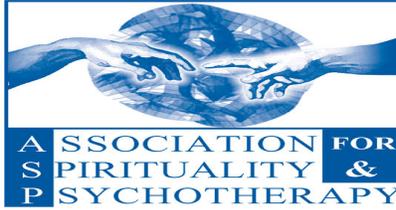


# PSYCHOSPIRITUAL DIALOGUE

"The integrated pathway of spirituality and healing in psychotherapy"



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NEW YORK NY 10019

QUESTIONS: 516.466.2872

DIANA KERIEVSKY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

WINTER 2009 CSPOFNIP@OPTONLINE.NET WWW.PSYCHOSPIRITUALTHERAPY.ORG CIRCULATION 4,300

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***OUR 2009 ASP MEMBERSHIP DRIVE IS ON NOW. REMEMBER, WE DEPEND ON MEMBERSHIP DUES TO KEEP THIS IMPORTANT WORK GOING. GO TO THE BACK COVER FOR A REGISTRATION FORM OR TO OUR WEBSITE.***

THE SUBJECT OF THIS ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER IS  
"SPEAKING ABOUT LOVE"  
SEE PAGES 9-14 FOR VARIOUS ARTICLES ON THIS TOPIC.

SEE PAGE 4 TO LEARN ABOUT THE MARCH 1, 2009 WORKSHOP  
PSYCHO-SPIRITUAL SOLUTIONS IN UNCERTAIN TIMES: ANTIDOTES TO FEAR AND ANXIETY

SEE PAGE 5 TO LEARN ABOUT THE MAY 2, 2009 HARVILLE HENDRIX WORKSHOP  
RELATIONSHIP AS A PATH TO SPIRITUAL WHOLENESS

SEE PAGE 3 TO LEARN ABOUT ASP'S 2009/10 ONE-YEAR PROGRAM ON  
***Developing A Spiritually Informed Approach to Psychotherapy and Counseling***

JOIN US AT OUR MONTHLY NETWORK MEETINGS SEE PAGE 26  
OR VISIT WWW.PSYCHOSPIRITUALTHERAPY.ORG

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

BY BERNARD STARR PH.D.

As President of the [Association for Spirituality and Psychotherapy \(ASP\)](#), I write a "president's message" to the membership in the semiannual newsletter. For this issue of the newsletter I decided to make my Column for United Press International's Religion and Spirituality section the message since the subject—change—has broad applications to spiritual psychology, the main theme of my Columns and ASP

Do people change? We like to think so. After all what are counseling, psychotherapy and spirituality about? If you are stuck exactly where you are how will you overcome your problems and issues—and more pressing, how will you evolve to a higher level of being or consciousness? And doesn't therapy stand for the promise of change. Otherwise, what's the role of the therapist?

Sometimes we wonder. I'm reminded of six year old Jacob who was smitten with his first- grade classmate Kathy. Jacob said he wanted to marry her someday because by then, he thought, she would stop hitting.

Many of you reading this are probably smiling and saying to yourselves, "lots of luck Jacob."

That giggling question mark about change also surfaces when I run into someone I haven't seen for years, or even decades. While the old acquaintance may be richer, more accomplished, or living in a vastly different social setting, it's the same old Harry, or Jane—just as nasty or pompous, or just as loving and gracious. I'm sure you've had similar encounters.

Then, about 10 years ago a prominent psychotherapist, addressing a large gathering at an American Psychological Association convention, proclaimed that, "we should get rid of the term cure." His announcement was met by the three thousand attendees—mostly counselors and therapists—with applause and a noticeable sigh of relief: "Maybe we don't have to be responsible for change after all."

I wondered what his patients would say since they were putting their money where their neuroses are with the expectation of "cure."

So we come to the chase: Can you teach old dogs new tricks? If we are talking about leading psychological developmental theories, old means over age six years of age. That's when, according to these theories, personality becomes more or less fixed. And even if you subscribe to other notions about development your experiences and observations will still make you wonder about the possibility for real change—and more so about the prospect for radical change or transformation.

That's the dreary side, or bad news. But cheer up. There's also good news—and some of it is unfolding before our eyes.

We have just come through one of the darkest periods in our history—and have still not seen all the fallout and collateral damage of the Bush years. At the outset it looked like we were in a free fall. It appeared that an irrational fundamentalist far right had taken over. They rolled into power, we thought, by convincing the public that God and the Bible were in their court giving them the self righteous mantle that would elevate us and the entire world. That edifice with its illusions and misrepresentations, like Humpty Dumpty, came tumbling down. And remarkably some of their "gripping" issues vanished from prominence in the recent presidential campaign as the reality of everyday life said we needed change and a new direction. People proved they are more open and malleable than we had imagined. Capping that was an event deemed impossible by pundits and foreign observers of American life: An African American President—and no less a first generation African American (on his father's side) with a foreign sounding name and immediate ties to Africa. Wow!

Maybe we can change. Maybe we don't have to abandon the notion of cure (radical change). Maybe Kathy will stop hitting. Maybe we have overestimated one side of the human equation. Maybe we have allowed the negative side to overshadow the positive side. Maybe "yes we can." Maybe we should listen to Charles Dickens.

In the opening lines of his classic, *"A Tale Of Two Cities,"* Charles Dickens captures the essence of the human condition that pervades all ages of history. These lines are as chillingly fresh today as they were when Dickens published his book in 1859:

" It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way."

Stated in terms of Albert Einstein's universe and the wisdom of spiritual traditions, "all things are present now."

For the coming new year I'll place my bets on the positive side of those ever present dualities. I hope you do too.

The Association for Spirituality and Psychotherapy, Inc. (ASP)  
 250 West 57<sup>th</sup> St., Suite 501, NYC 10019 [www.psychospiritualtherapy.org](http://www.psychospiritualtherapy.org) email: [cspofnlp@optonline.net](mailto:cspofnlp@optonline.net)  
 Call 516 466-2872

**Announces: The 2009/10 Monday Night Certificate Of Completion Course:  
 Developing A Spiritually Informed Approach to Psychotherapy and Counseling  
 Year-Long Program**

Student Testimonial: “As a psychoanalyst, I find that The ASP 1 year Program has enriched me personally and enhanced my practice and my ability to help patient’s address the spiritual aspects of their lives.” Gail Belluardo, N.C., Psy.A., LCSW

ASP Offers an in-depth exposure to psycho-spiritual theory and method. In addition, the process/project class provides a coherent structure intended to help each student develop a personal perspective regarding spiritually informed therapy.

<b>Course Faculty</b>	<i>ASP therapists and counselors experienced in a variety of spiritually-informed orientations</i>
<b>Monday Nights Sept. to June 7:30 to 9:30 PM With 2 Saturday 3 hour classes</b>	<i>Throughout the year 6 &amp; ½ different Modules meet most Monday nights for 4 weeks each for 2 hours a night: A process/project class meets after the conclusion of each module. (One 2 week module will begin at 8PM and One 2 week module will meet on a Saturday morning)</i>
<b>Tuition</b>	<i>\$1675 –71 contact hours - 10% OFF FOR ASP MEMBERS</i>
<b>NASWNY CEU’s</b>	<i>Receive NASWNY CEU credits and a letter of completion.</i>

*Developing a Spiritually Informed Approach To Psychotherapy and Counseling offers the participant a unique program for personal and professional growth in a community of experienced teachers and like-minded fellow students.*

**Teaching Philosophy:**

The Association’s teaching philosophy is based on the belief that spirituality is necessary for psychological healing. ASP is dedicated to deepening our students’ inner spiritual awareness to enable healing to take place for both themselves and the patients they work with. We believe that a spiritually informed therapy, while working with common presenting problems, can be maximally beneficial for the individuals who seek our help. ASP is committed to helping students work in a more effective, fulfilling way with individuals, couples, families and groups.

**Who should take this Course?**

We invite analysts, psychotherapists, counselors, and other psycho dynamically oriented healing arts practitioners and ministers as well as individuals who have a spiritual and psychodynamic orientation to register for these programs.

**General Learning Objectives:**

- Provide a spiritual perspective on working with psychological issues such as depression, anxiety, addiction, somatic problems and relationships, as well as casting “spiritual light” upon them.
- Develop “spiritually-informed therapists” by providing sound theoretical bases and learning experiences that will broaden perspective and increase skills in diagnosis, treatment, therapeutic presence and listening.
- Provide opportunity for psycho-spiritual growth as it relates to personal and professional development
- Offer a professional community.

**Teaching methods will include**

- Relevant meditations
- Relevant Supportive Psycho-spiritual Readings
- Didactic presentation of theory, method and technique
- Case discussions
- Experiential exercises including practice therapy sessions
- Process papers including the development of personal perspectives on spiritually informed therapy.
- Project and Class Presentation.

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS PROGRAM GO TO  
[WWW.PSYCHOSPIRITUALTHERAPY.ORG](http://WWW.PSYCHOSPIRITUALTHERAPY.ORG)  
 Or Call Diana Kerievsky, LCSW, Curriculum Chair at 516 829-5027**

**The Association for Spirituality and Psychotherapy, Inc., (ASP)**  
**www.psychospiritualtherapy.org email: cspofnip@optonline.net**  
**Phone 516 829-5027 Fax: 516 829-2132**

**ANNOUNCES**

**A SUNDAY WORKSHOP IN NYC ON MARCH 1<sup>ST</sup> 2009**

9:45 AM TO 5:00 PM

**Psycho-spiritual Solutions In Uncertain Times:**  
**Antidotes to Fear and Anxiety**

**Today** almost everyone's security base is shaken by fear and uncertainty. Financial worries spill over and can affect our emotional and social lives. The impact can be devastating to individuals, relationships and families. But there is a way out!

**Join us** on March 1, 2009 to learn about psycho-spiritual perspectives on the escalating challenges of these times—and the tools for maintaining inner strength, peace and balance in a seemingly out of control world.

**We will** offer a wide variety of psycho-spiritual strategies and solutions that address uncertainty, fear and panic including: Energy psychology, techniques for identifying and re-connecting with your power center and higher consciousness, movement modalities for body/mind synthesis, forgiveness and other releasing methods.

**And yes**, even humor and song. **Special guest:** Scott Kalechstein---Psycho-spiritual troubadour bringing levity and gravity and transforming all heavy dramas into musical comedy-singing his original songs like, "Waking up is hard to do" and "You're so Light."

**We guarantee** a memorable, rich, informative, and fun filled, uplifting day.

**PRESENTERS AND TOPICS**

**Paul Cooper, L.P. Necessary Anxiety.** Provides practical methods for using anxiety constructively and from a psycho-spiritual perspective will include both didactic and experiential components for participants.

**Armand DiMele. The Power of the Positive Mind.** Finding a positive attitude is difficult when you are stuck in depression or worry. Change seems unfathomable and you resist trying. Techniques will be provided for using the energy of your own resistance to find your way out of the drudgery. Shifting your attitude will help you to find your power.

**Tina Felluss, LCSW. Transforming Fear Through the Joy of Movement.** Focusing on the power of body awareness and movement to access, diffuse and transform fear into spiritual energy.

**Henry Grayson, Ph.D. Spiritual and Energetic Techniques to Eliminate Stress in Any Situation.** Most stress comes from what we think or believe about a situation or circumstance more than the event itself. You will learn several simple, yet powerful techniques, not just to reduce stress, but to eliminate it and its ongoing effects on your mind-body.

**Ani Kalayjian, Ph.D. Forgiveness: A Pathway for Transforming Anxiety, Fear and Panic into Meaning Making.** Provides understanding into how forgiveness of self and others creates the inner peace and calm which in and of itself transforms anxiety and fear into empowerment and meaning-making.

**Bruce & Diana Kerievsky, LCSW. Existential Metapsychiatry.** How can asking The 2 Intelligent Questions: What is the Meaning Of What Seems to Be? and What Is What Really Is? leads to understanding and transcendence of fear, panic, anxiety and depression.

**Sam Menahem, Ph.D. Humor, Healing and Enlightenment: The Pursuit of the Great Cosmic Chuckle.** The great cosmic chuckle will be pursued, captured and sentenced to 18 years of community service. Humor will be explored in light of Dr. Menahem's discovery that one cannot laugh and panic at the same time. All participants will have a rollicking good time and move toward enlightenment together.

**Bernard Starr, Ph.D. Prophecy and Profit of Challenging Times: The Spiritual Emergency of Crisis and Life Transitions.** A crisis is a terrible thing to waste. You may feel like shutting down. Better, though, to open the window of opportunity. A guide to steps on the ladder to the higher ground of *omni consciousness* that can transcend crisis, build inner strength and promote genuine growth.

