different exercises that are written up in various places: the Temple of Peace, a journey to the center of the earth, a journey into caves, a journey to the tops of mountains, things like that.

I also wrote one which I called "A Journey to the Sun," and different people use different versions of it, which sort of developed separately from each other. We're not going to have time to do it tonight, but it will be included in the transcript of this talk. (see p.24 ) It's basically a visualization exercise which liberates a tremendous amount of energy in the kids, because in a journey to the sun they merge with the sun and they bring back all the warmth and light and love they find there; and they bring it back to earth to share with others. It's a very powerful exercise. I usually use it right off the bat as an example of the energy that they have inside of themselves that they're not aware of, and which they can draw on at any time.

The visualization exercises are very strong. You can use them in a lot of different ways and most of them are written out in the book, Psychosynthesis. You can adapt them however you want. We did them on the bus trip and the kids would say, "I'm really stoned," when they came out of the visualization exercises. They'd be excited and feel very good about themselves and about other people, and they'd be putting out tremendous good energy after these exercises.

I'm also experimenting with visualization exercises in relation to Sufi stories. I don't know if any of you are familiar at all with Idries Shah's work. He's written a lot of books of stories, and they're very good to work with; you can have them visualize themselves in the stories, and have them work through each different part, each different character in the story. You can also have them imagine themselves as if they were objective observers of the story in a visualization exercise.

You can also use these Sufi stories as examples of sub-personalities when you get into work with sub-personalities. If you read them yourself you'll begin to see how sub-personalities come out in the stories. Each character in a story can be a different sub-personality, and you can watch them interact. They're like Aesop's Fables. They're stories that kids can relate to on any number of levels, and they are very effective.

At the same time they're doing all these other exercises, in order to work on this enhancement of self-image, we're also doing affirmations. By affirmations I mean things like the old standby, "Every day in every way I'm growing better and better." Where they do the relaxation exercise on their own every morning and every night, they plant this seed thought, "Every day in every way I'm growing better and better." They don't have to believe it, they just have to do it. And soon I pass these kids on the street and they'll say, "I'm better today!" They start affirming it constantly to themselves. Also let them plant the seed thought for themselves, "I like myself unconditionally, no strings attached." Get them working with these phrases. These are things they would never consider saying to themselves.

The only thing you have to do is plant the thought in their minds and they just latch onto it. It's beautiful. It's like the way a flower moves to the light. They begin to see a way out of the dilemma that they're in. If they can start saying good things about themselves, then they don't have to rely on others saying good things about them; they can get it from themselves. It's a very powerful technique. We also do a seed planting exercise which I learned at an Esalen Seminar from Dan Malamud.

Finally, the last thing that I rely on is my presence in the group, and I think that that's a pretty common experience with these groups, especially with adolescents. I have to be an example of everything that I'm talking about—openness, honesty, putting out good energy, saying good things about myself, affirming my own being.

The good thing about the bus trip was that I laid out the whole theory for them. I had nine kids that I was responsible for and it forced me to be on my toes every minute of the day, because I was telling them the energy that we put out is the energy that we get back, and that meant from me, also, and it worked. It was one of the highest times that I've had in my life, because having them look to me forced me to be aware all the time. They saw this and they related to it ; they picked up on it, too.

Are there any questions so far?

McMICHAEL: On the bus trip, you talked about, how, after it was completed, some children came back and were transformed and talked to their parents in a different way, and others fall back into a regressive state. Do you have any insights as to why some of them went back into a regressive state?

HOROWITZ: Partly in being back in contact with some of the kids from the past, and partly it was just the social-economic situation. Some have to work in gas stations. Some come from families that have ten kids, where they get very little attention. They have very little support outside themselves. They don't see the other kids from the trip; they don't get that kind of reinforcement. The kids it worked with were those who came from the same towns and see each other, kids who I can see more often, kids who were at a place in their life where they wanted to change, where they saw there were things they could do in their life to make their life better, and they had a commitment in it; they invested a lot of energy in it. And some of them had parents who were more open and that helped a lot.

Question: Will you clarify the age group that you work with?

HOROWITZ: It's junior high to high school, which means thirteen to eighteen. More and more I'd like to get into work with teachers and counsellors of adolescents, because I feel that if I'm doing this work and finding that it works, I could be more effective if I shared it with people who are teachers, because if I teach one person who is working with thirty, I'm more effective than if I work with those thirty kids individually.

We're going to go into the energy theory now, and I'd like you to participate with me, if you would. You'll see that it relates to your life as well as to the lives of the kids that I'm working with. Some of the language is not written for your age group, and you'll see what I mean when I say that I translate some of this language down to the level that they'll understand.

I'm going to share with you the foundation we work on with the kids. We create a structure that they can hang their life on, so to speak; they can plug into it and use it to analyze their life, to study their life, and to see where they get their energy from and where it goes and how they can begin to do some work on their life.

First, let's talk about energy in general. This is called the "Preparation of the Vessel," and it's a theory of energy flow; how we collect and spend our energy.

We're all familiar with the kinds of energy that we read about in physics class in school - things like solar energy, electrical energy, mechanical energy, kinetic and potential energy. Those are grosser forms of energy than the one I'm talking about here. We're talking about a more subtle energy.

Those of you who are into any esoteric work know it as prana, but we don't use this language with the kids because that's not something they can relate to. But

energy means a lot to them. I'll give you some examples, and then you can give me some, of how this energy manifests in your life. With the kids it's things like when they fall head over heels in love. All of a sudden they're just overwhelmed by a wave and they have this feeling of love and good feelings towards another person, and they feel like somebody is blowing up a balloon--a warm balloon--inside their stomach and they're going to burst.

I tell them that this energy that's building up inside of them, is distinguished from sexual energy. It's a feeling of joy and wellbeing that they feel, and it's very subtle. You feel this in your body, but if you don't look carefully you miss it.

