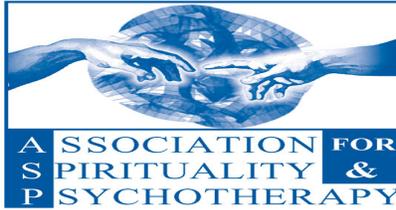


PsychoSpiritual Dialogue

"The integrated pathway of spirituality and healing in psychotherapy"



250 West 57th St Suite 501

New York N Y 10019

Questions: 516.829-5027

Diana Kerievsky, Executive Director

SUMMER 2010

CSPOFNIP@OPTONLINE.NET

WWW.PSYCHOSPIRITUALTHERAPY.ORG

Circulation 4,100+

Our 2010 ASP Membership Drive is on now. Remember, We depend on Membership dues to keep this important work going. Use the back cover for a registration form or visit our website.

The Subject of this Issue of the Newsletter is

"What are the Obstacles to Healing and How can they be Overcome?"

See Pages 5 through 11 for several articles on this topic.

Please note that the title of this newsletter is PsychoSpiritual Dialogue.

We encourage all readers to submit articles in response to what they have read in the newsletter as well as to contribute ideas on any psychospiritual subject.

The subject for articles for the next issue is:

**"Can One Change One's Character? Or
Are We Stuck Being Who We Are?"**

**See Page 3 for a description of our upcoming Fall Conference on
Spirituality and Sexuality entitled:**

Dancing with the Divine: Spiritual Sexuality and Sexual Healing

**See page 4 to learn about ASP's 2010/11 One-Year Program on
*Developing A Spiritually Informed Approach to Psychotherapy and Counseling***

**Join us for our quarterly Network meetings. To be notified about ASP events,
send an email to cspofnip@optonline.net or visit our website.**

Also, visit page 18 for a brief summary of a recent Network meeting.

ASP Board of Directors

Bernard Starr, Ph.D., President
Georgina Galanis, Vice President
Jeffrey Gurian, D.D.S., Secretary
Diana Kerievsky, LCSW, Treasurer
Henry Grayson, Ph.D., Past President
Samuel Menahem, Ph.D., Past President, Editor
Kenneth Porter, M.D., Past President
Bruce Kerievsky, A.B., Editor
Tina Fellus, M.S.W.
Charlotte Wolovsky, LCSW

PRESIDENT'S LETTER **by Bernard Starr Ph.D.**

As my term as president winds down I would like to highlight an issue that hopefully ASP will focus on in the coming years: The "spiritual bypass."

The spiritual bypass is critical for the integration of spirituality and psychotherapy. It's an issue that is growing in importance as more and more of the public embrace spirituality. Those who endorse the spiritual bypass believe that psychological issues of everyday living can be bypassed or transcended by achieving spiritual consciousness—call it enlightenment or any other term for higher consciousness. The spiritual bypass is often the main draw to join a spiritual path for people suffering with psychological stress and conflicts. "If I can leap to higher consciousness, I don't have to deal with all that messy psychological sludge," is the compelling thought.

Spiritual teachers frequently explicitly or implicitly reinforce this view. I've attended many satsangs where the guru or teacher gives short shrift to queries about personal problems by directing seekers to the "real self." "If you know who you really are the illusory personal issues will evaporate."

Not so fast. In principle the spiritual bypass should work. If there is a higher consciousness that is the ground of consciousness, and the ego, or our personalities, are conceptual manifestations of the all inclusive awareness consciousness, then achieving "enlightenment" should defuse the manifest self. But as therapists and counselors we know that in practice it doesn't. Personal issues

persist even as seekers make progress toward achieving higher consciousness. Spiritual enlightenment, or what the Buddha called waking up, is not a one step done deal process for most of us. Furthermore, the exclusive pursuit of the spiritual bypass is likely to intensify personal issues. Denial and avoidance eventually lead to implosion.

That was revealed last year in the New York Times story about the Buddhist Zen Master who came down from the monastery after 35 years to enter psychoanalysis. His pesky personal problems refused to yield to his highly evolved consciousness. The facile response of psychologists and spiritual healers that I spoke to was, "he really wasn't enlightened" —again implying that if he were he would still be cloistered in a state of happiness and bliss —and his personal problems would be nowhere to be found. That may or may not be true. But from the practical point of view, since relatively few make it to the spiritual mountaintop, we must struggle with our demons while at the same time striving to reach higher ground.

The spiritual bypass is clearly a complex issue that is central to the practice of spiritual psychotherapy and counseling. It also raises fundamental questions about the nature of "enlightenment" and the relationship between awareness consciousness and the personal self.

Let's give the spiritual bypass the attention and critical examination it deserves.

**Please share your thoughts on this subject with other ASP members and colleagues on the ASP face book page.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/ASSOCIATION-FOR-SPIRITUALITY-PSYCHOTHERAPY/247199349320>

For our twitter connection:
http://twitter.com/ASP_NY

The Association for Spirituality and Psychotherapy
President – Bernard Starr, Ph.D.
proudly presents

A Major National Conference – Friday – Sunday, Oct. 29-31, 2010
 Hotel Pennsylvania, New York City

DANCING WITH THE DIVINE:
SPIRITUAL SEXUALITY AND SEXUAL HEALING
Co-Chairs: Henry Grayson, Ph.D. and Kenneth Porter, M.D.

At this time of turmoil in the world we need more than ever to return to our deepest connections with ourselves and with others. For millennia many of the great spiritual traditions have taught the path of sacred sexuality - a gateway to physical and spiritual growth and healing. In this spirit the Association of Spirituality and Psychotherapy has brought together the nation's experts in spiritual sexuality and sexual healing for an exciting journey into divine sexuality. Through dynamic talks, gentle spiritual exercises, artistic performance and an optional third day (Sunday) of post-conference workshops we will explore how sexual commercialization, shame, guilt, wounding and abuse can be transformed into maturation and joy. The conference will include gentle movement practices, a cocktail party Friday evening, and a closing panel of presenters on Saturday afternoon.

<i>Keynote Speakers and Workshop Leaders</i>	<i>Title of Talk</i>
Jalaja Bonheim, Ph.D.	The Path of the Sexual Priestess
Drs. Rich and Antra Borofsky	Being Together: Love and Sexuality as a Spiritual Path
Andrew Harvey	Embodying the Light: Spiritualized Sexuality
Lee Holden	The Tao of Sexual Secrets
Michael Mirdad, Ph.D.	Exploring Sacred Sexuality
Gina Ogden, Ph.D.	Sex, Spirit and Shamanism: The Healing Connection
Mary Sise, ACSW	Energy Psychology and Healing from Sexual Trauma
Stuart Sovatsky, Ph.D.	Tantra, Romantic Love and Foucault's Ars Erotica

Conference fees: \$260 for Friday and Saturday - \$235 early registration. Sorry – no single day conference fee. \$125 for Sunday Post-Conference Workshops (10 am – 5 pm) - \$110 early registration. Senior, student and ASP membership discounts will be available.