**See Page 6 for Registration Details....only \$45 for the Whole Day!!! ASP's Gift to the Community.**

**Continental Breakfast will be included. Optional Facilitated Group Process and Networking will take place during lunchtime:**

**If interested, bring your lunch.**

**Visit [www.psychospiritualtherapy.org](http://www.psychospiritualtherapy.org) for biographies of our presenters**

The Workshop will be held at **The Auditorium at 310 East 67<sup>th</sup> St., NYC** between First and Second Avenue

**ANNOUNCES**

***RELATIONSHIP AS A PATH TO SPIRITUAL WHOLENESS***

A One Day Workshop With  
**Dr. Harville Hendrix**  
The Creator and Founder of Imago Relationship Therapy,

Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009  
The Workshop will be held at The Auditorium at 310 East 67<sup>th</sup> St, New York City  
Between First and Second Avenue  
10 AM to 5 PM

Come join Harville Hendrix, Ph.D. and the Association for Spirituality and Psychotherapy for a One Day workshop to learn how to enhance your relationships through a psycho-spiritual lens.

Dr. Hendrix is the co-creator of Imago Relationship Therapy and the concept of the "conscious marriage." Dr. Hendrix is the author of *Getting the Love You Want*, *Keeping the Love You Find*, and co-author with his wife Helen of several other books. .

This workshop, *RELATIONSHIP AS A PATH TO SPIRITUAL WHOLENESS*, is a rare opportunity to spend a whole day for study and inter-action with the co-founder of Imago Relationship Therapy.

In this day-long workshop you will learn how Imago Therapy:

1. Integrates and unites western psychology and spiritual disciplines to effect healing in primary love relationships.
2. Empowers partners with tools to safely reveal deeper, unhealed parts of themselves to encourage spiritual growth and healing.
3. Promotes spiritual wholeness.

This experiential and theoretical workshop is recommended for practitioners who work with individuals and couples as well as community members who are interested in enriching their relationships. Dr.

Hendrix, Ph. D., is an internationally known expert on relationships who has been described as one of the most dynamic, charismatic presenter. While his focus is on couples, he is passionately interested in the relationship between planetary health and healthy families. In addition to being a public lecturer, he is author of *Getting the Love You Want: A Guide for Couples* which has appeared eleven times on the NY Times best seller list, has also been featured seventeen times on the Oprah Show; it is included in her top 20 all time shows. Dr. Hendrix and his wife Helen LaKelly Hunt, Ph. D., have singly and together authored nine other books on relationships, two of which have also been NY Times best sellers. They are co-creators of Imago Relationship Therapy, a couple's therapy, which is practiced in 30 countries by over 2000 therapists.

**Continental Breakfast is Included**

**See Next Page for Registration Details**

**The Association For Spirituality and Psychotherapy, Inc. (ASP) c/o NIPTI**  
**250 West 57<sup>th</sup> St., suite 501, New York, NY 10019**  
**Phone: 516 829-5027 Fax: 516 829-2132**  
[www.psychospiritualtherapy.org](http://www.psychospiritualtherapy.org) email: [cspofnlp@optonline.net](mailto:cspofnlp@optonline.net)  
**Presents Two Workshops in 2009**

**1. PSYCHO-SPIRITUAL SOLUTIONS IN UNCERTAIN TIMES: Antidotes to Fear and Anxiety**

**Date:** Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009  
**Time:** 9:45 AM - 5:00 PM  
**Location:** The Auditorium at 310 E. 67<sup>th</sup> St. (Between 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue)

**2. RELATIONSHIP AS A PATH TO SPIRITUAL WHOLENESS**

**Leader:** Harville Hendrix, Ph.D.  
**Date:** Saturday, May 2, 2009  
**Location:** The Auditorium at 310 E. 67<sup>th</sup> St. (Between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue)

***First Workshop: Registration Information for Psycho-Spiritual Solutions in Uncertain Times***

When	Sunday, March 1 <sup>st</sup> 2009, 9:45 AM to 5:00 PM
Where	The Auditorium, 310 E. 67 <sup>th</sup> St. (between 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Avenues) Parking garage at East End and 66 <sup>th</sup> St.
Cost* In these uncertain times this fee is ASP's gift to the Community	\$36 For ASP Members if paid by 2/16/09 Early Registration* \$36 If you become an ASP Member By 2/16/08* \$45 for Non-members if paid by 2/16/09 Early Registration. \$55 for all if paid after 2/17/09 and at the door
Registration & Continental Breakfast	9:00 AM, Lunch will be from: 12:30 to 1:45 PM Bring your lunch if you want to participate in group process & networking

***Second Workshop: Registration Information for Relationship As a Path To Spiritual Wholeness***

When	Saturday May 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2009, 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Where	The Auditorium, 310 E. 67 <sup>th</sup> St. (between 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Avenues) Parking garage at East End and 66 <sup>th</sup> St.
Cost	\$130 (10% Discount if Paid by 4/18/09) \$140 after 4/19/09. To learn more about ASP membership & find a membership form go to <a href="http://www.psychospiritualtherapy.org">http://www.psychospiritualtherapy.org</a> and click on Membership Link Or email Diana Kerievsky, LCSW, Executive Director, at <a href="mailto:cspofnlp@optonline.net">cspofnlp@optonline.net</a>
Registration & Continental Breakfast	9:15 AM Lunch: 12:30 to 1:30 Bring your lunch if you want to participate in group process & networking
CEU Credits	We are applying for CEU credits from NASWNY for both workshop

**Mail Registration to Diana Kerievsky, LCSW, Executive Director, 7 Arrandale Ave, Great Neck, NY 11024 or FAX 516 829-2132**

Questions: Contact Diana Kerievsky 516 829-5027 [cspofnlp@optonline.net](mailto:cspofnlp@optonline.net) or Sam Menahem 201-944-1164 [smenahem@aol.com](mailto:smenahem@aol.com)

Registering for Psycho-Spiritual Solutions in Uncertain Times: Fee is \$\_\_\_\_\_ (ASP Member? Y/N = 10% discount)

Registering for Relationship As a Path to Spiritual Wholeness: Fee is \$\_\_\_\_\_ (ASP Member? Y/N = 10% discount)

**1<sup>st</sup> Workshop Cancellation Policy: Full Refund less \$12 Administrative fee up to 2/16/09; NO Refund after 2/16/08**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop Cancellation Policy: Full Refund less \$25 Administrative fee up to 4/18/09; NO Refund after 4/18/08**

Please print the following clearly: \_\_\_ Check or \_\_\_ Money Order (to: ASP) \_\_\_ MasterCard \_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_ AMEX

Name on Credit Card (Print)		Signature	
Credit Card Number		Expiration Date	
First Name	Middle Initial	Last Name	Title
Address		City/State	Zip
Home Phone	Business Phone	Cell Phone	EMAIL

## **MARI**

### **MANDALA ASSESSMENT RESEARCH INSTRUMENT TRAINING APPROVED FOR 21 CONTACT HOURS BY NBCC and NASW**

#### **WHAT IS THE MARI?**

- **Comprehensive psychological assessment based on Jungian concepts –especially the mandala**
- **Uses symbols (mandalas), colors, and developmental stages to reveal a visual picture of the psyche**
- **Reveals the inner truth of the individual *as it really is***

#### **WHY IT WORKS:**

- **There is a remarkable inner connection between symbols and colors and what is going on in the individual's life**
- **The Mari passes beneath the radar of the ego and reveals the center of the individual, which is not ego but Self**
- **Is based on the client's urge toward wholeness and individuation**

#### **THE MARI PROVIDES:**

- **21 contact hours approved for counselors, art therapists and social workers**
- **In-depth Traditional and Transpersonal information around issues of intuition, spirituality and deep mystical states.**

**April 17, 18 and 19, 2009**

**9:00 AM - 5:00 PM –Friday, Saturday and Sunday**

**The Divine Compassion Spirituality Center**

**White Plains, NY–close to New York City**

**Register for training at - [Mari4Info@aol.com](mailto:Mari4Info@aol.com)**

**More info: [MariCreativeResources.com](http://MariCreativeResources.com) or (919) 821-4222**

#### How to Dance in the Rain

It was a busy morning, about 8:30, when an elderly gentleman in his 80's arrived to have stitches removed from his thumb. He said he was in a hurry as he had an appointment at 9:00 am.

I took his vital signs and had him take a seat, knowing it would be over an hour before someone would be able to see him. I saw him looking at his watch and decided, since I was not busy with another patient, I would evaluate his wound. On examining it, it was well healed, so I talked to one of the doctors, got the needed supplies to remove his sutures and redress his wound.

While taking care of his wound, I asked him if he had another doctor's appointment this morning, as he was in such a hurry. The gentleman told me no, that he needed to go to the nursing home to eat breakfast with his wife. I inquired as to her health.

He told me that she had been there for a while and that she was a victim of Alzheimer's Disease. As we talked, I asked if she would be upset if he was a bit late. He replied that she no longer knew who he was, that she had not recognized him in five years now. I was surprised, and asked him, 'And you still go every morning, even though she doesn't know who you are?' He smiled as he patted my hand and said,

*'She doesn't know me, but I still know who she is.'*

I had to hold back tears as he left, I had goose bumps on my arm, and thought, 'That is the kind of love I want in my life.' True love is neither physical, nor romantic.

*True love is an acceptance of all that is, has been, will be, and will not be.*

With all the jokes and fun that are in e-mails, sometimes there is one that comes along that has an important message. This one I thought I could share with you. The happiest people don't necessarily have the best of everything; they just make the best of everything they have. I hope you share this with someone you care about. I just did.

*Life isn't about how to survive the storm, but how to dance in the rain.*

*The New York Open Center and the East Coast Diamond Approach Groups  
present*

**AN INTRODUCTION TO THE DIAMOND APPROACH:  
THE WORK OF A.H. ALMAAS**

A Three Week Course: Mondays, April 5, 13, 20, 2009 – 8-10 pm – Manhattan, N.Y.

*We live in a world of mystery, wonder and beauty. But most of us seldom participate in this real world, being focused rather on the parts that are mostly strife, suffering, or meaninglessness. The situation is basically due to our not realizing and living our full human potential. This potential can be actualized by the realization and development of human essence – the part of us that is innate and real, and that can participate in the real world.*

-----A.H. Almaas

The Diamond Approach is the path of self-realization and human fulfillment developed by the spiritual teacher A.H. Almaas. It is unique in integrating the great spiritual wisdom traditions of the past with modern Western depth psychology, in a way that enables us to live life in the world with richness, love, joy and spiritual maturity. This work is now being taught in groups throughout the United States, Europe and Asia to several thousand students. It has been described as “the most brilliant and profound synthesis of spiritual wisdom and Western psychology currently available in the West.”

This three week course will set forth the basic orientation of the Diamond Approach. Subsequent workshops will expand this overview.

**Workshop Leaders:** Kenneth Porter, M.D., and Patricia Simko, Ph.D., J.D.

**Kenneth Porter** is a spiritually-oriented psychiatrist and psychotherapist and a long-term student of the Diamond Approach. He teaches Buddhist Insight Meditation and is a student of Kundalini Science. **Patricia Simko** is a psychotherapist/psychoanalyst with a private practice in NYC and a long-term student of the Diamond Approach. She is on the faculty of The New School University and New York University, teaching courses on narcissism, creativity and dream theory.

**Time and Place:** New York Open Center, 83 Spring St. (between Broadway and Lafayette St.), New York, N.Y., Mondays, Apr. 6,13,20, 2009 – 8-10 pm

**Fee:** \$100. (N.Y. Open Center members \$90.), payable to N.Y. Open Center

**To register (and for logistical information):** 212-219-2527 or [www.opencenter.org](http://www.opencenter.org) –  
Course #09WSI29T

**For information about the content of the workshop:** Kenneth Porter, 212-289-7431,  
[rokeisland@aol.com](mailto:rokeisland@aol.com) or Patricia Simko, 212-627-0731, [simko@mac.com](mailto:simko@mac.com)

**Achieving your Childhood Dreams : Revisiting Priorities  
Obituary of Randy Pausch**

Courtesy of <http://www.shelf-awareness.com>

Randy Pausch, co-author of *The Last Lecture*, which became a bestseller after being published by Hyperion in April, died Friday, July 25, 2008. He was 47 and had been battling pancreatic cancer.

A computer science professor at Carnegie Mellon, Pausch gave a talk last September modeled on the kind where professors are asked to pretend they are dying and discuss what really matters to them.

In Pausch's case, he was dying, but his talk, called "Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams," focused on "the importance of overcoming obstacles, of enabling the dreams of others, of seizing every moment," as his publisher put it.

The talk and Pausch's story received amazing attention: he was named Person of the Week on ABC's World News, appeared on Oprah, among other shows, and when the book was published, Diane Sawyer did an hour-long show about him.

In a statement, Pausch's co-author, Jeff Zaslow, a Wall Street Journal columnist, said, "Randy had a remarkable ability to reach into his own life and find an anecdote, a funny story, an uplifting memory--and then translate it in ways that resonated deeply with the rest of us. I first saw him move and inspire 400 people at his last lecture. It was astonishing to then watch his message leave that room and touch millions worldwide. As his co-author, it was a great honor to see his love of life from a front-row seat. I'll miss him."

His wife, Jai Pausch, said, "I'd like to thank the millions of people who have offered their love, prayers and support. Randy was so happy and proud that the lecture and book inspired parents to revisit their priorities, particularly their relationships with their children. The outpouring of cards and emails really sustained him."