Sometimes if you're sitting with a close friend and it's late at night and the lights are down and you're having a very intense discussion; you're expressing ideas, back and forth, and all of a sudden it looks as though you're getting closer and closer together and there is this tremendous energy building up.

We've all had that experience; I'm not giving them anything that's new to them, and this theory isn't mine; it's things that I've picked up from other people and translated to these kids to work with. Everybody has had these experiences at one point or another. What you have to do is bring them into these kids' consciousness so that they're aware of them and start noticing them and working with them.

When they concentrate for a long time on a book or a puzzle, say, a math test or chess game, where they have to focus their attention, and whether they solve the problem or not, they come away feeling really high; they come away feeling very energetic and very good, and the energy that's building inside of them comes from focussing their attention.

Or you just wake up some morning, and you feel so good you run outside and hug a tree and roll around in the grass, and when you have that feeling, that's this energy. You can't attribute it to any of this electrical energy or physical energy. It's a more subtle energy that's building up inside, and it's responsible for this joy, this sense of wellbeing that you have. If you notice it then, how can you then start to get more of it and working with it more?

Another example I give to them is when they're feeling depressed and the whole world looks black, and they go to hear a rock band, or they put on their favorite record or go to see their favorite movie, and by the time the record is over, or by the time they come out of the movie, all of a sudden they're feeling really good again. That's the energy having gone from a very low place with very little energy in a state of depression, to allowing this energy to come in from an external source and build them up. In this case it comes from something that they've associated with positive energy; something that makes them feel good.

Are you getting a sense of the energy that I'm talking about? What are some of the ways that come to your mind? I really would like feedback on this, both critical and positive, because I can incorporate it. I get tired of using the same examples over and over. What are some other examples?

Comment: A beautiful sunset.

HOROWITZ: Exactly; and it triggers something inside of you and it makes you feel - awe; and that raises this kind of energy.

Comment: When you've been away from somebody you care very much about and you see them again.

HOROWITZ: Exactly, very much a love energy.

DUNN: Playing basketball.  
kinesthetic movement.

HOROWITZ: Sports. A lot of times just a sense of

HARONIAN: Mastery. HOROWITZ: Mastery is another one, being good at something.  
If any of you are really into creativity, painting.

If any of you meditate—and now we're really getting down to it—it's that kind of energy; very subtle. That's the keyword that I use. If I can emphasize to them how subtle it is and how careful they have to be in looking for it, then they understand a lot of these exercises that we're doing, like the relaxation exercise, the meditation exercise, because it calms down their minds and they start to see some of the subtlety of the energy surrounding them.

Then I ask them to list on their worksheet some of the examples of energy in their life, and write it down in their psychological workbook. They can begin to look at where the energy comes from; and I stress that it's not necessarily a physical energy I'm talking about - whether or not you feel tired, although this energy does affect how you feel. Your body also affects the level of your energy, although this is not specifically what we're talking about.

COMMENT: I guess it interests me because I don't think of it as all that subtle. When you feel this energy you just simply want to explode.

HOROWITZ: Right; those are the big energy rushes; but we get those types of input in smaller doses all the time during the day, but because we're so caught up in all these other things that are going on we don't see those more subtle ones. We don't see the person who is walking down Fifth Avenue with a tremendous smile on his face - and that can be just as big an energy input for you as going out and seeing Yosemite. But you're right, it doesn't have to be subtle.

So the working hypothesis is that we all need this kind of energy. We need it to live. Without it, we're dead, in the Gurdjieffian sense; we're walking zombies. We walk around lifeless and asleep. We're not aware of what's going on with us and we can't exercise any will or control in our lives because we're asleep. So the hypothesis that they have to accept in the beginning is that we all need it. The good part about the way it's all laid out in an organized structure is that they can test it in their own lives. They can accept the hypothesis as actually true, and once they've accepted it, it starts changing their lives.

The next question is, if we all need this energy, where do we get it? How do we start to seek out this energy and where does it come from?

So here's the partial list that I give them of likely sources of energy: Enlightenment, self-actualization, love, meditation, concentration, fixing the attention, nature, contact with your inner essence, with your Self, humor, intense thinking, creativity.

What are some other courses of energy that they can seek out? What are some sources of energy for you?

Comments: People—high energy people; people with good lives; positive examples; art, music.

COOPER: Music can be negative, too.

HOROWITZ: Exactly. We'll get to that in a minute. What are some other positive sources of energy?

Comment: Taking risks.

HOROWITZ: Right; risk-taking can be energy sources for some people, but there are a couple of cautions to risk-taking.

Comment: Eating.

HOROWITZ: Eating definitely can be a very high source of energy.

The one thing that I have to make clear to the kids is that the quality of energy is determined by the attitude with which they seek it or create it. The quality is determined by the attitude which they bring into the situation. For example, you can raise the energy level, the amount of energy that's exchanged in sexual experience if you bring to it an attitude of love, rather than if it were simply sex and you're on the make. And this is something these kids can relate to, because ninety per cent of their life is taken up with being on the make; and by changing their attitude, and by bringing in a more positive attitude, the energy that's liberated in that relationship is a lot greater; the quality is higher. So I have them start looking for this. I have them start looking for examples that fit into their lives.

Other sources of energy that I list for them are things like competition, sports, sex, thrill-seeking, gossip, movies, television, drugs. All of these things are sources of energy. In fact, most of them are what most of the people in the United States use for their energy input. They sit in front of a television and that's the energy that they have to live with during the day. The caution is that these energy sources have a very fine line drawn between their being energy sources and energy drains. Television can be very hypnotic, it can all of a sudden start draining your energy rather than giving it to you. Movies, television, sports, can be energy sources if you have the right attitude. If you're not fully awake when you're participating in these energy exchanges, then it will take from you rather than give you the energy.