If you are reading this you will receive a brochure with registration information after Labor Day. Join us for this great sacred adventure into love, sexuality and healing!

Further information: Kenneth Porter, M.D. - rokeisland@aol.com

The Association for Spirituality and Psychotherapy (ASP)

A Non-Profit (501c3) Corporation at 250 West 57th St., Suite 501, NYC 10019
www.psychospiritualtherapy.org email: **cspofnip@optonline.net**
516 829-5027

ANNOUNCES The 2010/11 Course:

Developing a Spiritually Informed Approach to Psychotherapy and Counseling

THE MONDAY NIGHT Year Long CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION PROGRAM

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.

Course Faculty	<i>ASP therapists experienced in a variety of spiritually-informed orientations</i>
Monday Nights Sept. to June 7:30 to 9:30 PM	<i>Throughout the year 6 different Modules meet Monday nights for 4 weeks each for 2 hours a night: A process/project class meets after the conclusion of each module. All Classes take place in NYC at 250 West 57th St., suite 501</i>
Tuition	<i>\$1675 -71 contact hours - 10% OFF FOR ASP MEMBERS</i>
NASWNY CEU's	<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 View the Current Year's Curriculum, Visit

<http://psychospiritualtherapy.org/Monday%20Night.pdf>

Or Call Diana Kerievsky, LCSW, Curriculum Co-Chair at 516 829-5027

The following section is dedicated to this issue's dialogue on "What are the obstacles to healing and how can they be overcome?" As usual, we invite all readers to offer their responses, which may appear in the next issue of the newsletter.

Healing Into Life: Obstacles to Healing and How to Overcome Them By Penny Cohen Penny@PennyCohen.com 914-764-1708

Years ago, before becoming a spiritually oriented psychotherapist I took a workshop on relationships. An exercise we did was to pair off with someone we didn't know and share a secret. The woman I partnered with said, "I've been ill and I have a belief that the ultimate healing is death. I think subconsciously because I have this belief I'm not taking good enough care of myself and in some way I'm even killing myself."

Automatically out of my mouth came, "Is there any way you can consider healing into life?" I didn't see her again until the close of the workshop when she came over to me to thank me for a new way of thinking about healing and a healthier life.

Over the years I thought about my own remark, "healing into life." What did I really mean by that? And what is it that we want to heal?

Many years thereafter having studied esoteric philosophy, Buddhism, Shamanism, Kabbalah and writing a book, *Personal Kabbalah: 32 Paths To Inner Peace And Life Purpose*, I've come to believe that healing into life is healing into our own life force; our higher Self; our soul. It's the part of ourselves that allows us to feel vital, whole, confident, and secure. It's the innate loving, creative part of ourselves. And furthermore, all sickness is home sickness. We want to return home to our True Self.

In Kabbalah it is taught that the highest part of our soul, the "Yechida," is out of body within oneness and source; our life force. It is the innate all knowing, all loving, all powerful, abundant part of ourselves; our Higher True Self, the essence of who we are. Along with that there's an inner self; the spark of divinity within the body seeking to open to and receive more of our True Self. When we're not connected to this greater part of ourselves we feel alone, lonely, discontent, out of balance and eventually become physically ill.

Whenever there are negative thought forms, repressed feelings and dysfunctional acting out behaviors we close off from our Higher True Self (soul). In Shamanism it is taught that a part of the soul leaves the body to avoid the pain. In psychology this is called disassociation. Furthermore, when the soul leaves the body it makes room for spiritual intrusions or uninvited guests. We feel out of sorts – or out of source – out of spirit. The void is often filled with addictive behaviors such as alcohol, drugs, shopping, gambling, etc. Or it can also be filled by internal disturbances of anger, depression, compulsions, fear, guilt and even physical manifestations of tumors, cancers and other uninvited physical ailments. For healing, our goal is to fill the void with our Higher Self, our Soul, our life force. It's allowing this life force back in.

Kabbalists formulated a blueprint of creation called the Tree Of Life. This is a map of creation delineating the forces of nature as well as our own personal relationship with these forces and the journey of our souls. From a personal perspective it shows the steps to healing the parts of ourselves which may have disconnected from our life force. It offers ways and means to reconnect through meditation and prayer. Integrating psychology into the equation gives us not only internal tools but helps us see the obstacles to living these attributes and the practical steps to healing ourselves and our lives, curing our afflictions and even going beyond to Self Realization and Self Actualization. Below is a chart with the ten Divine attributes, the obstacles to living them and the steps of repair.

Divine Attributes	Obstacles To Healing	Steps To Healing
1. Inner Peace & Hope	Poor Self Care	Choose Life and Self Care To feel peaceful and hopeful take care of yourself physically with good nutrition and exercise. To reach inside and experience your essence, meditate.
2. Self Love & Self Trust	Poor Self Esteem and Self Image	Become Self-ish. To feel good about yourself, and develop a strong inner foundation, acknowledge and believe in your Higher Self. Commit to becoming the best Self (soul) you can be and to make healthy choices.
3. Gratefulness	Negative Thoughts and Self-defeating Beliefs	Change your attitude to gratitude. To feel grateful from the inside out you need to understand cause and effect – that what goes on inside in thoughts and beliefs transmits out and comes back. It shows that we each are the cause based on our thoughts and we receive lessons on what thoughts and beliefs we need to transform for our souls to evolve. Acknowledging the lesson gives an inner sense of gratitude. It also helps to keep a gratitude journal.
4. Faith	Repressed Feelings	Let go And Let Love: When you hold onto emotions it feels like you're in control when in fact your emotions are controlling you. To experience faith from the inside out, master your emotions by identifying and releasing them, opening to love, asking for the highest and best good, and letting the universe take care of the rest.
5. Beauty and Truth	We see things not as they are but we as are	God is in the details: When we observe detailed facts rather than seeing things through perceptions, assumptions, beliefs or expectations we get to the essence and beauty of what is.
6. Justice and Empowerment	Giving Into Harmful Inclinations: Judgments, criticisms, superiority.	Self-Discipline: Judge not others, but yourself. What you judge in others is something you're judging in yourself. Justice emerges when you uncover the unresolved issues within yourself and experience acceptance. Empowerment emerges with the willingness to say what you mean without being mean which comes from disciplined "right" speech.
7. Grace	Being Unkind And Unmerciful	Heartfelt Forgiveness, Unconditional love and Loving Kindness. Grace comes with forgiveness. Forgiveness is forgiving love. When you forgive from the heart, not just the head, there's a feeling of unconditional love and spontaneous actions of loving-kindness.
8. Vision/Understanding (understanding your role in the universe)	Wandering Aimlessly: Having no vision, direction or focus.	Follow your bliss. Vision comes when you determine what you love to do and start doing it. If you don't know what that is ponder what you think people need that you can offer, learn it for yourself and offer it.
9. Wisdom	Self-sabotage: Feeling unworthy of your own greatness.	Feel entitled to have it all. For wisdom to emerge allow yourself to receive the goodness in the universe. Your role is to reach your highest potential and live life to the fullest. Since you and everyone else are in the image of the divine, then like divinity, you have the ability to live your highest potential and reap the rewards of abundance.
10. Oneness and Will (Presence)	Regretting The Past And Worrying About The Future.	Be humble, live in the present and dare to dream. Being humble comes with surrendering your compulsions to the Divine. Living in the present means accepting what is and what you have right now and being open to excellence – your own excellence. When you live in the present you experience the presence of the Divine and oneness. When you set an intention, you co-create with the divine and anything is possible. Dare to dream and set the intention to manifest it with love.