The family has requested that donations on Pausch's behalf go to the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network, 2141 Rosecrans Ave., Suite 7000, El Segundo, Calif. 90245 or to Carnegie Mellon's Randy Pausch Memorial Fund.

**HEAR DR. HENRY GRAYSON  
ON THE MINDFUL LIVING SHOW  
WEEKLY  
ON THE PROGRESSIVE RADIO NETWORK  
[WWW.PRNCOMM.NET](http://WWW.PRNCOMM.NET)**

**LIVE AT 5:00 PM ON MONDAY EVENINGS OR LISTEN TO THE  
ARCHIVES**

*Dr. Grayson discusses topics such as world wide spirituality, the new physics and other sciences, energy psychology, brain scan and trauma studies, and implications for psychotherapy, healing and relationships.*

*He has dialogues with authors such as:*

*Harville Hendrix*

*F. David Peat*

*Daniel Amen*

*Elizabeth Lesser*

*Bruce Lipton*

*Bill Tiller*

*Judith Orloff*

*Marion Woodman*

*Gerald Epstein*

*Bessel Van der Kolk*

*Sharon Salzberg*

*The Kerievskeys on Thomas Hora*

*Larry Dossey*

*Kenneth Porter*

*Sam Menahem*

*Jeffrey Rubin*

*Kenneth Wapnick*

*Joan Borysenko*

*Mark Epstein*

*Gary Renard*

*Andrew Cohen*

*Byron Katie*

*Margaret Merrifield*

*and many others*

*Available in the archives or copies for purchase at  
[www.henrygrayson.com](http://www.henrygrayson.com)*

The following section is dedicated to this issue's dialogue on "Speaking About Love" As usual, we invite all readers to offer their responses, which may appear in the next issue of the newsletter.

**'I LOVE YOU' OR 'LOVE YA' – THAT IS THE  
QUESTION**

**By Harold Klinsky ECB (Equally coming  
Buddha)**

I was recently asked if these terms are interchangeable or is 'love ya' more or less being blown off. Being a becoming-Buddha, I am aware that part of my responsibility when communicating is that I adjust how I speak to the audience before me. I'll discuss this in more detail later.

First, let me address how, in general, I view our culture's use of the word love. Being part of a loving community is one of my greatest blessings. Yet, the word love is treated like a buzz word by many. The

use of the word love has, in my experience, deteriorated to be a catch-phrase. People lose respect for a word that encompasses one of our most important and strongest forms of expression. Yet our society even thinks it's charming to misspell it: luv. My therapist once posed the following to me: Love is the answer, what was the question? He was trying to help find a path past my walls. Love can be the greatest moving force in the world to break down walls whether within ourselves or between ourselves and others. I don't think love ya' does it. A song from an earlier generation said 'Love Is a Many Splendid Thing' and not "Love Ya; Is A Many Splendid Thing". It wasn't 'Love ya' Lucy' but 'I Love Lucy' and we all did.

I always tell everyone to use the word hate with care. It has very strong negative connotations. There is a wide difference between dislike and hate and if we are aware we can learn that we need to be careful differentiating between the two. This lesson should include the word love. Let's save it for those occasions that warrant it. I have tried to be careful how I use both terms. Yet, I use the expression 'love ya.'

I sign all my personal emails 'love ya.' I'm a member of the current culture with a philosophical tilt towards more respect for the use of the word 'love.' So I've adjusted my philosophical approach to the word 'love' so that my contemporaries get my message. I used them interchangeably. In my life, my friends and family are confident of my love. Part of my path is to express my love for others clearly in speech and actions. Those around me know the depth of my feelings when I say 'I love you' and know the same holds true for 'love ya.' I have the right intention.

We can debate whether I'm being duplicitous. My response is that I have a faith that those around know the truth in my heart. The love in my world is continually growing as it continues to break down my walls. It is the answer. If you are open to my loving nature it won't matter anymore whether I say 'I love you' or 'love ya.'

Hey guys! Love ya, believe it or not!

### **On Saying "I Love You" By Bruce Kerievsky**

Everyone pretty much recognizes when someone loves something. He or she exhibits a pure,

focused interest accompanied by dedicated activity pursuing that object, be it stamp collecting, fancy clothes, classical music, rooting for a sports team, politics, etc.

Not so clear is love of persons. Many people are inclined to conclude telephone conversations, mostly with family members, with the declaration, "I love you" or "Love ya." The inclination to do so has probably been promoted by psychologists recommending that we tell people that we love them so they will not be unaware of our kindly and appreciative thoughts about them. The intent is to reassure others, to make them more comfortable with their thoughts about us. (even usually astute George Carlin succumbed to this temptation when he wrote, "Remember to say, 'I love you,' to your partner and your loved ones, but most of all mean it.")

And although it may be valid in some cases, it appears to mostly be an attempt to influence others, which can be deemed as trespassing. Rather than trust that our real motives are readily discernible by them, we resort to delivering an utterance, often just habitual and mechanical, to persuade people of our goodwill toward them. Further, it is frequently perceived by the recipient that it is a hollow statement lacking in sincerity, thereby diminishing our long term credibility.

Certainly, loving behavior with people is more likely to convince them of our positive attitude toward them, although that too may be fraught with a subtle, corrupt desire to elicit goodwill. Even observing someone in person when they say those words is not absolute proof of their authenticity. "When someone tells us 'I love you,' we look immediately and directly at him or her because by looking at the face, we can *know* — or, at least, we can know a great deal more — about whether the sentiment is genuine." ("Blink," Malcolm Gladwell, Little, Brown and Co. 2005, page 213)

The uncertainty that arises from this expression is due to the misunderstanding of the nature of love. Though we may all be interested in and seemingly reliant upon the notion of personal love between individuals, this limited view of its provenance has proven itself problematic. Experience teaches that, indeed, "the thinker and the thought are one." This means that thoughts, which come and go, governed principally by our values, are not constant and their quality is not to be depended upon.

Loving thoughts may radiate toward us at one time, and far from loving feelings at other times, with both coming from the same individual. To seek love from individuals whose motives may vary like the wind can be a debilitating desire, for it isolates us from the real source of love, joy, freedom, inspiration, etc. — the invisible but discernible, governing force of the universe.

So the impulse to say “I love you” could indicate that one is trying to manipulate another into adopting a friendly orientation toward oneself. Better it is to learn to cultivate “the love of being loving,” where one is primarily interested in attaining an appreciation of “nonpersonal, nonconditional benevolence.” When such an orientation is realized, one can say silently and only to oneself, when encountering others, “Namaste” (often translated as “I celebrate the divine in you”) as preparation for a wholesome communication.

Just as we are warned not to take God’s name in vain, so we might consider eschewing speaking those three little words, for they have a strong tendency to detract from our believability and produce an adverse reaction from other individuals. Instead, by consciously contemplating the loving mode of being-in-the-world, we can become beneficial presences allowing others the freedom to see us at our best.

### TALKING ABOUT TRUE LOVE

The following is excerpted from ***Reconnecting: A Self-Coaching Solution to Revive Your Love Life***, by Joseph J. Luciani, Ph.D. (John Wiley & Sons, hardcover, to be released April 27, 2009)

When Mumtaz Mahal died, her husband, Shah Jahan, cried out with grief, “like an ocean raging with storm.” He refused to appear in public or transact any affairs. From his constant weeping he was forced to use spectacles. His hair turned gray. Adhering to his dying wife’s request to build a memorial to their love, Shah Jahan spent the next twenty years of his life constructing an appropriate tribute to the loving memory of his wife. Today, we call Shah Jahan’s tribute the Taj Mahal.

The Taj Mahal’s stunning beauty defies description, particularly at dawn and sunset or under a full moon when the onion-shaped white marble central dome—sometimes referred to as a tear on the face of humanity—appears to glow with a transcendent

eeriness. Clearly, the Taj Mahal was an expression of Shah Jahan’s eternal grief, but more importantly, it was also an expression of his eternal love. Love is never an easy emotion to describe, but Shah Jahan came pretty close.

Whether it’s through architecture, poetry, or even psychology, I doubt anyone will ever be able to explain that love is this or love is that. Instead of attempting to define love, I offer you a couple of Self-Coaching insights that may help you get a handle on this indescribable emotion.

The way I see it, true Love begins only when infatuation ends. Infatuation is merely a prelude to love, but if you’re in a relatively new relationship, how exactly do you know when your infatuation has ended? One way is to realize that being infatuated causes both an emotional and a chemical high. As with any chemical high—alcohol, cocaine, caffeine, and so on—you’re able to anesthetize yourself from life’s problems while enjoying a drug-induced euphoria.

So an infatuation is over (or diminishing) when you begin to return to your previous, non-intoxicated existence—your mundane reality of job, pressures, anxieties, stress, all of which were minimized and eclipsed by your infatuated experience. Although you’re no longer infatuated, you may still feel your relationship is totally right and wonderful. But now, without the anesthetic of infatuation, you begin to realize that your relationship is no longer insulating you from the normal stressors of your life.

It’s at this point that you and your partner can begin to build a life based on each other’s *factual* uniqueness rather than on infatuation’s *fictional* projections. What’s critically important is that you realize that losing an infatuation is *not* a bad thing. If true and legitimate love is what you’re really after, then giving up an infatuation is not only a good thing, it’s an essential thing!

Unfortunately, if you’ve been brainwashed by the popular media into thinking that when you’re in love you’re *supposed* to be high, then a receding infatuation will leave you disappointed and questioning the value of the relationship—you’ll see this as a bad thing. You simply need a bit of education to recognize that infatuation isn’t an ending; it’s a beginning.

A more serious problem arises when you’re an infatuation junkie. If you fall into this category, insecurity is driving you to sidestep your personal

struggles by using infatuation to self-medicate. When you need to stay high at any cost, a fading infatuation is indeed cause for concern as old, nagging anxieties and insecurities begin to emerge once again.

Infatuation can be wonderful—who doesn't like fireworks?—but it is never the goal of true relating.

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### **Biology's Two Gears**

Whenever I try to understand the psychology of who we are and why we do what we do, I ask: what is the evolutionary, adaptive advantage of such and such a behavior? Clearly genetic mutations (accidents) either cause an adaptive advantage or they don't. Over the millions of years that we were becoming "human," those traits that were adaptive to the ever-changing environment had a higher chance of survival (and therefore breeding), while those that offered no distinct advantage wound up as evolutionary dead ends. From an evolutionary perspective, a mechanism such as infatuation that brings two strangers together as a prelude to sex (procreation) seems rather obvious. The more intriguing, less obvious question is why staying in love *after* conception would create a survival advantage.

From a strictly biological-evolutionary standpoint, for our species to be successful, there needed to be two "love gears." The first gear was the falling-in-love gear, and the second was the staying-in-love gear. We've been talking extensively about the falling-in-love gear (infatuation) as the biological mechanism that brings two strangers together with the potential for procreation. So how do we explain the second gear, staying in love?

Let's travel back in time to the origins of our species. At the dawn of our evolution in the dangerous African wilderness, if a father wasn't tethered to the mother and child, the survival chances of a mother burdened with childbirth and childrearing would be slim. Assuming that our species evolved as hunter-gatherers, a mother with child would be limited in her ability to provide food, shelter, and protection from the brutal environmental challenges. If, however, there were a psychological mechanism that predisposed a father to stay with mother and child, then the chances of survival would be significantly improved. Without such a mechanism for keeping the father tethered to the mother and child, males would become

infatuated, sow their seed, and move on. In which case, I probably wouldn't be writing this today.

In order for our species to endure, some inclination toward what sociologists call pair bonding must have become part of our hardwiring. Such a pair-bonding instinct would ensure that as a team, a husband, wife, and child would greatly improve their odds of survival in the wilderness. And for pair bonding to become solidified, there needed to be a corresponding psychological mechanism to ensure it. This mechanism is the psychological experience we call love. Love is the glue, the bonding impulse, and the capacity for commitment—all of which come into play to ensure our survival. I know I'm reducing the sublimely beautiful experience of love into a genetic propensity for survival, but on the other hand, it's important to know that the force behind love is as powerful as life itself, which would not exist if it weren't for our capacity for love.

### **Talking About True Love**

**True love means true solace.** As children we grow with an innate anticipation of the "other" (refer back to our discussion of Plato's *Symposium*). It's our instinctual "incompleteness" that propels us to seek the permanence of a partner. Infatuation starts the process of aligning ourselves with another person, and true love is the force that binds us. From the Us-experience, we derive a profound sense of solace, completeness, and resonance.

**True love is enduring and progressive.** When insecurity is reduced or eliminated from your life, true love is able to grow and mature. A stagnant relationship is a relationship suffering from insecurity—stagnation does not occur in a liberated, secure relationship. True love, like fine wine, must develop over time to reach its full maturity. The road toward mature love is often fraught with bumps and challenges, but with the right amount of self-awareness and trust, the bumps and challenges wind up helping rather than hindering.