It's like thrill-seeking. A lot of times, thrill-seeking becomes an energy drain. People are driven towards it, they get a thrill and then they need more of it; it becomes an addiction for thrill-seeking. If they don't have the right attitude about it, such as that it's for their own growth, it's for working out things, then it becomes simply an activity and not an energy source. It's the same thing with drugs, which is the example that I give to all the kids. Some drugs, if used intelligently, can be very high sources of energy; they can be very good tools for getting personal insights. Unfortunately, most people are not using them intelligently any more. They're not using them with the proper attitude, so that they become desensitizing agents, and then they become energy drains.

But I repeat, that any activity can be a high source of energy, depending on the love and awareness that you bring to that situation, and this is an important thing to keep reminding them of.

There are two laws that I lay out in the beginning; two laws of energy flow. One is that you always get back as much as you put out. Other people have said it: "As ye sow, so shall ye reap." "Do not unto others as you would have them do not unto you."

This works for destructive energy, also, and we can give countless examples of how, when you're putting out bad energy towards your parents, your parents get up-

tight and start riding you, and that makes you up-tight and you start putting out more bad energy to your parents, and it just keeps going around in a circle. And you usually get back more of this energy than you put out. "Whatsoever ye do in the Name of God, shall be returned a hundred fold" - that kind of thing.

So that's what I ask them to start looking for, right off the bat: What kind of energy are you putting out and what kind of energy are you getting back? They didn't believe it on the bus trip. We were putting out incredibly good energy. It was like a red carpet in front of us all the way through Canada. Every possible good break that we could have had we got. People didn't check us at the border; twelve freaks crossing the border in a bus, we didn't even get checked; we were clean. We didn't have anything on us and they knew it.

People offered to give us places to stay, to park our bus; people offered us food or gave us discounts; people let us stay in the national parks for free. The kids couldn't believe it. They said, "We sure are lucky!" and I went back to the energy theory that we had discussed on the very first day of the trip, and I said that it was not that we were lucky, we were putting out good energy. We were working out the hassles between us, feeling good about each other, and giving out that energy towards other people. "We're not hassling policemen like at home; we're not getting drunk and stoned and giving out bad energy, and we're getting back that kind of energy."

By the end of the trip I started not believing it! Things were so high, and we were getting such incredible breaks that I was not believing it. The bus never once broke down! We had a 1962 school bus with 115,000 miles on the clock and went 3000 miles and we didn't have any trouble with it. Anyway, it was a good example of this kind of thing. By the end of the trip every kid knew, when we came to the Canadian border, coming back into the States, we weren't going to get checked and they knew why, too. It wasn't coincidence; it wasn't luck; we were putting out that kind of energy.

The second law that I lay out, is that low energy people, and people and animals that burn energy fast, tend to seek out high energy people or high energy areas. The same thing with animals that burn energy fast, like cheetahs and shrews and dogs - and babies burn energy really fast. You will notice that they will seek out high energy areas. If you have a cat and you do any kind of meditation you'll often find your cat sits in your lap while you meditate. Or a very high event will occur in your house and your dog will come into the middle of the room and bark. They sense this energy. Babies are like this, too.

Then there are speed freaks, and this is an example that the kids can relate to, who burn energy very fast and they need to get it anywhere they can. A lot of these kids are in contact with speed freaks, and they know that these people drain their energy if they're not careful.

So if we can get this energy from all these sources, and it's around us all the time and it's just a matter of tuning into it, where does it all go? Why don't we have more of it?

Here's where I get into a little bit of jargon. There are two places that the energy goes: Energy rip-off and energy drain-off. Energy rip-offs are people or events that sort of come along and snap you out of the high energy situation. It's like popping a balloon and the air rushes out.

If you're in a restaurant and you're talking with a friend and it's very intimate and things are building up and it's a good experience, and all of a sudden the waitress comes over and asks for your order. You look over and you give her your order and you come back and you can't remember where you were in your conversation, and the feeling isn't there like it was before. You just allowed your energy to be ripped-off.

Sometimes you'll have a younger brother or sister, and oftentimes parents who will rip-off your energy whenever you're really concentrating on something. I know my mother was really good at this. I'd be very deep into some form of either my homework or listening to music, and my Mom would say, "Did you pick up your room?" and I would let my attention go off and she would have ripped-off my energy.

If you're making love and the telephone rings, and you go to answer it and forget where you were, that's an energy rip-off.

A lot of times there will be people who are very strong energy rip-offs, because they're very low energy types and the only way they have to get energy is from other people; so they seek out every high energy situation they can. You'll be standing there having a really good conversation with some friends, talking about yourself and this work and a friend will come up and ask you what kind of a car you drive and all of a sudden all the heads turn toward him and you've lost the energy out of that situation.

What are some of the energy rip-offs that happen in your life? When do you let yourself be ripped off? Give me some other examples.

FRIEDMAN: It's a very obvious situation when you're working with a group of people on a project and somebody comes along not carrying their share of the project, and it's a rip-off.

HOROWITZ: Sometimes I call that a drain-off circuit. If it's a member of the group who is always there and if they're a constant part of the group they are a constant leak in the energy; instead of being a one-shot thing where they just come up and steal the energy once, they're a constant source of an energy leak; so we call them drain-off circuits, and that's where some of the energy goes.

Comment: I have six children and I don't know whether I allow myself to be drained-off or ripped-off. (HOROWITZ: It's not important what you call it, so long as you recognize it.)

SEIXAS: The telephone is just a built-in rip-off!

HOROWITZ: Okay; but the thing that you have to know is that you allow yourself to be ripped-off. You have control over this situation. Once you become aware of the fact of a rip-off you don't have to let it rip-off your energy.

SEIXAS: Do you mean you don't have to answer it?

HOROWITZ: There are two things: One, you don't have to answer it; and two, if you do answer it, you can hold the energy level that you were at before you answered the telephone, talk on the telephone and go back to that same energy.