Obstacles to Healing **By Bruce Kerievsky**

The principal reason that healing appears and is experienced as being difficult to realize is that we are unaware of the source of our maladies and the values that must be learned and embraced for us to attain a good, fulfilled life. We need to gain an understanding of both the *meaning* of our afflictions and of the alternative *truth* we need to know to be healed.

Towards those ends, the therapeutic teaching known as Metapsychiatry has illuminated the meaning (i.e. the mental equivalent) of various disturbed states of consciousness, the words typically used to describe them, as well as educating us about those spiritual values that constitute harmonious living, which can relieve and redeem us. In other words, the problematic states of consciousness described below can be overcome when we understand how they arise and are willing to confront them.

Anger

This is the most commonly occurring affliction. It is the consequence of our frustration at not getting something we want. It is also referred to as “should thinking.” Both “want” and “should” indicate that we perceive our lives as imperfect, as lacking some essential feature that we require for happiness. Very often we want things from others that they are unwilling to provide. In addition to its being emotionally distressing, anger often leads to physical pain in the body, like headaches, or it can result in accidents or physical injuries.

The benefit of knowing that anger derives from wanting is that we can relinquish it. As anyone with any unhealthy habit knows, it is nearly impossible to give up something to which we are attached. But, if we have suffered enough from what we want, we can replace it with another, more wholesome value. The healing remedy for anger is gratitude for the good in our lives. At the same time we can consciously allow others the freedom to be that we cherish for ourselves, and thereby bless them. Being able to remind ourselves when anger arises that it indicates that we want something, that we need not continue to hold on to that desire, and that choosing to appreciate our lives, health, and

consciousness will liberate us from the pain of angry thoughts, is a most helpful lesson that can eliminate suffering from this all-too-human tendency.

Fear

Fearful thoughts are almost as common as angry ones. Ironically, fear is the flip side of anger. It represents thoughts about what we don't want to happen or what shouldn't be. Fear is future-oriented, a concern for ourselves, that something bad might happen to disrupt our present circumstances.

Once again, the value of knowing what fear is is that we can remind ourselves that we are projecting. As with anger, when we are fearful we are both assuming that we know what is best for us and others, and that we are able to control other people and events when the plain fact is that we have little or no control over them, and we do not know what is best for ourselves or for others. The awareness of our powerlessness frees us from our troubled concerns and allows us to rely instead on the benevolent forces that have sustained our life, health and consciousness.

Depression

Contrary to current physical and psychological explorations of the mysteries of depression, it turns out to be nothing more than a sense of hopelessness about ever being able to get what we want. By making what we want into an idol that we worship (with our attention), we can readily feel overwhelmed and miserable, thereby inviting those around us to feel sorry for us. Yet it requires great stubbornness to sustain attachment to our wants, even as it becomes clear that we are free to abandon them as troublesome and be lifted out of the gloom of depression.

Difficulty

When we describe something as being difficult, it reveals that we really have a conflict of interest regarding it. This applies to addictions of all sorts as well as simple, undesirable habits. For example, if we find dieting or stopping smoking to be hard, it reveals that we both wish to become healthy by changing our habits and that we still want to experience the feelings that we get from an unhealthy eating regime or from smoking. This

ambivalence is clarified tersely as “trying is lying,” since if we have a pure interest in something, then working at it becomes a labor of love, rather than a burden characterized as difficult.

Fatigue

Feeling tired and lacking in energy is a symptom that arises when we are confronted with tasks that we think of as drudgery. Rather than seeking physical causes for our listlessness, we can consider whether we find our prospects appealing and whether they evoke enthusiasm in us. Invariably we will discover that tiredness and exhaustion are simply consequences of being faced with responsibilities that we think of being unpleasant and unfulfilling. We need to contemplate the usefulness of such activities rather than focus on how they make us feel.

Loneliness

Feeling lonely comes when we have no interest in anything but ourselves. When we desire to be close to another individual who will confirm our being and our reality, and that is not happening, then we feel lonely. The healing is to either recognize that we are alive and connected to the source of life, or to simply become interested in something. Whatever we are interested in will command our attention and dispel any sense of loneliness.

Boredom

Boredom is a desire for excitement. It is similar to loneliness in that it comes from the dread of non-being. Instead of appreciating a sense of peacefulness, an awareness that all is well, we seek exciting experiences like watching stimulating or violent entertainments because they provide us with feelings of being alive, of feeling things deeply. Here again, pondering the relative values of peace vs. excitement can help one to see which is more beneficial to a wholesome life-style. [It has been observed that much of the world's troubles derive from the desire for excitement rather than the quest for peace].

In conclusion, an understanding of the provenance of the various troubled states of consciousness enables an individual to more directly and effectively address his or her discomfort and can facilitate transformation and healing.