**True love changes your perception from "I" to "we."** Until and unless we discover true love, we walk through life as relatively isolated, autonomous beings. I don't mean that love of friends, family, and pets isn't important or significant—clearly this isn't the case. I mean that the love between two life partners is indeed a unique and special experience. With true love there is a diminishing of ego

boundaries as we begin discover the “we-ness” of our new lives. The amount of unity that a couple possesses is directly correlated to the love that exists, and is inversely proportional to the amount of insecurity existing in the relationship. Ego blending doesn’t eliminate personal differences; it embraces them. The Us-component of a relationship brings you into a greater appreciation of your expanded relationship personality—one with twice the potential.

**True love offers stability, comfort, and numerous other benefits.** If you need proof that we as a species profit from being in a committed, loving relationship, you’ll find plenty of data demonstrating that couples live longer, enjoy life more, are healthier, less depressed, and less anxious. The only variable to all the good news is how much of the contaminating effect of insecurity you can eliminate from your relationship. A struggling relationship negates all the potential benefits of a true and loving relationship.

**True love is liberating and more efficient.** I have a few single friends. The amount of energy, time, and resources that go into their pursuit of a partner is astounding to me. In contrast, being in a true and loving relationship frees you from the burden of “searching.” You don’t have to pursue love; you are free to pursue other pleasures like hobbies and interests, or simply stay home and read a good book or watch a TV show without feeling pressured.

**True love offers a perception of permanence.** One of the most difficult challenges of being on this earth is dealing with the impermanence of life. Change is not a bad thing, but ultimately a world of constant change leaves us feeling out of control and ungrounded. A stable loving relationship allows you to embrace and trust that there is one profound, permanent truth to your life—your partner. The words of the marriage vow, “Till death do us part,” are indeed profound. Amid the turmoil and upheaval inherent in everyone’s life, the knowledge that there is one enduring life component that you can count on and trust, *till death do us part*, not only offers solace to our chaotic existence, but more importantly offers us the opportunity to live our lives more courageously.

**True love isn’t something you find—it finds you.** It’s important that you don’t overthink the issue of trying to find true love; this can actually impede your progress and experience. A better approach is

to focus on removing any and all obstacles, trusting that love will occur naturally when there is no longer a perception of danger. As the saying goes, let go, let God. Let go of intellectualizing and let the instinctual, natural forces emerge.

As a frequent lecturer, guest speaker, and author, Dr. Joseph Luciani has brought his message of hope to millions over the years. A clinical psychologist, he has been in general private practice since 1977, has written many books about self-coaching, and appeared on radio and TV.

### **What Love Really Is Michael S. Isaacs, MSW, NCPsyA, JD**

Love is an infinite, ineffable, invisible essence instilled as a seed in everyone. Its energy can emerge as a feeling, a way of being, and an action. It often becomes a conviction and a passion.

Love energy can be expressed for good in a multitude of ways. So we have love of country, sugar, sports, hobbies, children, self, solitude, material possessions, truth, God, altruism, and romance.

Yet, if the seed of love energy has no wisdom or spiritual base, if excessive or misguided, it can lead to suffering and sometimes evil. Love of nationalism can be misguided into lust for power and war as seen in the Nazi attempts to spread fascism and annihilation. Distorted love of religion can breed extremism as seen in the Crusades and jihad.

Love of pleasure can lead to attachment. Compulsive eating of sweet foods can result in obesity and addiction. In neurotic love, over-possessive parents can stunt children’s growth in the name of love by emotional smothering. A parent can rationalize child abuse, under the banner of love, “for your own good.” Love of solitude can follow from a schizoid personality or from spiritual bypassing of psychological problems. Romantic love is great, but so many are unable to adjust to a more mature relationship when it inevitably diminishes. Love of self is important, but when it is narcissistic it is ego centered and a barrier to love. Service to others is worthwhile indeed, but sometimes the motive is more about self-confirmation than selfless giving.

So it behooves us to embrace the purest essence of love, to gain access to this invisible imprisoned

splendor if we are to achieve the balance and wisdom needed to feel, receive, and express love at a deeper level.

The Greek philosophers added a spiritual dimension to love when they said that we should aspire more to the good rather than the pleasant. They called it agape love, distinguishing erotic love from brotherly and community love. Webster's dictionary defines agape love as non erotic love, the love of God for humankind or of humankind for God.

What is the "good" of love? We may not be able to articulate what it really is, but we can recognize its spiritual qualities. We can behold and experience such attributes as inner peace, gratitude, forgiveness, patience, compassion, wisdom, tolerance, humility, selflessness, and understanding. The meta-psychiatrist Dr. Thomas Hora would posit these verities as existentially valid modes of being- the Reality of the good of God.

The spiritual mode of love can be from the perspectives of love of self, love of God, and love of fellow man.

In this article, the term "God" is synonymous with such concepts as infinite invisible, the divine consciousness, creative principle, higher power, inner being, vital force, chi energy, activity of soul, inner realm, and fourth dimension.

The two commandments shared by the great religions of the world are to love God and to love your neighbor as yourself. The more we love God, the more we see the unity of all beings. We are all made in God's image. We are spiritual brothers and sisters.

How do we come to love God? Some of the ways are through karmic grace, meditation, prayer, scriptures, and being in the presence of those with a high state of consciousness.

How does love of God and love of man enhance a healthy love of self? Our feelings of adequacy and self worth are lifted by realizing we are children of God. We feel good when we have selfless thoughts and do selfless acts. We feel a presence and power that we can count on. Its love will always be with us, guiding us, and protecting us. Many human relationships involve seeking and expecting love from others. These breakups often lead to

separation. They can trigger painful abandonment memories.

One of Dr. Hora's eleven principles is: "There is no interaction anywhere; there is only omniaction everywhere." And, another spiritual thinker has said "Think about man and troubles grow; think about God and troubles go."

The relationship between love of God and love of man has been expressed by Western mystic Joel S. Goldsmith in his book "Practicing the Presence":

*What is love in the spiritual sense? What is the love that is God? We see that love is not something far-off, nor is it anything that can come to us. It is already a part of our being, already established within us; and more than that it is universal and impersonal. As this universal and impersonal love flows out from us, we begin to love our neighbor, because it is impossible to feel this love for God within us and not love our fellow man.*

In summary, we may not be able to describe what love really is since it is invisible, beyond the senses, ineffable. But, we can all agree with the Beatles that "All We Need Is Love, All We Need Is Love!" We can hitch our wagon to the star of spiritual values and spiritual practices so that our love is guided to love of self, love of God, and love of man. We can love to be loving, live to glorify God, and to be beneficial presences in the world.

## **THE HEALING OF PSYCHOTHERAPY JON SNODGRASS, PH.D.**

### **TRADITIONAL PSYCHOTHERAPY**

In traditional psychotherapy, the relationship between therapist and client is considered the vehicle for changing the patient's feelings, mind and behavior. The healing does not come, however, from the social relationship with the therapist, who may provide the patient with empathy, support, advice, guidance, interpretations and analysis. Healing occurs in the relationship with the client in the therapist's mind. The therapeutic process is, therefore, not confined to the time and place in which the two people actually meet.

Psychotherapy is not an interpersonal process that concerns the social interaction between two people in a geographical location. Nor does it concern the spoken dialogue between an analyst and

analysand. Psychotherapy is an on-going mental relationship between therapist and client. Its focus is exclusively on inner-subjectivity as distinct from social reality. Verbal and non-verbal communications in a session indicate only whether interpersonal influence is being used to promote change.

The traditional practice of psychotherapy, based on a ubiquitous medical model, relies on the intervention of the therapist to cure the patient. It is actually micro-political practice that has nothing to do with healing that occurs solely in the mind in relation to spirit. What goes on between two people in a session is relevant only insofar as it reveals the mutual self-relationship to spiritualized mind, i.e., whether or not the two exist in higher consciousness. An emphasis on social relations causes both parties to be defensive and blocks the mental readiness to heal through spirit.

If the therapist and client reside in aspiritual states of mind, the political conflict will reappear between them and be acted out. This is known in the trade as “transference and counter-transference relations.” A two-way exchange of social influence between therapist and client means a struggle for power governs the association, but the solution does not lie in this domain. What happens in Las Vegas may stay in Las Vegas, but therapy goes on in the mind. The success of relational psychotherapy and psychoanalytic psychotherapy is limited outside the range of spirit.

The therapeutic relationship is not designed to be more satisfying to the client than other relationships. The therapist does not act as a surrogate to fill developmental needs better than the client’s own children, spouse and parents. A conflict between the two is replicated in sessions as long as the separation from spirit remains in the mind. The therapist provides the mental example and the temporary appearance of a social model that leads to the resolution of identical mental conflicts in both parties, using spirit as the guide to healing.

If the client is encountered on a social plane, however, the therapist risks being drained of energy rather than being restored, because the involvement is seen in terms of social roles: the giver and taker of the cure. Staying professionally detached is tiresome, requiring vigilance to protect separated egos from projected self-attacks by and

on the other. A therapist enhances personal well-being when engaging the client at the level of mind because exhaustive, hypocritical, egotistical, defensive posturing is unnecessary.

### WHAT IS HEALING?

“What is psychotherapy” is a question addressed by the standard texts used in the teaching of psychotherapeutic skills to professionals in training. Despite the range of nationalities, theoretical allegiances, diversity of degrees and types of personalities, the various theorists all define psychotherapeutics as a function of interpersonal relations. As examples, several respected figures in the field and authors of practicum textbooks are quoted below.

“A heightened sensibility to existential issues (‘the givens’) deeply influences the nature of the relationship of the therapist and patient and affects every single therapy session.” Irvin D. Yalom, American Existential Psychiatrist, *The Gift of Therapy* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2002) p. xviii. (Yalom’s *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy* (New York: Basic Books, 1995) has sold 170,000 copies in 18 languages in 5 editions since 1970).

“Psychotherapy, as I define it, is the art of alleviating personal difficulties through the agency of words and a personal, professional relationship.” Anthony Storr, British Jungian Psychiatrist, *The Art of Psychotherapy* (New York: Methuen, 1980) p. vii.

“If I can provide a certain type of relationship, the other person will discover within himself the capacity to use that relationship for growth and change and personal development will occur.” Carl R. Rogers, American Humanist Psychologist, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist’s View of Psychotherapy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co, 1961) p. 33.

“From the outset, however, the analyst has to make it clear that everything in their relationship is significant and that their relationship is unlike any other.”

Bruce Fink, American Lacanian Psychoanalyst, *A Clinical Introduction to Lacanian Psychoanalysis: Theory and Technique* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997) p. 11.

“Throughout the process of therapy, the relationship is our main instrument of cure.” Jeffrey A. Kottler, American Ego Psychologist, *On Being A Therapist*, third edition (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2003) p. 17.

When the social relationship is considered the source of healing in psychotherapy, however, the literal perception of physical and psychological differences dominate the thinking of the therapist and client. Using the bodily senses as the origin of understanding overlooks the abstract idea of common interests and shared oneness through mind. There is only one un-conscious that is trans-individual. The sense organs can detect distortions to reality, but only the abstract, conceptual ability of the mind can comprehend that the totality of falsifications makes reality an illusion.

*A Course in Miracles (ACIM)* claims that nothing happens in traditional psychotherapy because reality (including the social relationship) is illusory and spirit is relegated to the unconscious where the interconnection is unseen. This coincides with the point of view of James Hillman, an American neo-Jungian psychoanalyst, to the effect that *We've Had 100 Years of Psychotherapy and the World is Getting Worse* (1993). Hillman argues, however, that problems in the discipline are caused by the neglect of social forces rather than the neglect of spirit. His pantheistic, other-worldly account speaks of gods, but not of God.

Jeffrey (Moussaieff) Masson's polemic, *Against Therapy* (1988) argued that all psychotherapy is based on abusive authority relationships. (*ACIM* says, “Some forms of psychotherapy have nothing to do with healing”). The author was a Sanskrit scholar trained in psychoanalysis and designated to become director of The Freud Archives. With insider access to Freudian correspondence and unpublished manuscripts, he wrote a controversial critique of psychoanalytic theory. As a result, Masson was dismissed as a Project Director of the Freud Archives and repudiated in psychoanalytic circles. He withdrew from the profession to be-

come a popular writer on the emotional life of animals.

Due to an absence of mentation, like sociology, the emphasis on the social relationship in traditional psychotherapy reduces the discipline to the study of behavior. According to this point of view, gender identity is based on sex role socialization by significant others in child-hood stages. Children learn to think like egos, that is, to think they are who others think they are. To conform to a superficial ego, however, requires the suppression of a spiritual identity. Then the ego is reactive, addictively fixated on physical needs or social power, hysterical or obsessive-compulsive, to remedy spiritual losses.

The relationship between the therapist and client mirrors the decision to keep spirit conscious or unconscious and personifies individual thinking. The therapist changes her mind, not the mirror, or the client, because “reality” but conforms to projected thinking. Mental disturbance comes from self-attacks of guilt denied. Client and therapist exchange emotional injury for healing when realizing the answer abides in a common psychic field of unconscious spirit. The therapeutic dyad learns to forgive self, one another and others for “real” and imagined attacks.

In classic psychoanalytic theory, the conflict was between the superego and the instinctual drives as mediated by the ego. The problem then showed up in the body as conversion hysteria, or in the ego as neurosis. In contemporary psychotherapy, however, the conflict is seen between the individual and the world in myriad social forms. Both the old and new points of view omit the spiritual core. An inner conflict is then concretely displaced onto the body, other bodies and environmental bodies to sustain the denial of spirit.