COOPER: Staying centered.

HOROWITZ: Right, it's called staying centered. The trick is that once you've got these concepts you can start practicing. Once you realize that this is where some of your energy goes, then you can start saying, "Aha! the phone just rang, but I'm not going to get so caught up in it that I let it take my mind completely off of where I am now; I'm going to answer the telephone." You get up, talk, and you're back in the same place.



The same thing holds for the waitress at the restaurant. You're talking, you're at a very high place between the two of you; it's an intense situation; the waitress comes over, you give her your order and you go back to the same state.

Comment: This is the subtle part, more than how the energy flows.

Comment: You can even transfer it to that person.

HOROWITZ: Exactly. In that situation you can allow the waitress to be an energy input and build it even higher. But you have to have these concepts in your minds and you have to be experimenting with them. If you're not alert you constantly get your energy ripped-off without being aware of it. It takes practise; and that's why we plant these seeds with the kids I'm working with, because then they can start practising it.

Another example was the work I was doing in the Sizzleboard restaurant, where the kids would be sitting around in a group talking about the work that we had been doing in our groups; they were being very honest with each other and very sincere, trading their experiences and really getting high off each other and then some guy would come over and say, "Hey, want to buy some grass?" and all their energy would go out, and they would allow themselves to be ripped-off.

One of the things about an energy rip-off is that it attracts your attention and you put your energy in this new thing, rather than where you were or into yourself.

Comment: Sometimes you can turn a negative into a positive. If you realize it is going to be a negative source, say a person you have to see and you don't want to see, you can prepare to change the negative into the positive. It's a creative thing--

HOROWITZ: Exactly. Once you have these concepts they become tools. It's like a toolbox that you carry around with you, and then you can start using them in all these different situations. Once you're aware of where your energy comes from and where it goes, it's like getting more of it and spending less.

Let me go on; but you can keep asking questions and giving input; this is really good.

The other question that I ask on these work sheets, is, write down some other forms of energy rip-offs and who and what rips-off your energy, and how do you rip-off energy? Work with these questions and put them all in your journal--your psychological workbook and we'll talk about them next week.

So once we become aware of how our energy comes and goes we can stop ripping-off others, and we can stop letting ourselves be ripped-off by others, so that you become aware of it and you stop letting it happen. It's almost as simple as that, but it takes practice and it takes awareness.

CANNON: What if you consider yourself a low energy person, was a question I asked myself--and I thought yes. At the beginning you started out with all those kinds of things that are sources of energy. Would there be a specific attitude in dealing with that, let's say a sunset?

HOROWITZ: Everybody will have at least one positive thing that gets them off every time. All you have to do is keep working with them until they can remember what that happy thing is, and you can do a visualization exercise with it to recreate it. They'll say, "I remember a sunset, once, that I got really stoned on." And you have them go back and visualize the same thing, feel the energy and what's it like - those kinds of things.

There are some people who are continual energy rip-offs. Sometimes it's because they're low energy people; sometimes it's because they've learned bad habits. Once you become aware of these concepts, then the first thing is you stop letting them rip you off. Then you point out to them what they're doing, bring it to their consciousness.

You give them the whole energy theory just as I have given it to you; and to any high school kid - whether you go through the whole energy theory or not, whether he's sophisticated or not - you can say, "look, you just ripped off the energy in this situation," and he knows exactly what he did.

You don't even have to explain it to them. They can see that they pulled the energy out of the situation. Once you've made them conscious of what they're doing then you can turn around and help them get energy in positive ways by consciously giving them energy, rather than letting them rip it off from you, and that's where the flower watering comes in. When you see that the people need energy you give it to them. And you give it to them consciously and then the energy comes back to you and it becomes a positive cycle.

The second place that energy goes is the energy drain-off circuit. Energy drain-off circuits are constant leaks in the system; it's like a hole that the energy leaks out of, drop by drop by drop. There are two types: external energy drain-off circuits and internal energy drain-off circuits.

External energy drain-off circuits are people or situations that you constantly find or place yourself in that drain off your energy - for instance, the one that Justin gave of working with a group of people where one person is not carrying his load, and continues not to carry his load. That's an energy drain-off, because everybody else is generating the energy but this person is taking it out of the situation.

Where these kids have a bad family situation, constant fighting and bickering and a lot of tension and a lot of hassles that keep going around and around, that is a drain-off circuit for everybody, the parents as well as the kids.. They know that; as soon as they walk in the house they're back into that energy drain-off circuit.

Schools are notorious as drain-off circuits, constant repetition, boredom, not speaking to the real problems that the kids have, the real issues with their identity and their feelings. These become external drain-offs which the kid has to plug into every day. So what he does is choose not to plug into it; he takes downers instead or he gets stoned, which is another drain-off.

COOPER: Advertising; that's a good example. It's always there; it's always draining off our energy, if we let it, if we don't have the right consciousness about it. We're constantly being bombarded with that kind of thing. Bureaucracy is another good example. A job, where you have to be nice to a supervisor in order to keep your job, is an energy drain-off circuit.

DUNN: Rationality. HOROWITZ: Rationality, thinking too much, those conscious vicious circles. COMMENT: Noise and pollution.

HOROWITZ: Noise, noise pollution, right - a constant energy drain-off.

One of the things that the kids get into a lot is just hanging out. This is very much an energy drain-off. Smoking grass night after night because they don't have anything else to do can be a serious energy drain-off.

COOPER: Complaining about the government.

HOROWITZ: Complaining about the government. Any attitude that you have which you haven't been able to transcend can be more of an internal drain-off circuit. Guilt is an internal one.

So I ask them to write down in their workbook some of these external energy drain-off circuits on themselves.