Yet we certainly find that for most of us many problems persist, even after we have been informed of the errors of our ways. This resistance

to healing shows that we remain hesitant to alter our orientation in life (our “mode of being-in-the-world”) because we do not fully realize how inexorably it is harming us. The Bible says, “Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light.” (John 3:19)

To reform our outlook on life requires that we genuinely regret the mistaken values we inadvertently adopted, and that we become cognizant of an appealing spiritual alternative. “Blessed are the poor in spirit (those consciously suffering from dysfunctional values, and seeking a better path), for their's is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:3)

Rigid Disbelief: An Obstacle to Healing

Michael Grosso, Ph.D

Grosso.michael@gmail.com

www.michaelgrosso.net

The psychologist, William McDougall, recounts the case of a client who came to him after a year of struggling with his affliction. A young man got his left hand violently caught in a hay-rake, and emerged from the accident with his left forearm reduced to a state of flaccid paralysis and anesthesia. Several doctors, including one that left scars from a failed electrical treatment, treated him without success; another offer was to simplify matters by amputating the apparently useless limb. According to McDougall, the young man was absolutely convinced he could not be healed. After all, no one had helped him so far; he must be a hopeless case. The man needed to be disabused of the false belief he had embraced. “It was only through a course of education, persuasion, and suggestion (waking and hypnotic) and encouragement continued over some weeks that the cure was effected. The essential step was to shake and undermine his fixed belief in the permanent nature of the paralysis.”¹ McDougall's 1926 approach, by the way, sounds like spiritual, cognitive, or philosophical therapy: Belief is the material that has to be worked on, and the methods all rely on using the higher mental faculties such as reason, patience, conversation, encouragement, and so forth.

McDougall's case is rich in symbolism, and may be generalized: we have our limits as to belief in what is possible. Unfortunately, it is easy for us to

¹ *Outline of Abnormal Psychology*, pp. 242-243. (1926)

become “paralyzed” by our beliefs, and one of the great obstacles to healing, to coming into the fullness of our lives, is the rigid belief that we *can’t* heal, grow, evolve, etc. In the absence of the belief that something is possible, in most cases it just won’t happen. Whereas, the mere belief that healing is possible can set the process of healing into motion.

Three areas of research point to the positive power of our beliefs. In Morton Kelsey’s study of healing in the gospel narratives (for one historical example), Jesus typically caps a healing with the saying, “your *pistis* (trust, faith) has made you whole.” The trust, confidence, hope, energy, willingness, etc., all have to come from inside you. Jesus characteristically didn’t say, *I* healed you -- but that the initiative has to come from within us. In the gospel narratives, the healing *pistis* (trust or belief) applies to both physical and mental problems.

In modern, scientifically medical times, the healing power of belief is affirmed under the guise of “placebo effect.” The robustly attested placebo effect demonstrates the sometimes super-ordinary power of belief. The *mere belief* that a substance, person, or procedure has healing power will lend that substance, person or procedure therapeutic power. In an experiment conducted at Harvard, patients were given ipecac and told it would rid them of their nausea; it did. They did not know that the chemical composition of ipecac normally *induces* nausea. It appears that a belief suppressed the chemical effect of a substance and created (against chemistry) the desired healing effect. This power of belief to trump physical reality speaks in general to the power of mind to reshape nature itself. The next example takes this point a step further.

Another body of experimental data encourages us to appreciate the power of beliefs, attitudes, and expectations. Psychologist Gertrude Schmeidler coined the expression “sheep-goat” effect to describe a trend: Belief in one’s ability to succeed in an ESP test tends to create measurable success; disbelief creates deviation from chance in the *opposite* direction. Belief may be a factor that facilitates a spectrum of heightened effects, and explains why strong belief is sometimes a powerful factor in healing. In light of this, strong disbelievers

might well be at odds with their own self-healing capacities.²

Belief that one has resources to heal is itself healing. But people waver in what they believe about their healing resources. For some, a deep-rooted sense of worthlessness may destroy their confident hopes that a healthy renovation is possible. In our presently constituted political and economic world, we should remind ourselves that some people and institutions stand to profit by destroying confidence and positive beliefs about healing.

There is a time of day in American TV I call the hospital hour (it goes on for more than an hour!), mostly around dinnertime and the evening news. During the hospital hour the nation is bombarded with suggestions that one may be sick. We are told repeatedly, day in and day out, using the same formula to “see your doctor!” We’re deluged by warnings, innuendos, and downright alarmist threats that we are at risk for any number of diseases. A favorite ad of the hospital hour shows a gurney following a man, suggesting a heart attack is imminent if he fails to “see his doctor” about some advertised med. But not to worry; there is good news after all: The pharmaceutical industry is here *to save you*. The purpose of the hospital hour, it seems to me, is to undermine American well-being, for it does nothing but raise doubts about your self, your health, your prospects for a good life; the very image of your self, it is suggested, is worthless, helpless, and damned to suffer from disease. Getting sucked uncritically into the hospital hour puts you at risk. The victim is manipulated into a funk of weakened self-belief; everything is designed to induce abject dependence on the pharmaceutical industry. Is this the new slavery being slyly thrust upon us?

We need to keep a critical eye on our key beliefs because the great vampire of profit-obsessed global capitalism *needs* to keep us as weak as possible so it can flourish. We *must* have sick people to feed the blood-sucking pharmaceutical Mammon. One would like to be able to say with Walt Whitman: “Afoot and lighthearted, I take to the open road -- healthy, free, the long brown road before me.” But the truth is that there are vested

² For the power of our beliefs and attitudes on physiology, ours and other people’s, see Emily Kelly’s chapter in *Irreducible Mind* (2007) on psychophysiological influence.

interests that will not tolerate Whitman's confident, yea-saying stance before the world. What are needed are weaklings, whiners and hypochondriacs rushing off to their doctors and pharmacists.

Our inner attitudes are vulnerable to all sorts of destructive influences. Big Pharma daily manipulates and exaggerates our fears, but the masters of fear induction are governments, politicians, tyrants, etc. Fear is a valid emotion we inherit from our natural history, but the use of it as a weapon for controlling people's beliefs in the interests of political aims should be evident to anyone who has lived through recent American history. (Let us recall how the Iraq war was justified by evoking fear of nuclear attack from a nation that had no nuclear weapons.) Fear manufactured to achieve gain, political or financial, erodes belief in our healing capacities and undermines our healthiest instincts.

I have mentioned two external sources that may be undermining confidence in our healing capacities: ruthless capitalistic advertising and the political induction of mass fear. One could argue that the target is none other than the full ensemble of one's belief-system. Let me finish with some remarks on the most dangerous form of enemy to the vitality of our healing beliefs: the constantly inquisitive questions of the human spirit. From Socrates to Descartes and Galileo and on to modernism and postmodernism we see an intellectual history that is constantly overturning landmarks, archetypes, and traditions. In a way the glory of the human spirit, I do not believe this is consistent with stable health-promoting belief-systems for the average human soul. Darwin's own health seems to have suffered from the stress of discovering ideas that overthrew traditional Christianity. The growth of modern consciousness with its constant search for new and better foundations provides a poor atmosphere for maintaining the roots of a healing vision of life.