In arguing for the historical origin of the unconscious, Freud is the one who recognized the link between sexual repression and culture. Originally, there were indiscriminate, incestuous relations with mothers and sisters, and preemptive patricide by the sons in the passionately wild primal tribe. Patriarchal social organization arose to suppress fraternal promiscuousness, to renounce instinctual gratification, to exchange women through marriage and to share male rule. In *Totem and Taboo* (1913) Freud believed that the social process that began in the ancient family, passed

into the psychic life of the descendents as myth and was relived in the form of Oedipal phantasy (Feldman, 1959).

Thus, what began as reality in prehistory entered into the mind in time to reinforce the hierarchical structure of social relations. Fantasy was then vestigial reality and memory was vestigial history, but God did not survive because, according to Freud, She never existed to begin with. A skeptical Freud wrote, "Religion is the universal compulsive neurosis of mankind" (*Future of an Illusion*, 1927). God the Father was an illusion to Freud who called himself, "A Godless Jew" (Gay, 1989).

### **SPIRITUAL PSYCHOTHERAPY**

Spirit is the healer. Therapist and client are both patients who are resisting healing. The psychotherapist calls on a higher Mind power through prayer, inside and outside the session, to be present to do the healing. The therapist becomes a patient-patient, along with the client, using spirit as an inner guide-healer-therapist-doctor-teacher. The healing is already done and the two are waiting for individual minds to log onto the Higher Mind that exists outside time and space to undo the long-standing separation from spirit suffered by both parties.

The emotional problems of the psychotherapist and client are identical and the two are diverse only in superficial bodily form. The client's resistance is the therapist's own resistance and both need empathy, because both endure a lack of kindness and forgiveness in their self-relationship. As a psychotherapist, you "inspirit" both patients by being "inspired." The therapist endeavors to keep spirit conscious during the process of healing, but the patients may make unconscious the freedom of will to choose.

What you think, I think as well, but this truth is unconscious to us both. *For every atom belonging to me, as good belongs to you*, penned Walt Whitman in *Leaves of Grass* (1855). Spiritual growth by the therapist is essential to healing in psychotherapy. Not wanting to forgive self-other guilt, or forgetting, makes the therapist an unreliable doctor, an "unhealed healer," to use the terms of *ACIM*. A therapist not at peace means that the desire to control appearances (politics) and the use of illusion (magic) are being used in the place of spirit to calm personal fears.

The client is a different person (body) only in appearance and has the same struggle as the therapist to stay spiritually aware. In healing, you are merely recognizing the *a priori* power of spirit to heal the mind. In sickness, a desire for bodily states and social relations is being substituted to cover the repressed guilt that reappears as attacks, by and on others. Healing is a decision made by the therapist, on behalf of both people, to give up the non-stop, self-other attack cycle that splits the self from the Self.

"Therapy begins with the realization that healing is of the mind" (*ACIM*). The social relationship between therapist and client facilitates the healing when either one is willing to go beyond physical and psychological appearances to the meeting of minds through spirit.

The healing process is not started, however, without an invitation to spirit to enter the mental relationship. Spiritual psychology relocates the therapeutic process from social to psychic relations. Then simultaneously the healing of minds takes place without words, gestures or actions. You can teach forgiveness "within an instant without words" (*ACIM*).

Spiritual psychotherapy is an opportunity for the self that appears in the social relationship to find the Self in the mind. Traditional psychotherapy is corrigible praxis, attempting to bring about interpersonal political change. Establishing social relationships is not wrong, however, for it may lead to the joining of spirit, the releasing of mutual guilt and the learning of forgiveness. The social relationship will appear to change with the invitation, but rejoicing over the results may take time to come about. Psychotherapy is usually ongoing because the stubborn ego makes healing a long-term process.

The role of the inner relationship in the cause and cure of disease is evident in hysteria and hypnosis in the history of psychoanalysis. Hysteria was epidemic in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and spread by doctors and patients through the practice of hypnosis. Both non-verbal and verbal suggestion communicated repressed sexual fantasies that danced in imaginary (and real) seductions. By the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, hysterical disorders had vanished, coinciding with the abandonment of hypnosis because it implicated the unconscious desires of doctors and patients in the etiology of the disease.

Jacques Lacan's long-standing assault on the psychoanalytic establishment in Europe and the United States argued that classical psychoanalysis teaches analysts to subordinate any authentic-autonomous self to the desire to emulate the training analyst. This view coincided with his main criticism that the psychoanalytic movement emphasized the ego above the original importance of the unconscious in Freudian theory. In not being like-minded himself, Lacan condemned the individual and organizational forms of egocentrism. He was ousted and broke continuously with national and international psychoanalytic societies (Fink, 2007).

A psychotherapist is under no obligation to invoke spirit to produce miraculous results. Often depicted to the public by the media as comically unstable, therapists may now be vulnerable to ridicule as faith healers which they are. A commitment to spirit is essential for success and the rationale for requiring therapy for the therapist and analysis for the analyst. In medicine, the doctor remains *apart* from the sick patient, but *a part* of the treatment in a spiritual model. The discipline of psychotherapy may continue to fear the power of the Mind and look for answers in social reality.

Spiritual psychotherapy is an occasion to invite spirit to remind us that we are already healed and whole. It is akin to the traditional function of the shaman as an intermediary between the natural and spiritual worlds. And, like the practice of meditation in Eastern religions, being spirit-minded involves subordination of the will to a higher power. Materialism, on the other hand, relies on objective resources, perceived to be lacking, as the means to salvation. Typically, however, others prove disappointing, the body deteriorates and the environment becomes polluted and hostile.

The psychotherapist is responsible to spirit to change his mind and perform "miracles," but is not responsible to the client to change his life or to reform the profession. The purpose of spiritual psychology and psychotherapy is to transcend the illusion of separation, to escape the dominance of perception in thinking and to make spirit real in mental life. Through spirit, the therapist and the client experience an inner relationship that diminishes personal suffering by learning forgiveness. The profession and the world, as illusions, can never be

healed or reformed and as the ego's last stand, will continue to contend that spirit is problematic.

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The next two articles were written by students in the 2007-2008 One-Year Program "Developing a Spiritually Informed Approach to Psychotherapy and Counseling

### **CLASS PRESENTATION By Carmen Morales LCSW**

As I commence this presentation I would like for all to close your eyes. As you do so, find yourself comfortable and relaxed. As you take a deep breath, you are experiencing a feeling of so much gratitude for everything you are. As we exhale, we are exhaling Love... so much Love that only the presence of God is surrounding us. With a smile on our face – coming from within, we gently open our eyes – as we embrace ourselves as precious children of God.

During this course of Spirituality and Psychotherapy – we have been exposed to different techniques, methods and theories – that have served me as a valuable tool – and which I have utilized for my own personal and spiritual growth – as well as to help those that come into my life as clients or patients seeking mental health treatment.

During the first week or so of this course, Sam presented an overview of the different therapies that today exist and emphasized how psychology and psychotherapy evolved.

A lot of attention has been given to the False Self – through this course as well – so that today I truly believe that psychoanalysis is the therapy of our false self, the therapy of the ego from which we need to learn to detach ourselves completely.

The main purpose for me in taking this course was to learn how to integrate Spirituality with psychotherapy, and I am so grateful for everything I

have learned. I feel better equipped, more confident and really assured that Spiritual therapy is the way to go in helping others and at the same time working on our own personal growth and spiritual involvement.

The beauty of this practice is the need not to focus on the pathological aspects of the individual in treatment – but working from the knowledge that our true self is perfect and that people can improve their lives by expressing their authentic selves.

For those of us who work in out-patient mental health agencies or hospitals, the determination of an appropriate diagnosis is based on an evaluation of the client's complete clinical presentation. As therapists we must compare those behavioral, cognitive, emotional and interpersonal symptoms that the client presents with the criteria for diagnosis of a mental illness condition as described in DSM-IV.

Despite arguments made against diagnosing clients in this manner, diagnosis is a reality that exists in the practice of mental health care, and it is a necessity for third-party reimbursement. It is the clinician's thorough knowledge of DSM-IV criteria and a complete understanding of the client assessment data that contribute to the most reliable, valid diagnosis.

As a psychiatric social worker/clinician, working with patients mainly covered by HMO's health insurance, I find myself mandated to look primarily at the DSM-IV diagnosis the patient carries in order to establish goals and objectives that fit the patient's diagnosis instead of focusing on the basic process of healing and transformation methods we all were introduced to in Dr. Hora's readings on Metapsychiatry.

The readings and teaching of Dr. Hora, touched me profoundly. The fact that God plays a major role in his teaching and practice continues to maintain hope for the practice of psychotherapy in the field of mental health which has become very frustrating for most practitioners.

I know for a fact that God is the only source of life and nourishment and although we are all different and independent, we all have a common connection to God and the teaching of Metapsychiatry offers this understanding to all of us as a tool for spiritual growth.

The two intelligent questions were introduced to us in his writings: What is the meaning of what seems to be? and What is what really is? They can be utilized as a method of truth realization.

Metapsychiatry teaches us a method of how to have a better understanding of the mental state and helps us to know the true nature of our being. Metapsychiatry combines ideas and insights from Buddhism, Christian Science, the Bible and other traditions to define different spiritual terms and truths.

I envision having a mental health clinic joined by spiritually-oriented therapists where people come to us seeking spiritual healing, and spiritual guidance and spiritual answers to the problems they are presenting. As Dr. Wayne Dyer writes, "Thinking is the source of problems. Your heart holds the answer to solving them." His book "There is a Spiritual Solution to Every Problem" shows us that there is an omnipresent spiritual force right at our finger tips that contains the solution to our problems from ill health, to financial worries, to relationship difficulties. Drawing from various spiritual traditions, Dr. Wayne Dyer helps us unplug from the material world and awaken to the Divine within. This reading provides the essential foundation for spiritual problem solving, and explains the basic principles needed to understand and access the world of spirit. Dr. Dyer gives specific suggestions to help us put spiritual problem solving into practice.

The different modules that composed this course helped me enormously to expand my knowledge in this field of psycho-spiritual therapy.

Tina's contribution in teaching us the connection between mind, body, spirit and emotions through body awareness and movement was superb.

Learning theories and practices of both Western psychotherapy and Buddhist psychology and philosophy and their focus on alleviating suffering and enhancing happiness, taught by Lani also contributed to my education, as did Jeffrey utilizing STAR therapy and healing methods.

Diana and Bruce, in Existential Metapsychiatry and the emphasis on the method of Metapsychiatry created by Thomas Hora opened a new horizon for me. The last module presented by Dr. Henry

Grayson concentrated on helping us integrate any of the systems of psychotherapy with spiritual approaches. He emphasized energy psychology to create an interaction and unified approach to psycho-spiritual therapy.

His major contribution for me is his view of Synergetic Therapy. He views the ego mind as that part of our thinking which creates the illusion of separateness and therefore destroys our peace of mind, judges ourselves and others, makes us anxious, afraid, depressed, deprived, physically sick, makes us focus on the past or the future and causes us to avoid living joyfully and successfully now.

Holding my vision of having a practice where people come to us for Spiritual healing, I will emphasize helping clients discover different ways one can identify the ego voice, learn tools for letting it go, teach them how to release all that prevents them from having a life of abundance, from having inner peace, health, joy, success and loving relationships.

They will learn about the vicious interaction cycle of the ego, how to transcend it, and the Process of Awakening to SELF. There are so many effective tools that the patient can utilize. Engaging themselves in the therapeutic/healing process will serve as motivation, providing energy to produce changes in their lives. With daily meditation vs. taking daily medication they will be in control of any emotion they present.

### **Onetown**

**By Gail Belluardo, LCSW**

#### **Experiential Exercise**

Please take a deep breath and close your eyes. Imagine you are on your way to work. Only, this morning you left late and you are hurrying and feeling rushed. It's your turn to do a presentation at a 9 am meeting and your next raise depends upon how well you perform.

Suddenly, the traffic stops abruptly and you and 20 other cars crash into each other. No one is seriously injured, but there is a lot of damage to cars.

Traffic stays at a standstill. You turn on the radio to hear that the bridge up ahead is out because a bridge worker made a serious error. And, they don't know when it will be fixed.

It's a hot summer day and cars begin to overheat. You remember that your spouse was supposed to get the radiator in your car fixed but did not get around to it. You look out into a sea of cars and realize that you might not get to work for several hours.

What are you feeling? How do you feel toward the bridge worker who created this mess? How do you feel toward your spouse for not getting the car fixed? How do you feel about the other drivers who have hit you? And, how are you feeling about yourself? What is the mood among the other drivers? You are flooded with a variety of feelings and sensations.

As a resident of Onetown (explained below) you recently attended a session in Energy Psychology and learned how to deal with stressful situations. But, your mind is racing and cluttered with thoughts and you can't recall what to do to help yourself.

Now – open your eyes. You can't focus, but you remember something about putting your two fingers to the center of your forehead and applying pressure. You take 3 deep breaths. Then, it comes back to you.