The other thing is the internal drain-off circuits. These are by far the more serious. These are slow leaks, metaphorically, inside of us; things like hang-ups, fears, worries, wrong thoughts or ideas, dissipating actions, bad habits, lack of self-respect or self-confidence - all of these are internal short circuits, and we're constantly leaking out energy through these things. Such things as telling yourself - and these two are the ones that the kids relate to the most - "I can't do this," or "I'm not pretty enough to be liked," negative thinking.

And the second one is fear. Negative thinking and fear are the two biggest internal energy drain-offs. Thinking about things that have happened and what the outcome will be; worrying about things that haven't happened yet and what the outcome is going to be; all of these are vicious circles that we get ourselves into that keep leaking out energy.

HARONIAN: How do you handle that with the kids, for example, when you get this constant putting of oneself down?

HOROWITZ: We start doing the opposite. Each time they put themselves down I say, "Yes, but what's good about you?" You always have to be on your toes in such subtle ways. Every time they say, "I can't do this," you have to say the opposite. Every time they say, "I'm not good enough," tell them "Bullshit," and show them how they just did it; constantly counteract that thing. It's like a badminton game. They say, "I can't," and you say "You can." Pretty soon they start doing it.

HARONIAN: Do you ever go so far as to get angry with them for knocking themselves?

HOROWITZ: I wouldn't usually do that, only because it's not my mode of operation. Sometimes I get frustrated, but I constantly try and remind them when they do it. They get so tired of me almost nagging them that they start not saying it around me, and that's the first step.

HARONIAN: Then you send them away, in effect, if not physically then psychologically, when they keep turning you off with this negative information about themselves every time?

HOROWITZ: Every time I keep affirming the positive for every one of their negatives, and it does take a lot of energy.

Question: You don't just deny and accuse them of saying something?

HOROWITZ: No. I point out to them that they're doing it. I say, "Look what you just did," pointing out that they're constantly repeating negative things to themselves, but asking what's the positive side of what they just said; and they begin to repeat it.

For all of you who are teachers or counselors this can be a drain-off circuit for you. If you have to counteract a negative statement every time a kid makes one, and you have to come out with a positive statement; unless you're really centered, unless you're tapped into your source of energy, that's going to take energy from you

and the energy really drains and gets wiped out. So it's very helpful to see where your energy goes during the day when you're working with kids like this.

Ego roles that you play are very strong internal energy drains. When you have to keep up a false front; when you have to be happy when you really hurt and you're really feeling sad inside, that takes a lot of energy and that's an internal drain. When you have to act like you're strong, like you're coming across with a strong macho image when you really want to feel your mother's arms and be taken care of. That takes a lot of energy, to keep up that false front.

Question: Over a period of working with a group you get to know, don't you allow yourself sometimes to say, "I really feel shitty?"

HOROWITZ: Oh yes. "I feel bad, but what am I going to do about it? Am I going to wallow in it for the next week? I experience the fact that I'm down, but will I identify with it? How deep am I going to go with that?"

Question: What I meant was do you let that come out so they know?

HOROWITZ: Right. I don't want to give you the impression that this is a course in rose-colored glasses. You don't have to let yourself wallow in it. Most people aren't familiar with regaining their energy and allow themselves to wallow in a low energy place. This is something I found out with the kids. I found out in looking at myself. I feel depressed, so I feel sorry for myself. I get other people to feel sorry for me and that's an input of energy and pretty soon I know that if I stay down feeling sorry for myself that I'm kind of recycling old energy and you can't stay at that place very long.

H. HILTON: Isn't this actually a part of the dis-identification exercise?

HOROWITZ: Right, being able to identify and to be able to experience it, but not to wallow in it. I feel sadness, but I'm not sad. Because I experience depression that doesn't mean I'm a depressed person; that's the difference.

Question: Going back to desires--

HOROWITZ: Desires can be a very strong internal drain-off circuit. To want more and more and get more and more, but that doesn't satisfy you and you find that you still need to go out and get more and more--sex, money, material possessions and all of those kinds of things. If you don't have the right attitude, those desires are insatiable and you spend a lot of energy seeking them. That's a pretty heavy one for most people.

DUNN: For the will to gain energy, for instance, the will to aspire, to be better - that's basically a seeking, desire type thing.

HOROWITZ: In the beginning you can affirm those kinds of things. Energy greed you can affirm in the beginning, but point out to them that what we're talking about is not simply getting more and more good highs. You can let them start out that way, but once they begin acquiring energy you point out to them that we're not just after highs; we're after how we use this energy in helping others and in helping ourselves to grow and to keep ourselves centered.

BRODBECK: Do you find it is difficult to observe the energy changes that take place?

HOROWITZ: Not at all. What you'll find is that when you walk out of this room you won't be able to forget these things. You may not have been particularly interested

in them, but the next time somebody comes and rips-off your energy you're going to sit back and realize what we're talking about. That's what happens with the kids, too. They may not be really excited about it the first time, but they go out and start looking for it in their lives and it's just there. The only reason they never saw it before is because those concepts weren't in their minds. I think it's very easy to see.

COOPER: What about the will - "I will not smoke; I will not eat certain foods." That's energy rip-off, isn't it? (HOROWITZ: Right.) Weight reducers, weight watchers and some of these others rip-off a lot of energy this way.

HOROWITZ: What they're doing is, without making any other kind of investigation into or understanding of the situation, they know that they don't like the fact they're smoking and they say, "I'm not going to smoke. I will not smoke." And it's like beating up against a brick wall, because they've got all these things that are causing them to smoke and they're trying to exercise this will, like grinding your gears or racing your engine in neutral, because you're spending all that energy trying to exercise your will without all the other aspects.

COOPER: And there's another one, "I should."

HOROWITZ: Right. "Shoulds" are very strong internal energy drain-offs; all these "shoulds" that are implanted in us. Start looking at some of these things in your own life and you'll get a sense of what I'm talking about. All of this stuff you've all experienced, and all the kids that you're working with and the kids I'm working with have all experienced these things. The only thing you have to do is set up the structure in their minds and all of a sudden they see the world differently. They can see the world in a way of energy exchange.