I return to the opening image of the young man absolutely convinced his arm was paralyzed; fortunately for him, it was possible to change his belief, and McDougall proved it by taking a little time to persuade and encourage him to do so. The odd challenge we face today is not only the danger of rigid beliefs about our lacks but also the danger of not being able to hold any firm beliefs at all, even when they serve the basic needs of our lives. Rigidly held beliefs can be a danger to one's health,

but so can the inability to cherish any firm beliefs that bear fruit for the art of living.

Guilty? Me? By Sam Menahem Ph.D.

There are three emotions that may block healing. These three basic emotions are fear, anger and guilt. I have chosen, guilt, the most hidden emotion of the big three as my starting point for this article. Our unconscious acceptance of guilt in early childhood leads to much unnecessary suffering, sometimes called, "the human condition." A young child feels like he or she is the center of the world. If anything happens in early childhood-it is our fault. This normal narcissism of early childhood is part of the developmental process we all go through. Theoretically, if everyone around us in childhood were happy and cheerful all the time-we would also be very happy. Unfortunately, few people are raised in such ideal families. Thus, the normal narcissism of early childhood leads us to hang on to the idea that we are responsible for everything that happens around us.

As the self centeredness of early childhood fades, the guilt gets automatically repressed into the unconscious mind. The catch is that it is still there, creating pain, suffering and feelings of unworthiness. Some people accept this guilt and unworthiness. They develop an unconscious belief in guilt which is then manifested in negative events, feelings of inadequacy and a need to be punished. Other people deny any guilt or responsibility for negative events or feelings. Instead, they get angry at others (the guilty ones) and blame them for anything that goes wrong. If there is nobody in the vicinity to blame, there is always the government, big business, life itself or even God to blame for anything that goes wrong. The "guilties" need to be punished. The "angries" are more than willing to yell at them. This is called marriage. The third emotion (of the big three) is fear. The "guilties" fear that they will never get what they want. All they will get is more punishment. The "angries" fear retribution for their wrath. So everyone has fear too. Thus, the seemingly endless suffering continues. Guilt leads to anger which leads to fear. The circle continues, suffering continues and nobody realizes that there is a way out.

The way out is awareness. As Sigmund Freud recommended, make the unconscious, conscious.

from "The !Spontaneous! Painting Diary"

by Susan Bello Ph.D, ATR, Director of
The Organization for the Arts & Whole Brain
Learning

However, just making it conscious does not necessarily release the toxic emotions. The twelve step traditions go a step further. They recommend letting go and turning the emotions over to a higher power. In other words, "let go, let God!" In other words, it is Spirit or God that enables us to let go of control. But, according to the founder of Existential Metapsychiatry, Dr. Thomas Hora, there is a third step—"accept healing." Dr. Hora said, "God helps those who let him." God is the Higher power, pure energy-pure love-the ground of being, our source. Accepting healing means letting go of the perfect control we all want from our conscious, ego level of being. The ego is a belief system. It is the result a synthesis of all of our experiences. This belief system (ego) is glued together by the guilt, anger and fear. The ego part of us believes it is all of us. It does not want to change, despite the suffering. The ego's answer to suffering is more control, through more will power. However, if we become willing to let go of the toxic emotions, Spirit takes over, allowing the egoic negative beliefs to change.

We can identify instead, with positive beliefs, spiritual beliefs. Dr. Hora recommends peace, assurance, gratitude and love. This is the true healing! Releasing the guilt, anger and fear is the emotional healing (letting go). Turning to spirit instead of the ego (let go, let God) and allowing the beliefs to become spiritual is the real healing. I have purposely placed bodily healing last. It is usually placed first. That is because we have everything backwards. The body (the densest layer of our being) may be healed as part of the spiritual-psychological process but the culprit in all bodily suffering is stress (actually distress). The emotional distress creates stress hormones, which then destroy cells and organs. To recap, the distress comes from listening to the ego while ignoring or denying spirit. The release of the toxic emotions opens us up to Spirit instead of ego (allow healing). As Spirit is allowed to be in charge, healing on all levels, including the mind and body, can take place. The emotional, cognitive and spiritual healings described in this article lead to relaxation and cellular, organic and bodily healing. So the blockages to healing are the stressful circle of guilt, anger and fear. The healing requires that we "Let go, let God" and accept healing.

Generative thoughts that open us to trusting ourselves and the divine consciousness within and without align us with a living healing energy. *What then are the obstacles to healing and how can they be overcome?* According to Peter Senge developing a state of Presence includes letting go of Core Limiting Beliefs, deep listening, and awareness of the present moment. These three aspects of Presence lead to a state of "letting come."

When I apply for a grant, I cultivate this state of *letting come*. I don't identify with the thoughts that take me into fear or worry: "I won't get the grant, my work isn't good enough." I choose to "let go" of old aspects of my identity and stay with the living energy of the desire I wish to embody. To me *letting come* means focusing on my connection to a higher power. While riding on the bus, I sometimes close my eyes, breathe and feel my body relaxing, deepening to receive and *let come* this connection to God, or Spirit. I establish my connection to God, and ask to be used as a vehicle for serving the evolution of human life.

Sometimes I do not know how to listen deeply, and I keep insisting that my desire to serve takes on a certain form. When I insist, my body tenses, and the more I insist, the tenser I become when my expectations are not met. Sometimes I have insisted for years! But when I can "cut the braces from my legs," and *let come*, I feel in harmony, the muscles and internal organs in my body relax. I hold my wish, then give it up to God, and stay in silent connection. We are all channels for divine consciousness.

Why aren't we teaching people how to develop this ability, to surrender the rational mind. In my work facilitating workshops in the creative arts through The Spontaneous Painting Process, I have seen people who never painted before let their symbolic images emerge, and unleash a potential living in the unconscious. They may have no idea what their symbols mean, but the energy has been unleashed, and continues to develop in painting and after painting. I have no doubt that the

unconscious is directing the conscious mind in many ways, and spontaneous painting is one vehicle for *letting come*, synchronizing us to our wisdom within and to a higher order. This quality of allowing the unconscious to lead the way and of surrendering the rational mind is an aspect of nonlinear intelligence we all can develop.