You place two fingers above your eye by the bridge of your nose and say (repeat after me) "I release all fear related to this experience." You take 3 deep breaths.

You place two fingers by the outside of your brow near your temple, apply pressure and say "I release all anger and rage related to this experience."

And take 3 deep breaths.

You place your fingers under the center of your eye, apply pressure and say, "I release all anxiety related to this experience." Take 3 breaths.

Place your fingers under your nose, apply pressure and say "I release all shame and guilt related to this experience." Take 3 breaths.

Place your fingers under the center of your bottom lip, apply pressure and say "I release all guilt and embarrassment related to this experience." Take 3 breaths.

Press the fingers of each hand 3 inches below the opposite armpits and say "I release all excessive concern related to this experience." Take 3 breaths.

Place the fingers of each hand under the bottom of your rib cage, apply pressure and say "I now release all hurt and sadness related to this experience."

Press the fingers of both hands between the center of your chest cavity. Take several deep breaths as you inhale love and exhale fear through your solar plexus.

Place your fingers on the crown of your head, apply pressure and take 3 breaths.

Now, how do you feel? What residual feeling is left?

Take your hand, place it above the center of your breast and gently rub in circles. Repeat after me "I deeply love and accept myself even if I still feel some ....."

How are you feeling now? What is the mood of the others around you now?

Your mind moves to other thoughts – Peace, Assurance, Gratitude, Love.  
And you remember to ask yourself:

"What is the meaning of what seems to be?"  
Then: "What really is?"

### **Onetown**

A city that is run on the concept that residents, though individuals, are connected to one another at all times. Everyone is just as human as anywhere else, with their separate characters, strengths, weaknesses, internal conflicts and interpersonal conflicts.

The difference is that they all have an awareness of their interconnectedness with one another and realize that they are all part of the same WHOLE.

In addition to the usual services provided by a city government, there is a structure in place that provides services which support and cultivate residents' consciousness of connection. This is justified by the realization of city officials that it

makes fiscal sense to support its residents in this way so that crime and work absences are lessened and work productivity and morale can be enhanced.

Some of the services offered include:

In Schools – the teaching of mindfulness meditation beginning in the elementary classes with time for meditation built into the daily schedule. Also taught is the understanding of our connection to one another and the benefits of keeping this in mind when conflicts arise between students. A room designated where students can go to meditate when they are feeling emotionally overwhelmed and unable to concentrate on schoolwork (a staff member would be present to oversee this). All school personnel are trained in meditation, conflict resolution and holistic concepts. A holistic nurse is on staff.

Free Standing Holistic Centers – mindfulness and other forms of meditation are taught and there are rooms that people can enter during the day and evening hours to meditate on their own free of cost. Classes in yoga, NIA and other forms of movement therapy are available at a nominal cost because the center is subsidized by town funds. Practitioners in Energy Psychology, Metapsychiatry and Clinical Hypnosis are on staff to provide treatment to residents. Classes on Mind/Body/Spiritual Connection are offered and available at low cost to the community. The staff periodically visits schools and the PTA, Service Clubs and other town organizations to inform them of the services offered. School personnel are provided with free services at the center (again subsidized by the town) to experience their benefits and see the value they hold for students. A Holistic Dentist is on staff.

Holistic Legal Center – holistic lawyers are available to provide legal services to residents with an emphasis on conflict resolution – their goal being to help the parties involved understand each other's points of view and rights leading to a fair and equitable resolution of conflict. They readily refer clients to the Holistic Center for services when needed.

### **Ego by Joyce Fishback**

**Why do they love you so?**

**You are not beautiful**

**You are not wise, or strong.**

**You distract me from my worship.  
And contaminate my breath.  
No sweetness can be found in you.**

**Oh, you are so deceitful.  
You hide from me.  
Tell me your secrets.**

**Someday we will be lovers.  
Then will you be satisfied?**

#### **ASP Members' Message Board**

There are 2 ways for current ASP members to join the ASP Message Board:

1- Go to <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/AssocSP/> and request membership.

2- Contact Paul Cooper ([pshaku@aol.com](mailto:pshaku@aol.com)), moderator of the message board, and request membership

The message board is open to all current ASP members to participate in dialogue and to post relevant information such as announcements of conferences, workshops, or talks. We also allow the submission of relevant articles, which will be posted and announced upon their approval. *[Please keep in mind that the message board is not meant to promote any individual's private practice]*

#### **Eco-psychology: theory and practice By Alan Levin, M.A., L.M.F.T.**

Although the basic understanding of eco-psychology is ancient and predates modern psychology, its current formulations have been growing for the last twenty years. It is still quite rare that I meet people outside of some very limited circles who have heard of it. I'm presenting here a very brief overview of this very exciting and potentially revolutionary contribution to not only psychology, but many other disciplines.

It is hard to imagine any psychological theories, including spiritually oriented ones, that don't include "mother" in the considerations of both the pain and healing process. One simple way to describe eco-psychology, (hopefully not over-simply), is that it considers the Earth or Nature as the "mother" with whom we are wounded and with whom we are healing. Just as psychology expanded from a focus on the mostly intra-psychic to the interpersonal and family systems theories, eco-psychology takes that movement further to understanding the human body/mind as part of the whole web of life as our "family."

We all feel the pain not only of our personal stresses related to family, work and relationships and not only as a result of our inner conflicts and unhealed wounds. We also feel pain (or fear or rage) at the darkness swirling through our nation and the world, at the abuse and destruction of the natural world. In the multidisciplinary study and practice of eco-psychology, this fact informs any consideration of the problems humans face regarding depression, anxiety, alienation, addiction and dysfunctional relationships. Eco-psychology points to a fundamental pain that results from an unhealthy split in our conscious lives from the life all around us, of which we as a species are part.

Eco-psychology as a field is a wide umbrella for many diverse perspectives. The unifying notion is that it is important to consider the role of nature in our lives as part of any study of the sources of our unhappiness and also in the methods included in our therapies. Some writers have focused on how dysfunctional societies contribute to dysfunctional families that foster dysfunctional individuals. They note that the roots of these dysfunctional societies develop from a pervasive separation of human life from the natural world. Another way to say it is that our rootedness is no longer embedded in the Earth.

Other theorists focus on specific ailments such as depression, alienation, addiction and anxiety and explore how these are manifestations of this human/nature split. What, after all, happens when we are cut off from the organic sources of life, regeneration and healing energy? How much more significant is this when we don't even realize what it is from which we feel separated?

When it comes to methods of therapy that are rooted in eco-psychological thinking, there is a range of suggested practices. These can include discussing and encouraging the experience of the healing effects of being in nature, guided inner journeys into the energetic relatedness with natural forces, experiencing nature as a mirror of internal psychic forces, and literally in-the-field practices drawn from indigenous cultures such as ritual experiences in natural settings, sweat lodges, night vigils on the mountain or vision quests.

Additionally, eco-psychology has included studying how it is that we human beings continue to behave the way we do, destroying our own habitat and refusing to change behaviors in the face of

evidence that we are threatening ourselves and other species. There have been efforts involving environmental activists and eco-psychologists coming together to focus on how to better educate, influence or motivate people concerning the state of the environment and what we must do to live more sustainable lives. Likewise, to awaken those involved in healing work that sometimes people can find meaning and purpose in relating and servicing the needs of the earth community.

Most importantly, eco-psychology takes us on a different kind of spiritual journey, one we can do with our eyes open, feeling gratitude and appreciating the sacredness of life in its infinite forms.

Alan Levin, M.A., L.M.F.T. has a private practice in Nyack, NY and integrates an eco-psychological and eco-spiritual orientation in his work.

***The Great Cosmic Lesson Plan  
By Sam Menahem Ph.D.***

Originally published in Pure Inspiration Magazine-  
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"Hey dad, what is life for anyway? It's not that much fun." This question was posed to me by my nine year old daughter, Lauren. We were riding in the car, on the way to a "biddy basketball" game. I guess she wasn't enjoying the basketball too much. But what the exact stimulus for her question was I didn't know. Somehow, though, at that moment she was wondering what life is all about and I had to say something. I replied with the first answer that popped into my head, "It is about loving,...as many people as you can...as often as you can." The second part of her statement gave me a clue how to continue. "Well nobody has fun all the time. You do have fun sometimes don't you?" She admitted that was true. "So, I continued, nobody has fun all the time, but if you love people as much as you can, you will be happy. That is the most important thing in life: love and be happy" We then went on to the game and the question was dropped. My daughter has grown up into a happy young woman, who has her share of fun, with occasional doses of negative events and issues. No more than anyone else, less than some. I sometimes wonder if she even remembers that conversation, probably not. But from my observations she is a very loving person, so she followed my advice. She is learning her life lessons in her own way.

Still, is that enough of an answer to a question that has perplexed human beings since time immemorial? Maybe it sounds too trite or pat to an adult who is battling serious illness, financial ruin, or a puzzling series of failures. Just love everyone, “yeah right, I’m going to love my husband who just cheated on me and left me.” “Sure, I’ll just love anyone while I die of cancer or heart disease.” “Well, my house just floated away in a hurricane, but I’ll just love everyone and it will be all right.” In short, there is a lot of resistance to accepting a life that is full of problems, issues and seemingly negative events. People often get discouraged, depressed, or filled with self-pity and anger when things don’t go their way. What is there to say without being banal?

I give many speeches. I often ask the audience two questions. First, “How many people here think they are a good person?” So everyone, of course, raises their hand. Then I ask, “How many people here have had at least one bad thing happen to them?” After a few snickers, everyone, of course, raises their hand. I then pronounce, “Now you know why Rabbi (Harold) Kushner sold so many copies of his book, “When Bad Things happen to Good People.” Bad things happen to all people. The question we ask ourselves in times of distress shouldn’t be, “why me?” It should be,

“Why not me?”

Rabbi Kushner might even agree with that statement. However, we seem to have different concepts of God. He portrays God as a wonderful-but overworked parent, with many children, running around, putting out fires. God is very busy, says Rabbi Kushner, sometimes he slips up, and bad things happen. So the Rabbi does well in getting away from the erroneous concept that bad things happen as a punishment for being bad. Indeed, bad things also happen to good, righteous people. However, I think he misses the mark with the overworked parent metaphor. There must be some other reason so many “bad” things happen to all people. Of course, people are not all bad or all good. Most of us try our best to live a good and righteous life. All of us, however, have the potential to do some hurtful or bad things. Psychologically, this is called our “shadow.” So are the bad events of our life the result of unknown bad deeds? Or repressed shadow emotions? Are we being punished for real or imagined thoughts and actions? I think not. The punishment metaphor just

does not hold up for me. I just do not see God as a vengeful judge or a beleaguered parent.

At his point, my scientific materialist friends might jump in and say, “Why are you trying to make sense out of meaningless random events? Stuff just happens, why not just accept your life and do the best you can. Why do you have to make up a supernatural God that is punishing or saving you? Just suck it up and make the best of your life before you die and are obliterated.” Whew! To me, that is a very depressing pathway. In order to go down that path, you have to be very cynical. You have to ignore the many wonderful qualities of all being. You have to ignore all selfless acts of love, all beauty, chocolate, ice cream, wisdom, baseball, the very essence of how life may have started in the first place. Was life started by a random big bang, followed by chaos? I do not think that explains anything. As my one time professor, Dr. Victor Frankl (a holocaust survivor and psychiatrist) once said, but “LIFE MUST HAVE SOME MEANING.” What could be the meaning of all the sufferings we go through on Earth? Randomness obviates meaning. So I reject the purely scientific, materialist, random, no God theory. So my search for meaning continued. Is there anywhere else to look in the history of philosophy? Yes, there is the doctrine of existentialism.

We will examine the thought of two existentialists, John Paul Sartre and Soren Kierkegaard. Sartre, an atheist and communist, felt there was no God but there was meaning. He argued that man must create his own meaning through taking responsibility for his own thoughts, feelings and behavior. This is an interesting amalgam of atheism and New Age thinking. I like the part about taking responsibility and creating your own reality. However, the atheist part denies any context for this meaning. He seems to be saying you just, live, make the best of any bad things that happen to you and then you are obliterated. He recommends being courageous, responsible, and reasonable, then you just die. You are dead, that is it.

Kierkegaard put existentialism in a religious (Christian) context. He felt that human beings go through three stages; pleasure seeking, ethical and religious. In the first stage, we are purely pleasure seekers, narcissists (are you listening Freud?). Eventually, we realize that there is more to life than just pursuing pleasure and avoiding pain, there is an ethical- moral dimension to life. We try to do the

right thing-just because it is right. There is no supernatural reason for doing so. We just do it. Finally, there is the opening up of a religious dimension. There is a God and we do the right things to please him, and because we fear his wrath if we are bad. That, of course, takes us back to the original problem with a monotheistic model of God, already discussed in earlier sections. Thus, existentialism leaves us floundering, still looking for meaning. My daughter's question is still unanswered. In the narcissistic stage of pure pleasure seeking (childhood-where most of our culture is) we develop self pity when bad things happen. We see no meaning in ill fortune. Even in a monotheistic belief system we find only the idea that we are being punished or are not important enough for God to help us. There must be a better way of looking at life, where even the "bad" stuff happens for a reason.