Another law of energy flow is that the more energy you can contain or retain, the higher you feel. And this is where they all perk up. By "high", I'm talking about things like increasing your perception, heightened awareness; ease of action; feeling at ease at being; using all your potential. Giving all your facilities to realize your potential is what I mean by "high." It's a greater use of all your resources, an ease of thought, feeling and action; feeling smooth, relaxed, happy. It's a rightness that you feel, and part of this feeling of being high comes as a greater self-confidence and positive outlook on life. They come right on each other's tails. That's what happens when you start containing and retaining more of this energy.

So how do we begin to keep more of this energy? I have them imagine themselves as a bucket. If you can picture yourself as a bucket, the first thing that you'll notice is that there are a lot of holes in the bucket, where all the energy leaks out. And the holes are the things we just mentioned - the rip-offs, the drain-off circuits, the fears, the hangups that you have in your life, so that every time you get some energy it goes right out the bottom and you don't have it long enough to do anything with it.

So you can go meet a Guru and listen to him talk; he will give you the blessing and you can feel high, but by the time you get back to the street you're down again. You'll say, "Where will we go to eat dinner? Look at this traffic," and there is all the energy gone, just like that. So what we have to do is start to plug the holes in the bucket. So I have them draw a bucket; I have them draw this energy going out the bottom; I have them draw a cork, plugging the holes in the bucket. I have them write down in their journals what some of the holes are in their buckets. Specifically, "Where does the energy leak out of your system; where are your rip-offs and where are your drain-off circuits; what are your fears, hangups, worries, consuming all your energy?"

Sometimes by just becoming aware of these holes you plug them, because by becoming aware of them we're looking for them and we stop allowing them to happen. Sometimes, in a case of an energy rip-off, it's necessary for us to remove ourselves from that situation; it's necessary for us to physically remove ourselves from the presence of an energy rip-off. Sometimes it's necessary for us to work out the hassles in our family; to work out these external drain-off circuits. Sometimes we need to do physical exercise to plug these holes in our bucket - like Yoga, certain meditation techniques, other kinds of physical exercises. Sometimes we have to seek outside help from a therapist or friend to help us see where the holes are and help us work them out.

But just to plant that concept about the holes in the bucket is very important. As you begin to plug the holes in the bucket you begin to hold more energy, and what you find is that you have more energy to use and you start feeling better. You start feeling better about yourself and about plugging the holes in your bucket, and the more holes you plug the more energy you have and it just keeps building like that.

There are a few things that happen at this stage. As you start - and this is where the preparation of the vessel comes in - it's very important to know that your bucket isn't foolproof, and although you may fill the holes in the bottom of the bucket, as the energy is building, you find that there are also leaks in the side. There are leaks higher up in the bucket. Some of these leaks are things like conceit - starting to think that you have got it together, that you know the answers and nobody else does; that's a hole in your bucket! Thinking that you're getting somewhere, but stopping halfway because you think you've been all the way; trying too hard; all these are holes that we find higher up in the bucket. But, if we've got enough energy and we're starting to build this energy, we can plug those too.

The other things that I have to point out to the kids - and I have to remind myself of - is that sometimes the bucket just isn't ready to hold the energy, and this is also part of the preparation of the vessel. Sometimes you have to consciously and deliberately leak energy; sometimes you hold it just as long as you can and you're feeling really good and you have to blow it, sometimes. You have to allow it to flow out; you can't quite hold it yet. It's like a conscious leaking off. The next time you can let it build up just a little bit higher, and it's a constant strengthening of the walls of the bucket.

So many of us - and this is the thing I ran into - we just keep trying too hard; and every time I would leak off energy because I was getting more than I could handle at the time, I would start feeling really down on myself for leaking off, and feeling guilty. All of those are energy drain-offs, and I would leak off energy because I had leaked off energy!

F. HILTON: Instead of leaking it off, why not deliberately radiate it?

HOROWITZ: That's one possibility. In fact, ultimately that is the place where you would want to be. This happened to me on the bus trip. I don't know how to describe it, but I radiated it off to the kids, and because of the law of energy flow, the more you put out the more you get back. I was trying to leak it off because I couldn't hold it, and kept getting it back! It started manifesting in me as I began walking and talking faster; and I was getting up at five o'clock in the morning and going until eleven. I didn't really know how to handle it; I just wasn't ready.

What you say is ultimately where we're trying to get to. Once the bucket gets full then you can start sharing this energy and radiating it. You don't have to wait until the bucket gets full, incidentally. Once you get the energy flowing in

your system and you start sharing it with others it's a contagious thing. It keeps building and building, and it's a very strong feeling.

What I point out to the kids is that once we get some energy then we can start defining questions to ourselves like "Who am I?" "What am I doing?" "Where am I going?" "What's life all about?" We can apply ourselves with some will to these questions, and we can have some energy to commit to action. All of these questions become a lot easier when we have energy to work with, when we're no longer asleep, when we're aware of things around us.

Then we find that it enhances our perception of the world. We begin to see things differently. Finally we notice that we can channel some of this energy back to the greater source of which it's a part, and usually at that point is where I stop. We get to this point and work with that for a while. We begin to get into channeling the energy back to a greater source, a higher source, at a little bit later date.

That's the energy flow theory.

BRODBECK: Do you ever get involved with healing that way?

HOROWITZ: Not with these kids. These kids have a very strong tendency for going with the glamor of it, and if you get into things like healing and astral projection and things like that, they get caught up in the glamor and the sidelight of this energy rather than getting into the real substance of how do you use it on yourself. Yes, there is no question about using this for healing. We do the laying on of the hands exercise in the sense of healing, so if there's a low energy person we do a centering exercise and everybody does the laying on of the hands and lets the energy channel to the one who needs it.