I have learned from my spiritual teachers to allow myself to do what most matters to me. I always want to help, and sometimes I forget to help myself. I can become a conduit for the divine in myself to manifest by staying aligned with what brings me deep pleasure. As therapists, we can help people align with their pleasure principle, instead of exploring "the problem or pathology." What turns you on? the Beatles asked. Connect with that. Cut the shackles of guilt, and enter the flow of life, the living energy that I experience as unconditional love from God. If we resonated with this level of consciousness, instead of living in fear, worry, and guilt, we would celebrate life. I remember the words that my meditation teacher Goyenka repeatedly said, "Be happy."

**New York's Leading
Holistic Learning Center**

Located in Manhattan's Murray Hill Area

SHORT TERM RENTALS

Meetings
Workshops
Trainings
Lectures
Group Therapy Circles
Urban Retreats

**NEW YORK
OPEN
CENTER**

Contact: Maria Rodriguez
212-219-2527x135
mrodriguez@opencenter.org

22 E 30th Street NYC 10016
www.opencenter.org

Seeking The Truth About Love
By Rory Pinto, Spiritual Healer and Teacher
Rorstar@aol.com 212-874-4384

I'm wondering about Love... or more precisely that romantic kind that we are so fond of....Love with "The Attraction"(as the Irish call our sexuality) built into it. Well fire up my engines! Crazy love!! Hoo Ha!!! (Now simmer down, boy....)

Have you ever felt that way? Have you ever been out of your mind? Consumed? Obsessed?? Temporarily insane? Down in the pits, then on top of the world in a flash? Wooer or woeeee: Yippee...!!! I certainly have ridden that roller-coaster, and occupied that often hormonally-driven-super-charged state of consciousness.

The cartoons of my youth always showed Cupid's arrow-pierced young lovers transported to a cloud (presumably #9), with violins playing, little hearts floating out into space, long eyelashes fluttering, looking goo-goo eyed at each other while little birdies chirped away. And in the wings, the stork-baby-transport-service was always waiting....

I suppose this image captures the reality of the first stage of romantic love. It is like going into a trance - your faculty of discernment and the ability to stay grounded are temporarily suspended, and you are allowed to indulge in a very pleasant dream without having to take too much responsibility, or even having to wake up.

And when you are smitten, it comes completely by surprise. "I just don't know what came over me. I was swept away. Now I cannot live without you". It can happen at any age. (Even in a nursing home it doesn't take much to trigger these primal emotions, much to the delight of the residents and the occasional consternation of the staff!)

There can be a certain truth in the saying that "love is blind, but marriage opens your eyes". Even so, who hasn't lusted after this dream at one time or another, maybe even time and time again? It seemed to be another step forward in exploring our world, coming to terms with it, finally making peace, and thriving. But whenever we got stuck in this beginning phase of romantic relationship or lived for it alone, we eventually became frustrated, angry, numb or jaded.

Romantic love (or "Eros") can affect more than our

relationships with our sweeties. It is present whenever getting that new pair of shoes or new large screen TV seems just as exciting. In our culture, the freshness, newness, and excitement of this Eros is used to sell many, many things. It is an adventure into the unknown! If you use our product you will be happy, glamorous, attractive and alluring.... (even laundry detergent can take you over the rainbow!).

There may a degree of buyer's remorse when the bill arrives, but for that one brief shining moment...that one brief shining moment.... Oh, if only this fusion of heart and loins could last (even if the head went out the window!) Oh, if only great sex could guarantee great relationships! Oh, if only we could look at all the beautiful acquisitions in our homes and closets and stay happy, long after the thrill of shopping has gone! Oh, if only our fame and achievements could bring us peace....If only....

For one brief shining moment – isn't that what we have been looking for, moment after moment? Hour after hour? Day after day? One brief shining moment, when all is right with the world.... Romantic love can bring a feeling of tremendous expansion and liberation from our fetters, however temporary that experience may be. It may even seem like a harbinger of spiritual experience, not just in the "Oh My God!!!" exclaimed in the peak of sexual passion, but in the dissolution of boundaries and feeling of transcendence.

In the contracted state of our "morning-afters", we may talk ourselves into believing that the rise was worth the fall, and then pick ourselves up and start the hunt for what appears to be yet another opportunity to go beyond our limitations, heal our loneliness, find meaning through the immersion with another, or gratification in the acquisition of more toys, baubles, power, and experiences. Like many a gambler, we fervently convince ourselves that just this time, we will hit the jackpot, (get the boy or girl), and walk away with all the winnings. (Bring up the music, and roll the credits!)

Too bad this kind of satisfaction never really lasts. Something's missing. This takes a long time to sink in, and even then hope never seems to fade. (It seems far easier to settle for the quick fix of the "next best thing" than to do the work of truly liberating ourselves from our conditioning, of letting go of the great attachment we have to our differences, of opening to unconditional love).

Constantly selling our birthright for Esau's pot of porridge, we yearn for the satisfaction of the next seemingly urgent need, for the partial relief of a discomfort that just won't go away.

The problems with romantic love really lie in our expectations of it. We ask it to bear the heavy burden of fixing our unresolved issues, something for which it was never really well suited. Can our partners really lift us up? Make us happy? Complete us? Make us whole? Or are we constantly putting the key to our happiness in someone else's pocket? We want the excitement of the new and unknown to wake us out of our sleep and save us from our boredom. Our new love has to at heal our wounds at last. However ungrounded, we want someone to share our dream.

Expectations are at the heart of the differences that divide many couples. (Most people feel great disappointment at one time or another). When their romantic relationships cannot do all these things and fall short, they blame their pain on their mates" attitude and behavior, demanding that their partners change without truly examining their own thoughts, beliefs, conclusions, and attitudes about the relationship. It seems far easier to stew in terminal criticism and resentment or go off in search of another mate).

If you make your lover into a god, you eventually discover that he or she has feet of clay. But this disillusionment is a necessary part of our awakening, and puts us on a more balanced footing when we do not resist or blame, when we instead use it as a springboard to examine what is Real. Sooner or later our bubbles, no matter how pleasant, have to burst. Then what? The real work of relationship begins.

This is where caring, kindness, and being in touch with each others' needs becomes important, where we become aware of the delicacy of intimacy and the vulnerability that comes with it. There are so many opportunities to wound one another in our intimate relationships, as much through words unspoken as through words expressed, through our tone of voice, glance, facial expression, how we carry our body, how we exchange energy, the timing and quality of our actions. All this springs from the state of consciousness we hold. Even with the best of intentions our relationships can still create heartache and become all tangled up. Our communication and intentions become

misunderstood, and we use our partners' weaknesses and limitations to hurt them. In an effort to impose our will and get what we want, we manipulate, shame, provoke guilt, and try to dominate each other.