*Could it be that the real God is not a comic book super hero?*

*Could God be something other than Santa Claus-punishing bad deeds, rewarding good deeds?*

*Could it be that the real God is not supposed to rescue us like superman rescues Lois Lane?*

*Could the narcissistic idea that nothing bad should ever happen to us on Earth be mistaken?*

*Could it be that we have to learn something from our sufferings on the planet Earth?*

*Could it be that the real God is trying to teach us something that we can only learn by dealing with the difficulties of an Earthly life?*

Yes, of course.

***Life on Earth is a gigantic lesson plan from God!!!!***

This is the great cosmic lesson plan!!!!

Any teacher knows that each lesson must have behind it a lesson plan. This plan must have an aim and a method.

***The aim of the great cosmic lesson plan is ... (drum roll please)***

***To discover the true nature of Oneness with God, to become fully aware and experience the***

***Oneness, preferably, while still ensconced in a human, physical body.***

How will we know if we have succeeded? That is easy. Enlightened beings are kind, loving forgiving, non-judgmental, happy, peaceful and humble. All they want to do while still in a body is to help others gain the same level of enlightenment. Think of the Dalai Lama, Mother Teresa, Mahatma Gandhi.

***Methodology:***

Life will be set up so that human ego consciousness will ***appear to be*** separate from God. Each individual will totally identify with the body. Due to this universal error, God will be viewed as either an enemy, dysfunctional parent, or completely non-existent. Death will be both feared (as the end of the body- and thus, everything), or desired as a way out of the total mess of suffering. The desiring of death as an "escape hatch" will be repressed and denied by most people. Thus, most people will fear death except those few who are aware of desiring it as an escape hatch. This hellish period will continue until we realize that we need to ***experience God the way God really is***. God is not a comic book superhero. God is not judging us. God does not get angry. ***God is a Spiritual Oneness characterized by love, peace, power and intelligence***. God is just waiting for the teachable moment for each fragment of himself (humans) who have gotten lost in materialism, turn and return to the Oneness that is all there is. This turn may be accomplished by prayer, meditation or a simple "aha" experience that Monism or the Spirituality of Oneness is the answer to the question, "what is the meaning of life?" Each event, especially the seemingly bad ones, is an opportunity to turn to our real self or inner teacher and ask-"what is going on here? What do I have to learn from this so that I may become more peaceful, kind, loving, accepting-in short, spiritual."

***A Case in Point***

Chuck came into psychotherapy complaining of depression, inertia and marital dysfunction. His wife, a very successful sales person, continually complained about his passivity, low energy and refusal to do simple things like open the mail or take care of his body. In fact, he has a severe case of diabetes and needs insulin, as well as careful control of his diet. He is very lackadaisical about his need to manage his blood sugar. His wife gets enraged over this. He just shrugs and becomes more withdrawn and depressed. It was explained to

Chuck that his passive-aggressive, resistant behavior served many functions for him. First, it enabled him to anger his wife, who then punished him by yelling. His guilt and victimization thinking would then be strengthened. His inner guilt requires punishment. He sees himself as a victim of everything from his disease to his wife's anger. He is suffering from victim thinking and unworthiness. The motto of the passive-aggressive person is, "what did I do to deserve this?"

Chuck needed a context to understand what he was doing to bring on and exacerbate his suffering. It was pointed out to him that diabetes is sometimes called "accelerated aging" by the medical community. Physically, the pancreas shuts down, there is no insulin, and cells age and die rapidly. Was he unconsciously hastening his own death? He admitted that he believed that when we die, there is nothing. Thus, to him, death was an "escape hatch" from the endless suffering caused by his physical condition and his unconscious, angry refusal to take responsibility for his life. Some people might say I am blaming the victim here. I think not. Even though he did not consciously order diabetes, he is conscious of welcoming death whenever it comes. He is also aware that he does not manage his diabetes well, thus hastening the process of death-which will free him from having to face his responsibilities. If he decided to take responsibility for his life, manage his illness, open the mail, and make choices for happier thoughts, feelings and behaviors, he could live, longer, happier and better.

He was quite distressed at first, when I suggested that death might not be the end of everything. I told him I believed that life continues after physical death. If he dies in a depressed state of mind, he might have to go through more suffering (the "life review" in which you feel all your feelings and those you induced in others) until he sees the light. Then he might have to reincarnate and try again to get the most from his new lesson plan. But, I stated enthusiastically, there is good news also, if you take responsibility and become happier now, you can be released from suffering now-then, at physical death-you may see the light right away and become one with the higher power we call God. It is not physical death that brings enlightenment-it is getting the point of the great cosmic lesson plan. Take responsibility for your life now. Be here now! Be loving now! Only love is real! (I hear Carole King singing in the background)

He is now taking small steps toward fulfilling his lesson plan in his own way. He needs to express love for himself now by managing his illness well, exercising, opening his mail, etc. etc. These are small steps in his version of the great cosmic lesson plan. Understanding and accepting Oneness with divinity is a big step for him to take. He is getting it- slowly. Death is not the answer. Love, connecting with others and universal Oneness is the answer.

Chuck's life will improve as he follows the lesson plan of his life. We all need to let go of fear, anger and guilt that come from accepting our separated (from divinity) material life as all there is. As we gradually let go of these painful emotions our life improves. That does not mean that we just sail smoothly through the rest of our life, we just perceive things differently, we accept the good and bad events of our life as part of our unique lesson plan, leading us to Self and God realization.

***The Spirituality of Oneness is the goal. Life is God's plan for getting us there.***

We can resist as long as we want. Time, as we think of it, does not even really exist. However, eventually the lesson plan works.

So, in summary:

- Accept life as a lesson plan.
- Develop spiritual thoughts, feelings, behavior, values, insights.
- If you are having trouble with the above, "fake it until you make it."
- Ask for God's help through prayer, meditation and questioning your inner self.
- Let go, Let go, let God,
- Accept healing!!!!
- Life is a great cosmic lesson plan, is this the teachable moment?

**Upcoming Networking Meetings  
New Format to Begin in Winter Meetings**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Topic</i>
January 30	To be Announced	To be Announced
February 27	To be Announced	To be Announced
March 27	To be Announced	To be Announced
April 24	To be Announced	To be Announced
May 29	To be Announced	To be Announced
June 26	To be Announced	To be Announced

# A Gift for You and Africa Too!

Beginning now, and thru this season,

I will be providing spiritual counseling  
(via telephone or skype) on a donation basis,  
all proceeds supporting the **Africa Vulnerable Children Project**  
<http://africa.livingcompassion.org>

Rev. George Jacobs, MTC  
610-391-1262

*ordained interfaith minister,  
masters in therapeutic counseling,  
many years experience with adults  
and youth.*

**Stress is not required**

## Label Reads: Beauty Meditation in a bottle

.....As i was meditating today these thoughts came to me on Beauty....

To the unsung Quasimodo heroes and unseen beauties of our world, let us manifest them in physical, spiritual and ecological balance.

i place my personal intent on  
releasing the inner light beneath veils of oppression,  
actively listening to the silent voice of perseverance  
lost in unprecedented violence and gender imbalance.  
the beauty of our inner child with hair flowing in the breeze.  
Empowering the impressionable and meek by way  
of reflection

Nurturing a gentle will to wash away any mask  
not true to the authentic you.  
Preserving the burgeoning purity and character of young girls  
as they blossom and illuminate their beauty  
from within into grace-filled wisdom-hood without.....  
..To instill young men of today with the courage and  
gentleness  
to seek a view on what beauty really is -- in this mad media  
confusion  
through a process of awakened awareness

and rightful balance of the divine feminine within themselves  
and the divine masculine within each of us.

Helen Keller, with her fingertips saw only potential.  
The ageless and the divine illumination of the soul  
An authentic love of the wabi sabi of beauty,  
the flaw that makes one beautiful beyond skin deep.

A reminder how our presence  
can act as a shining mirror of self honoring and acceptance  
to ever include kindness in everyday ways,  
for we know not from where  
this scarred heart or beloved face has returned. i served beauty  
perhaps it was something more....

sappho and georgi

## Seeds of Forgiveness Health Transformation & Spirituality Presents at the United Nations Week of Spirituality By Ani Kalayjian, Ph.D.

New York, NY, October 24, 2008

As part of the United Nation's Week of Spirituality, under the auspices of the Committee of Spiritual Values and Global Concerns, the working group of Health Transformation and Spirituality presented "Cultivating the Seeds of Forgiveness: Transforming Trauma to Meaning-Making and Peace-Building." This presentation, held at the Uganda House, was organized and chaired by Dr. Ani Kalayjian, an internationally recognized expert on the psychological effects of trauma, UN representative for the Armenian International Women's Association, and Professor of Psychology at Fordham University. She has worked extensively with veterans of the Gulf and Vietnam wars, with survivors of the Holocaust and Ottoman-Turkish Genocide of the Armenians, and with survivors of earthquakes and hurricanes. Dr. Kalayjian began by creating a setting of peace and tranquility and led everyone in a moment of silence. A Forgiveness altar was lit with colorful persimmon candles and stood on top of a festive autumnal runner. Placed in the center of the large conference table, the altar included items from multiple denominations; Jewish, American Indian, nature inspired, Orthodox, Islamic, Buddhist, Apostolic Armenian, Hindu, and Shinnyo-en. Unique representations of interfaith included saraswati, the goddess of abundance, a stone Buddha, hand painted Greek icons, Islamic poetry, a Burmese communal plate, an American Indian figure and

terra cotta rabbit, a brass tooled Indian candle bed, cherry blossom leaves, and seeds of forgiveness.

After a short introduction, discussant, and sacred activist Georgina Galanis honored Eleanor Roosevelt with a historical quote and tribute to human rights. She then introduced the speakers, briefly highlighting their work and focus for the presentation.

Dr. Kalayjian began with a talk on forgiveness. In her presentation, she stressed the importance of forgiveness in this day and age, and its benefits to mankind. She explained that forgiveness is not for the person who is being forgiven, but rather for the individual who is forgiving. The process releases internal turmoil that then allows the individual to move forward and begin the healing process. Dr. Kalayjian discussed different methods of beginning this process and how to continue the work on a daily basis. The words spoken by Dr. Kalayjian carried extra weight as she was able to connect these ideas to her own experience with the Armenian genocide. As her parents were survivors of this genocide, Dr. Kalayjian experienced the trauma related to a disaster and was able to speak from personal knowledge. In cultivating the seeds of forgiveness, one must remember that what one does reaches 7 generations into the future. Healing the present to dissolve intergenerational prejudice and conflict must become the way of the future, if we want to create a culture of peace.

The next presenter was Dr. Joy Carol. Dr. Carol is an author, international speaker, spiritual director, workshop and retreat leader. Over the last 30 years, she has also been an educator, counselor, and manager of international development programs. In a dialogue with participants, Dr. Joy Carol spoke about how most people yearn for peace of mind and a more whole way of being, in a world that is stressful, frightening, and oriented towards consumerism and success. She spoke about her own personal illness and near death experience, and how that trauma moved her to become more spiritual, forgiving, and to live life more fully. She also shared how people can deepen their spirituality and learn from life's journey.

A young woman dressed with colorful scarves from the Orisa Community Development Corporation, named Ayoka Quinones spoke to us about "Nature as a Resource for Healing and Building Peace: A

Yoruba Traditionalist Perspective." She introduced four central themes and spiritual concepts that are included in African spirituality and particularly in the Yoruba tradition: 1) Collective consciousness or that of a philosophy of a communalistic society; 2) Connection with/and reverence for ancestors; 3) Connection with the divine and the divine within oneself; and 4) Connection with/and reverence for nature. These themes constitute the basic cosmology and framework for healing and transformation. Collective consciousness means that the decisions of the community and individuals are made from the framework of the collective and from family structure. The connection to the ancestors enables Yoruba traditionalists to share the collective wisdom of the ancestors through inspiration and gives the necessary strength to succeed, rear children, and live ethically and authentically.

Georgina Galanis engaged us in a short connection exercise where we turned to one another in observance of our collective spirit and chanted, "I am I and You are You. He is she and She is He. We are one." Her moving poem, "The Minefields of Mankind" reinforced the message that love is the seventh wave, as it spoke of a soldier that saw his own face, in the face of children, and was freed from the ravages of war.

The next presentation was given by Dr. John Bolling, an African American who graduated from Howard University's medical school in 1966 and was a Josiah Mercy Fellow in child psychiatry at New York University-Bellevue Hospital Center. For the past 30 years, he has served the New York City community as a clinician and psychiatric director of several mental health clinics. Dr. Bolling's research focused on the self-concept and identity of black children and the soul-centered approach to integrating spirituality and psychotherapy. For centuries, acknowledgment of the sacred, the divine, spirituality, and organized religion have been cornerstones in the helping tradition of many cultural and ethnic groups, including African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, and immigrant groups such as Haitians and West Indians. Specifically, Dr. John Bolling focused on the Mandala model of self that connects us into the whole circle of reality, in which and out of which, we have our interconnected aspects of being. In the context of this model, we affect our environment and our environment affects us at all levels of being. Dr. Bolling spoke of ways towards inner self-

discovery and self-fulfillment by utilizing the soul-centered, psycho-spiritual integrative model.