It establishes a foundation, a structure that they can work in, and suddenly they can look for things in their life that they can verify; they can experiment and they can start generating some energy in their life. As soon as they do this, they say, "Oh, wow! Feeling better! If this makes me feel better, then maybe if I stop doing this or if I stop letting this happen I'll start feeling even better."

There may be regression, but the structure is there, and I found that if the structure is there, once they understand it, they never forget it. They may not practice it but they'll never forget and they keep coming back to it. Usually after I've given this energy theory some of them are still a little bit skeptical. "This can't happen to me. I can't get this energy." Then we do a visualization exercise. We go into a relaxation exercise, a disidentification exercise and a visualization exercise all at the same time. It generates a tremendous source of energy from within, and all of a sudden they see that what I'm saying is true. They are capable of generating their own energy; they are capable of being high without drugs, and they are capable of doing something by themselves for themselves.

DUNN: How about energy rush-ons? A car zipping out of an alley, something like that. Some people can do the right thing about that, but other people will freeze.

HOROWITZ: That's very much included; and a lot of things we use in our life - a lot of kids use drugs - as an energy rush. A lot of people use thrill-seeking in order to subject themselves to that energy rush. A lot of times it just happens spontaneously - say, where a car misses you by two inches. Some people collapse on the sidewalk in utter fear and have a tremendous energy rip-off; and some people can have a tremendous energy inflow by saying "Wow! The car missed me. Things are going right." It's just a matter of flipping that little switch in your head. It's a matter of

practice; your attitude at any given point determines the energy that you get from it. It's the optimist-pessimist thing. The pessimist sees a half-glass of wine and says the glass is half empty; the optimist says it's half full. That attitude toward any energy situation will determine what you get from it.

COOPER: You can use it as a test too: How did I do today in conserving energy? Did I lose it all? The next person you meet who is an energy drainer, see him as a test rather than as an obstacle.

HOROWITZ: At the end of the day when you do the evening review, which is one of the exercises in the book, you can have an imaginary ledger in your mind; energy expended, energy gained. Where did my energy go today? What were the sources of my energy?

Question: Do you ever find that the adolescents don't feel this need, therefore they don't want to work with it?

HOROWITZ: I've never met anybody who hasn't felt that they could get more energy. I've met kids who don't want to change. They have to get to the place where they're so far out that they want to change; but when we start talking about this stuff they almost automatically relate to it. (DE PHILLIPPO: You do think that?) Yes, I do. I think most of the time they see that these things do happen in their life and maybe that's what is responsible for how they feel right now. (DEPHILLIPPO: Do you ever use energy circles?) Yes. The relaxation exercises we do with the meditation, and with the meditation we experience this; also from the visualization exercises. You can do group visualization exercises for this energy. I want to repeat that this material doesn't just work for adolescents!

FRIEDMAN: Thinking back to my own adolescence, and the amount of alienation that went on in it, a big theme of it was that you feel you can't accept help, or in your terms, energy. Do you have any exercise that would make someone receptive to accepting energy?

HOROWITZ: I know what you mean. It's a feeling of loneliness and alienation in having to deal with that. Once you've got the energy plug theory, then you use it as a way of analyzing what happens in the group. What did you just do in the group? What did you just do to get this exchange? This person is at a low energy state; can we give him energy? Usually you can get them to feel if a person is receptive to it or not. Very few people will reject it, even if they're alienated. It may take a lot to open them up to it, but usually they become receptive to this kind of thing, because it's not a hard drive thing. It's not something they would automatically set up a reaction to.

You kind of gently get them to open up, and you point out to them how much energy they spend on that alienation, and where else could they apply that energy if they didn't use it up in that way.

END OF DISCUSSION

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Note: A formal presentation of "The Preparation of the Vessel---A Theory of Energy Flow" is available on request from the Psychosynthesis Research Foundation. Single copies free to Members of the P.R.F.; to others the cost is 25¢ per copy.



## THE JOURNEY TO THE SUN

### Introduction

This exercise is a useful tool in helping to develop and train the visualizing powers of the individual. When coupled with the dis-identification exercise, "The Journey to the Sun" becomes a viable technique for experiencing the self and its symbolic unification with the Transpersonal Self. Once this unification has been made symbolically, it becomes much easier to actualize on a conscious level.

Once "The Journey to the Sun" has been made with a competent guide, it is possible for an individual to use the exercise at any time, on his own, as a reminder of the existence of his higher Self and its renewing energies.

### Procedure

One should allow 45 minutes to one hour for the complete exercise.

When done in groups, have the participants assume a relaxed position on the floor with their heads to the center of a circle. If this is not possible the exercise may be done sitting up in chairs.

It helps if the individual or group is familiar with the principles of the dis-identification and visualization techniques.

When the group is comfortable and settled, begin with a version of the following:

"You are going to be doing a three-part psychosynthesis exercise. The first part will be a relaxation exercise; the second will be an exercise in dis-identification and self-identification. This will flow into the third part which is an exercise in visualization.

"During this visualization, you will make a journey with me acting as your guide. This is a large group and your tendency will be to travel at different speeds, so I am going to ask you to let me be the guide and determine the pace of the exercise. Try to concentrate on my voice and follow the pace which I will set. Also there may be minor points along the way which are unclear or confusing to you. Since visualization is a very personal and flexible process, you may interpret any unclear suggestion in a manner which is intuitively suitable to you, and then continue with the exercise.

"This exercise takes some amount of time so make yourself comfortable. (One may choose to ask for questions at this point.)

"We are going to begin with the relaxation exercise. Begin by choosing a spot or object in the room and become familiar with it. This spot or object will serve as an anchor in the following exercise. Now let your eyes close ... (Proceed with any one of several exercises designed to create a feeling of relaxation and well-being in the body. A version which is 8-12 minutes long is most useful.)