Where does this all end? Morals and integrity arise from true love more than from passion, (which is more about getting than giving). Rules of conduct may be imposed from the outside, but unless they come from inside, we will always be looking for a way around them. The heart must be our guide. Even the aftermath of our transgressions can still be an opportunity to grow - to learn humility, admit our mistakes, ask forgiveness and make amends. Like rocks in a tumbler, we polish each other by our choice and continued willingness to engage in intimate relationship. The inevitable conflicts that arise in rubbing against each other (sometimes the wrong way!), impel us to become more skillful in our communication and aware of our partners' feelings, beliefs, intentions and needs, as well as our own.

There is great joy in adventuring into the unknown, a joy in making a deep connection with another. Joy arises in revealing ourselves, sharing and giving freely to our lover, and supporting each other in the often challenging task of living, growing, and rearing children when we have been so blessed. How often we come out of the crucible of our romantic relationships humbled and purified, yet also wiser. Our hearts have expanded greatly, and we are stronger too as the result of this experience, with new gifts to share.

As Romantic Love evolves, our union can be a bridge to the experience of Oneness with the substance of all forms. Our intimate relationships become a training, both tender and rigorous, a kind of ongoing meditation on the process of being together and sharing our lives. It tunes us as we stay tuned in - to ourselves, our mates, and the new Unity that is discovered in the union of hearts, minds, bodies and souls. It takes a clear intention and a strong commitment to make intimate relationship work, and a willingness to understand points of view other than our own. Over and over, we have to give up "being right". Living as a couple challenges us to accept our differences and focus on what unites us rather than on what divides us, to learn to let go of the attachment to the outcome of our desires and flow with whatever presents itself.

Attunement, atonement and at-one-ment all spring from the same root.

How truly wonderful would it be if romantic love were a prelude to experiencing the Essence that we all share first hand! The Infinite Presence of Unconditional Love is always here, waiting for us to become both its inlet and outlet.

Let us realize that ultimately, we are one, Spiritual Beings "begotten, not made, of one substance with the Father", like branches on the same tree. Every obstacle on our path points to this impending realization. We can only share with our mates what we already have. As we let go of our limited, human sense of self, we can discover the Infinity of that Presence that is within.

Let us embrace each other amid the thorny reminders of our shortcomings, and the rosy beauty of true, limitless love.

HAVE COURSE: WILL TRAVEL
*Spiritual Psychology and Spiritual
Psychotherapy*
Syllabus, Article, Resume Upon Request
Jon Snodgrass, Ph.D.
jsnodgrass@calstatela.edu
(323) 343-2215

**The Power of Love and Spirituality in
Psychotherapy
By Susan Cohen**

Love is the most powerful force in the Universe; it is also a healing force. I know, because it changed my life after a forty-five year search for a solution to my basic problem. My former psychotherapist, Dr. Don Mielin, taught me the power of love and how to give it to myself. This changed my life.

My purpose in sharing my story is to show therapists and patients how essential love is in a therapeutic relationship. I believe this despite the fact that love in psychotherapy is often considered unethical. This terribly restricted view has damaged the full potential of therapy. My experience has shown me that psychotherapy without warm acceptance and respect often fails.

According to Erich Fromm, love involves knowledge, respect, caring, and the ability to respond. Don knew me, respected me, cared about my emotional health and growth, and was able to respond to me. All the requirements of a

good parent were evident in his reaction to me. In return, I loved him as a daughter loves a caring father. Don took the place of the secure attachment I lacked when I was growing up.

We are not all born to parents who know how to love us. Psychotherapy offers an opportunity to receive the loving attachment some of us have missed as children. However; when I say a therapist should love, I am referring to that which is appropriate within the context of treatment. This should be openly discussed so it is clear to both the professional and the patient. A client/patient has the same right to be warmly accepted within therapy as does a child within his/her family.

Because I had lacked a secure attachment as a child, I had “given myself up” around the age of ten. I disowned my natural curiosity, spontaneous enthusiasms, my feelings, and any other intrinsic qualities that made me who I was. Instead, I began looking for clues as to who I should be! My parents had not seemed happy with the real me. I became quiet and withdrawn as I searched outside of myself for signposts of how I should feel and act.

By age nineteen, my parents had died, and I was facing the world more alone than ever. This was very intense as by then I had such a weak sense of self. I started seeing a psychotherapist, never dreaming that I would be in therapy all my adult life. However different psychotherapy might have been in the fifties, some things remain the same. For example, how do you help a person find the self she has disowned and lost? Nobody ever seemed to have a good answer.

By seeing professionals (six in all), I was able to feel safer than I would have by just living with my own insecure self. But, I never found the whole ME! I certainly did not feel true respect for myself or for anyone else. Being alone was frightening. So, I filled my days as best I could with people and activities.

Presenting “ME” to therapists was part of the problem. I presented the self I had been using since age 10. This was the self that people seemed to want, i.e. a polite, pleasant, and certainly an agreeable person with no strong opinions or preferences. An amorphous “Miss Anybody.”

Sometimes, I alluded to the lost soul inside of me. The therapists did not pursue it. It was, after all, in the distant past. So, I gave all the power to the “professionals”. Hadn’t I been taught to erase myself? Unfortunately, during several decades of “therapy,” no basic changes took place inside of me. I performed well on the outside, but my inner self remained the same. I did not feel truly cared about by these therapists, and I certainly did not consider myself lovable! Because I continued to feel such low self esteem, I was unable to establish strong healthy ties with others.

Finally, at the advanced age of sixty-four, I found Don. What made him different was he could see through my adult façade. He saw the lost and frightened child inside of me, and he loved her! He encouraged me to retrieve and to talk to the “young Susans” living inside of me.

Within a couple of years, I developed a stronger sense of myself. I owned more of my “lost parts”.

At various meetings, I had usually been quiet or predictable. Because I had been afraid of revealing any authentic thoughts, I was easily discounted. Gradually, as I was able to share my truer self, I found others often treated me differently: listening, appreciating my input, and sharing more of themselves. My relationships became more meaningful, and I felt less alone.

Sadly, Don is gone now. I feel the pain of this loss terribly. However; his voice and his lessons continue to live inside of me. The statements in bold print below are some of the healing messages he gave me over a period of four years. It is these statements as well as others that I repeat to myself (and to my “younger selves”) regularly.

It’s important to emphasize that Don made these comments and others like them during our semi-weekly sessions. These statements were not tossed at me as sessions were ending. They were included as a vital part of the therapy! Also, the remarks were repeated as needed over the course of four years.