Once the presentations concluded, the floor was opened for discussion. There were many questions and comments raised by members of the audience and the speakers responded to their questions. One of the key points raised, was the idea that there is a process to forgiveness and that the initial pain of the experience must be overcome before forgiveness can be achieved. Along with this, was the idea that the process of forgiveness is ongoing and lifelong. It is not something that is achieved in a short time and requires daily efforts to be made. By cultivating the seeds of forgiveness exchanged here today, we can change our outlook, and by making the commitment to live a life of forgiveness, and deeper understanding, we can establish a culture of peace.

**The One Thing that Changes Everything:  
An Introduction to Presence-Centered Healing  
and Transformation**  
By Rhonda Mattern

In recent years, a fundamentally different approach to healing and transformation has emerged that combines elements of spiritual practice and psychology into a distinct new discipline. Numerous individuals and groups practice its methods under diverse, and often esoteric, names: non-dual psychotherapy, Buddhist psychology, Leela Therapy, Diamond Heart Work, Internal Family Systems Therapy, The Presence Process, and Integrative Processing, to name a few.

I see these diverse practices as branches of the same burgeoning discipline, an approach I call presence-centered healing and transformation. Presence-centered approaches offer practical, accessible methods for becoming more *present* to, and *centered* in, the vast transformational capacity of your own consciousness.

**Principles of Presence-Centered Practice**

Despite their diverse names and origins, most presence-centered approaches are based on similar principles:

- **Consciousness is the force that heals, transforms and uplifts all life.** Presence-centered approaches see consciousness itself as the source of healing and transformation

and help us to access more of its infinite potentialities.

- **Consciousness is present in everything, not just the “higher self.”**

Rather than focusing exclusively on the “higher self,” presence-centered practitioners learn to become more aware of the *whole self*—body, mind, emotions *and* spirit.

- **Suffering occurs when unconscious patterns block our awareness of consciousness.**

Psychology points to conditioned responses as a root cause of suffering and spiritual teachings cite separation from our spiritual nature. Presence-centered practice takes both insights a step further: conditioned responses create suffering *by blocking our awareness of the full spectrum of our own consciousness* (i.e., body, mind, emotions, *and* our spiritual nature). This integrated view of what causes suffering requires a completely different approach to breaking free of it—an approach that presence-centered practitioners continue to refine and evolve.

- **Healing and transformation occur when we bring consciousness to unconscious patterns.**

This principle combines two long-accepted maxims into a third insight that articulates the central premise of presence-centered practice:

Insight Number	Source	Healing and transformation happen when you...
1	Spiritual practice	Experience the wisdom, creativity, and compassion of higher consciousness
2	Psychology	Understand conditioned responses and choose new strategies
3	Presence-centered practice	Bring the wisdom, compassion, and creativity of unconditioned higher consciousness to conditioned responses

If you learn better from pictures, you can visualize Insight #3 like this: Picture your soul or deeper nature as a beautiful castle. Now see your limiting attitudes and emotional reactions (e.g., angry outbursts, judging yourself mercilessly, etc.) as alligators in the castle moat. It's not enough to learn how to enter the castle, because alligators keep pulling you back into the moat. It's not enough to learn how the alligators pull you into the moat, because that doesn't get you back into the castle.

Spiritual teachings show you how to get into the castle, which is absolutely essential. Psychology shows you which alligators are pulling you into the moat, which is also critically important. Presence-centered practice helps you take the next step: bringing the wisdom, creativity, and compassion locked inside the castle to alligators that are limiting the possibilities in your life.

I call bringing consciousness to unconscious patterns "the one thing that changes everything." To be honest, it's still a bit shocking to me that such a simple practice has brought such profound healing and transformation to my own and others' lives.

### **How Presence-Centered Practice Differs from Other Approaches**

The principles we just reviewed don't quite convey how radically different this work is and how profoundly life-changing it can be. Thirty years of meditation, therapy, and alternative healing barely put a dent in the thick veil of depression, fear, and self-doubt that had plagued me for decades. Presence-centered practice changed all that in less than three years.

During presence-centered sessions, we didn't talk about consciousness—we experienced it! My mentor helped me to deeply connect with the awareness beyond my thoughts and conditioning, not just for a few minutes, but throughout the entire session, and not just now and then, but *during every session*.

Finally I'd found the approach to healing and self-actualization that I'd always dreamed was possible: a practical, hands-on mix of spiritual practice and psychology. This was the "third force" that pioneering psychologist Abraham Maslow had envisioned half a century earlier. And it was truly a

force to be reckoned with: a completely new and distinct discipline, not just talk therapy with a few spiritual concepts or meditative practices pasted onto it.

One of the first things my mentor helped me to learn was how to tell the difference between unconditioned awareness (i.e., higher consciousness) and conditioned thoughts. After a bit of experimentation, I realized that what I thought was my soul or higher consciousness was just a bunch of thoughts about it (and I was an experienced meditator!) Shifting from my thoughts about consciousness to the *actual experience* of it was a subtle skill to master, and working with someone who knew the terrain first-hand made all the difference.

There's another aspect of practice-centered practice that was radically different from anything I'd ever experienced: both the facilitator and the person being facilitated were practicing *the same thing*—being unconditionally present to everything that arises. The methods my mentor used weren't amorphous or incomprehensible; they were concrete skills that she clearly articulated and painstakingly helped to me to master. Learning these skills helped me to access my own insights and experiences instead of depending on hers.

Surprisingly, as I began to practice these skills, I discovered limiting patterns that gifted therapists had missed—long-hidden root causes of my lifelong struggles with depression, troubled relationships and low self confidence. Why had therapists overlooked these patterns? Because less conscious parts of myself had so artfully hidden them. As I learned to shift into the wise, compassionate space of my own deeper awareness, my most wounded parts finally felt safe enough to surface.

Several other distinctions made this work different from anything I'd ever encountered:

- Instead of trying to fix, change, or get rid of things, I learned to be unconditionally present with them. Paradoxically, the moment I stopped trying to change my life, it started changing in ways I'd never been able to effect by my usual "push and shove" methods.
- Dissecting my dysfunctional habits always felt like getting a spiritual root canal—it was painful, tedious, and exhausting. Experiencing my

conditioned responses from unconditioned consciousness, on the other hand, was illuminating, energizing and enlivening.

- Instead of devising strategies for behaving in new ways when conditioned responses arise (more conditioning!), I practiced bringing the creative, spontaneous wisdom of my own consciousness to conditioned responses, first in quiet practice sessions, then in “real time”—i.e., as patterns got triggered in daily life.

The first time I managed to bring consciousness to my reactive patterns in “real time” marked a significant turning point in my life. On that fateful day, my boss began screaming at me uncontrollably in front of co-workers. My usual mistrust of authority began to arise, not to mention fear of losing my job and a panicky need to defend myself. As I opened my consciousness to these patterns without fighting them, my body quaked with terror, and yet I felt surprisingly centered and present. After several speechless moments, a few unassuming words popped out of my mouth, completely disarming my boss. She invited me into her office, began to cry, and confessed how poorly suited she felt to her job. A short time later, she left the company.

For years I’d longed to live in greater harmony with my spiritual ideals, and nothing I tried seemed to work. Now the very things I had turned to for support—spiritual practice and psychology—began working unbelievably well.

### **Inside a Presence-Centered Mentoring Session**

Before closing this introduction, I’d like to convey some sense of how presence-centered facilitation works. In a recent mentoring session, someone I’ll call Peter expressed frustration and shame that he hadn’t reached his goals. Rather than offer insight or solace, here’s how I responded:

Rhonda: So what are your goals?

Peter: There’s only one, really – to get to God.

Rhonda: And what would it be like if you didn’t have that goal? What if you just lay down the thought that you need to get to God for a minute, just to experiment?

Peter: God, that’s terrifying.

Rhonda: Did you actually lay down the thought and experience being terrified? Or is “God, that’s terrifying” just a thought?

Peter: Hmm... it’s just a thought.

Rhonda: So, let’s experiment a bit more. Before we do, you might notice that with each breath, you can fall deeper and deeper into yourself.

Peter: Yes. (*long silence*)

Rhonda: And now you might notice that you can take that goal of reaching God and put it on a shelf right beside you for just a minute. What do you notice when you put down that thought?

Peter: All of a sudden, I don’t feel anything. I think I’m blocking myself. I need to learn to feel my feelings. I try, but I just can’t.

Rhonda: What if you don’t have to feel anything? What if that’s just a thought?

Peter: Wow – okay. (*silence*) So it’s just blackness. This is scary. I’m going to have to face myself now.

Rhonda: What if don’t have to face yourself? What if that’s just another thought?

Peter: (*with wonder and surprise*) Wow. Then it’s just – just – blackness!

Rhonda: And what if this blackness has no meaning, no labels? What if you explore it spontaneously, like a little kid? What’s it like?

Peter: (*sounding totally surprised*) It feels kind of peaceful!

Rhonda: Yeah...I can feel that peacefulness too.

Peter: Yes. It’s this total expansiveness. (*We both commune in silence for a few minutes.*)

Rhonda: You might notice that this peaceful expansiveness can flow through every cell of your body.

Peter: Yes! (*long silence*)

Rhonda: So I’m curious. What *is* this peaceful expansiveness? (*long silence*)

Peter: (*whispered with awe*) Self. It's who I am!  
(*silence*)

Rhonda: Oh, that's so beautiful! And if you put your attention on your search for God now, what are you aware of?

Peter: (*quietly*) That this is the space...this is where connection with God is possible.

Rhonda: Hmmm..... (*long silence*) So, how did you get there?

Peter: The real breakthrough was when you asked me to put those thoughts on the shelf. That's when everything shifted.

Rhonda: You laid down all those thoughts that were blocking you from yourself!

Peter: (*excited*) Yes! That's *exactly* it! And what really blew my mind was when you said "What if you don't have to feel anything?"

Rhonda: What did you notice then?

Peter: Well, I thought that I had to feel things. And it was liberating not to have to!

Rhonda: Yes! We accumulate all these beliefs about what need to do to heal, and all these thoughts just block us from our self.

Peter: Yes. I had all these thoughts about what I needed to do to get to God. And it's all just like a picture of a delicious food, but not the actual taste of the food itself.

Rhonda: And once you taste the real thing, you know the difference.

Peter: Yes! You know through direct experience. Wow, it's amazing, isn't it?

Rhonda: Yes, it's really amazing!

### **How to Learn More**

Those interested in learning more are welcome to check out the practitioners, tele-classes, and other resources listed on Rhonda's website at [www.the1thing.net](http://www.the1thing.net) or to send her questions and comments at [info@the1thing.net](mailto:info@the1thing.net).

### How to Dance in the Rain

It was a busy morning, about 8:30, when an elderly gentleman in his 80's arrived to have stitches removed from his thumb. He said he was in a hurry as he had an appointment at 9:00 am.

I took his vital signs and had him take a seat, knowing it would be over an hour before someone would be able to see him. I saw him looking at his watch and decided, since I was not busy with another patient, I would evaluate his wound. On exam, it was well healed, so I talked to one of the doctors, got the needed supplies to remove his sutures and redress his wound.

While taking care of his wound, I asked him if he had another doctor's appointment this morning, as he was in such a hurry.

The gentleman told me no, that he needed to go to the nursing home to eat breakfast with his wife. I inquired as to her health.

He told me that she had been there for a while and that she was a victim of Alzheimer's Disease.

As we talked, I asked if she would be upset if he was a bit late.

He replied that she no longer knew who he was, that she had not recognized him in five years now.

I was surprised, and asked him, 'And you still go every morning, even though she doesn't know who you are?'

He smiled as he patted my hand and said,

*'She doesn't know me, but I still know who she is.'*

I had to hold back tears as he left, I had goose bumps on my arm, and thought,

'That is the kind of love I want in my life.'

True love is neither physical, nor romantic.

*True love is an acceptance of all that is, has been, will be, and will not be.*

With all the jokes and fun that are in e-mails, sometimes there is one that comes along that has an important message. This one I thought I could share with you.

The happiest people don't necessarily have the best of everything; they just make the best of everything they have.

I hope you share this with someone you care about. I just did.

*Life isn't about how to survive the storm, but how to dance in the rain.*

## **ASP ABBREVIATED 2008 PROFESSIONAL DIRECTORY**

Appearing below is the yearly abbreviated listing of all professional (\$70 or more membership) members of the Association for Spirituality and Psychotherapy. Business telephone numbers were used where they were available. To update your listing, please e-mail [cspofnip@optonline.net](mailto:cspofnip@optonline.net). We will be mailing the full professional directory with the 2009 Membership Dues Letter. We need your continued support to publish our newsletter, arrange networking meetings, and plan for ASP conferences. **RENEW YOUR 2009 DUES NOW! SEND US YOUR WEBSITE TO APPEAR IN THE PRD**

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Degrees</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
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