"Now that you are in a state of complete relaxation, I am going to recite to you an exercise in dis-identification and self-identification. I will recite this exercise in the first person and you will incorporate it for your own self. The exercise goes like this: "I have a body but I am not my body." (Recite, with any personal adaptations

the dis-identification exercise from p. 118 of PSYCHOSYNTHESIS, by Assagioli.)  
...'After this dis-identification of the 'I' from its contents of consciousness,  
I recognize and affirm that I am a Center of pure self-consciousness. I am a  
Center of Will, capable of mastering, directing and using all my psychological  
processes and my physical body.'I affirm that I am a Center of pure consciousness.  
I am I, a Center of pure conscious energy." (Pause.)

"Now I would like you to visualize, located in your chest, this center of pure conscious energy. Visualize and experience this center of energy. You will find that it is gently pulsing, that it is radiant and that it is warm. Visualize and experience this center of energy in the middle of your chest. Follow with me in your own body as this center of energy begins to move up your body and into your head. Visualize and experience this center of radiant, gently pulsating, warm energy moving up your body and into your head. It continues to move out the top of your head and stops about a foot above the top of your head. Visualize and experience this center of pure conscious energy, which is the self, radiating and pulsating about a foot above your head. (Pause.)

"You are this sphere of energy which begins to rise toward the ceiling. Slowly at first, and because you are energy, you find that you are able to pass through any object in your path, with no harm to you or to the object. You continue to rise, and you pass through the ceiling, still rising slowly until you reach a point where you hover directly above this building. (Pause.) As you look down, you see the building below and (describe the surrounding area) --- as you continue to rise, higher and higher, (the scenery) becomes smaller and smaller. (Pause.)

As a center of pure conscious energy, you have no sense of cold, or speed or time. You are a sphere of pure energy and you continue to rise higher and higher. As you look back you see below the entire section of (New England) as if on a globe. As you rise higher and higher you can see the entire North American continent below you. You see cloud layers, you see the entire continent and you continue to rise higher and higher as a sphere of pulsating, radiant energy. (Pause.)

As you look back now, you see below the entire globe, the whole earth, and you see that one half is in light and the other is in darkness. You move farther and farther away, higher and higher, and as you move upward the earth becomes smaller and smaller. As the earth becomes a mere pin-point in space, you rotate slightly away from it and begin to feel an attraction toward the sun. The sun is still small in the distance, but you sense, you know, that this is where you are going. You notice that you are outside space and time and can move without any sensation of speed or any sensation of heat or cold. You are a center of pure, conscious, radiating, warm energy. The sun is becoming larger and larger as you move toward it. (Pause.)

The larger the sun becomes, and the closer you get to it, the more you feel this attraction, the more you know that it is the same energy that you are. It is a gently pulsating mass of warm energy. You are coming closer and closer to the sun and you feel no heat, you feel no fear, because it is the same energy as you are. And as you come near to the sun, you begin to orbit around it three times. You orbit the sun slowly, and as you move slowly around it you feel a very great attraction toward this larger source of energy of which you are a part. You feel a tremendous attraction for this source of energy. You feel a warmth, a radiance. As you finish your third orbit, you let yourself merge with the sun. (Pause.)

As you merge, you feel a unity, a wholeness, a joy; you experience radiance, light, music, and love. A vital peacefulness, permeates your entire being, as you become one with this source of energy. Total love and joy surrounds you. (Long pause; allow ample time.)

Slowly now you begin to become aware of your own particular sphere of energy, which is a part of this much larger source of energy. You find your particular essence and you become aware of it. You notice that you feel such a tremendous love permeating this essence that you wish to share it with people on earth from where you've come. You know that you want to share these good feelings with others. Feeling this, and knowing that you can return here whenever you wish; that you've made the journey and can return, you slowly begin to leave the sun. There is a sadness at first, but there is also a joy because you are going to share this feeling with others and you know you can return at any time. And as you slowly emerge from this great energy source you once again begin to orbit around the sun three times. Once again, experience your own essence and gently pulsating sphere of pure energy. (Pause.)

Once you've orbited the sun three times, you begin to draw away from it and make the journey back to earth, taking with you the sense of vital peacefulness and love. You can hardly wait to communicate to others these feelings which you radiate. You begin the journey back to earth. It is only a pin-point now ahead of you, but it is slowly beginning to grow larger and larger as you move further and further from the sun, taking with you all the warmth and joy that you've experienced.

The earth is becoming larger and larger ahead of you. As it grows you begin to notice the North American continent beneath you. You are beginning to approach the earth slowly. You find yourself above (the New England area). You can see below you the (coastline, Cape Cod, etc.) You focus on the area you know to be (eastern Massachusetts, the area around Boston) as you come closer and closer to the earth. Still experiencing the radiant love and pulsating energy, you find yourself hovering above this (building, with trees all around, etc.) and you slowly begin to descend as a sphere of gently pulsating energy, filled with love and joy and vital peacefulness. You pass through the ceiling (of the building), locating your body beneath you, slowly, slowly settle to a place about a foot above the top of your head. Slowly now this sphere of pulsating energy with all its warm radiant feelings, enters your body through the top of your head. As it enters, you once again become aware of your body and experience warmth and pulsating energy spreading through it. This center of energy moves down, and once again settles in your chest region. From this center in your chest, you are radiating light and love throughout your entire body. (Pause.)

Once again, centering on this sphere of gently pulsating energy in your chest area, become aware of your body (lying on a floor, in a house, near Boston, Massachusetts). Experience your body, experience the floor, become fully present. And when you feel fully present you may open your eyes and focus on that spot or object in the room that you anchored on in the beginning of this exercise. Affirm your presence in your body, in this room. When you feel ready, you may sit up and record your experiences in your journal."

Mark Horowitz  
November, 1972