- 1) **Keep a positive forecast.** This was my first lesson. I used to fear the future and saw only bad things coming my way. This caused unnecessary tension and made it harder for me to enjoy my life.
- 2) **Don’t compare.** I used to compare myself to others and often came up short. By shutting down

this message, I made room to enjoy my uniqueness and to appreciate others.

3) **You count. Don't leave yourself out.** I had become withdrawn. Don continually encouraged me to step up and use my voice to bring out my thoughts. The fact that he clearly valued me as a person helped me do this. At last, I was starting from a position of security. Robert Karen in his book Becoming Attached makes it clear that those who have had insecure attachments spend all their energy looking for a safe harbor. They rarely feel free in their early years as well as later, to explore their world; thus their ability to grow and to mature is stunted.

4) **You are beautiful, capable, and loveable.** Who would not benefit from hearing this?

5) **I have faith in you.** I had longed to hear that all my life.

6) **I want you to be all you can be.** I would like all parents and therapists to say this to their children/clients.

7) **Tell little Susan you love her and will never leave her again.** Since I had disowned myself at a young age, it was important to have daily dialogues with my frightened "younger self".

8) **Tell yourself you want good things.** I needed to make a commitment to myself to pursue worthwhile people and experiences. I also needed to begin listening carefully to my own needs, not to just fill my time with busy work.

9) **Keep an open heart. Stay with your love.** This one can create a sense of peace. Don mentioned this one the most. My guess is it was his favorite.

10) **I'm already proud of you.** This was said to me over the phone after I had told Don that I wanted to make him proud of me. I was very touched by his response.

11) **You're very important to me. I'm glad you're in my life.** How about these two for building self esteem and a sense of security?

By repeating these messages frequently, I have reprogrammed my thinking. Some parents give these kinds of messages (in word, deed, or both) to their children naturally. They usually grow up to be secure confident adults. The rest of us have to struggle to find inner peace.

One of many books Don recommended to me is called Love at Goon Park: Harry Harlow and the Science of Affection. The author is Deborah Blum. This book describes research done with monkeys that helped to prove that love is a

physical/spiritual necessity for the developing human being. If it is missing during a child's development, the consequences are quite disabling.

As part of Don's therapy, he often recommended literature that was of a spiritual nature. We would read and talk about a number of books. The readings helped, because they explored the universal issues of love and forgiveness. Here's a list of several of the books both Don and I especially liked:

A Gift of Peace by Frances E. Vaughn and Roger K. Walsh

A New Earth by Eckhardt Tolle

Forgive and Forget by Lewis Smedes

How to Enjoy Your Life in Spite of it All by Ken Keyes

The Art of Loving by Erich Fromm

The Art of Possibility by Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander

The Bridge to Reality by Paul Ferrini

The Four Agreements by Don Miguel Ruiz

The Mastery of Love by D.M. Ruiz

The Path to Love by Deepak Chopra

The Road Less Traveled by Scott Peck

Mother Theresa observed that there's more hunger for love and appreciation in the world than for bread. I hope more therapists will step forward and do their best to love their patients.

Unless a person has felt sufficiently esteemed from an outside source, it is often difficult, if not impossible, to generate the feeling on one's own.

Don helped me to heal and to grow by introducing me to a different world. I believe his work has much to teach others, and I'd like it to be shared. My message to therapists is this: Do not be afraid to love your patients as they need it. Make sure they can discover that they are lovable! You can do this without being inappropriate or immoral. If you cannot provide this for a patient, and you know that's what he/she needs, I believe it is your duty to suggest that due to your own hang-ups, you'd like him/her to see someone else. Please be honest about this. It is so critical to healing!

Due to the wishes of the widow of my former therapist, I have not used his real name. Dr. Don Mielin is a pseudonym.

Susan Cohen, 13248 W. Circle Drive Parkway
Crestwood, IL 60445

Book Review:
Heart Path Practitioner: A Practitioner's Guide
by Cinthia McFeature Ph.D.
and Bill McFeature Ph.D.
Review by Sam Menahem Ph.D.

As I was reviewing some notes for this review, there was a knock on my office door. It was my four o'clock patient-an hour early by "mistake." I invited her in early and she went deeper into her very troubled story. She had been molested by her brother as a child. Her father had beaten her. Her mother was a drug addict. She was haunted by the family's negative predictions for her, which had come true! The details rolled out. She had become an alcoholic as they said. She had a daughter with a rare disease they had mentioned, etc. etc. I listened compassionately, praying for her healing. She then reported an easing of her troubling memories since our last session. The more she told me her unique story, the better she felt. Despite 29 years of sobriety and membership in Alcoholics Anonymous, she had to tell her story and hear it reflected back to her in order to heal. Her early appearance was synchronicity at its finest.

This healing is exactly what is described in the beautiful book by Christian psychotherapists Cinthia and Bill McFeature . They begin with a description of the physical heart-a powerful pump with memory. However, as they quickly point out, the heart is much more than just a pump. It is the center of each human being. It is the key to healing. In order for healing to be effective and complete, there must be healing on all levels: physical, emotional and spiritual. The heart is the center for all three levels. Thus they run the gamut of healing advice. In early chapters they make many recommendations for physical healing; from diet and exercise to specific foods that are good for the heart. However, there is more reason to follow these recommendations than just "living a few more years." The point of living longer is to develop emotional and most importantly spiritual healing. The heart is the center for all three types of healing. The balance of the book explains and gives examples of their technique for healing the heart on all levels. They call it the "Life narrative into the heart of the divine." In other words, they explain how the practitioner can listen to each unique life story with an open heart, giving feedback along the way. The patient, feeling understood, is then healed emotionally. The realizing of toxic shame, guilt

anger and fear connected to their story opens the way to true healing which is spiritual and of God. What a beautiful summary of how spiritual psychotherapy works. This book is highly recommended for all psychotherapists who wish to penetrate to the heart of healing, as well as to laymen who want to heal themselves.

An Excerpt from the Chapter Entitled
"The Body" in Beyond the Dream
(pages 228-9)
by Thomas Hora, M.D.

It is not possible to emphasize enough the importance of mental discipline. If we realize that nothing comes into experience uninvited, we clearly see how vitally important it is to discipline our thoughts and thereby gain dominion over what will be admitted into consciousness and what will not be permitted to take root in consciousness. Everything depends on the quality of consciousness. God gave us the power to be stewards of our consciousness.

Sometimes it seems like a very hard struggle to give up pleasurable fantasies which provide, for instance, erotic sensations in various parts of the body. Interestingly enough, in most harmful thinking the issue is mostly physical sensation. No matter what kind of imaginings we are partial to, in the final analysis, what we are aiming at is some kind of special physical sensation. In other words, fantasies have one common denominator, namely, the confirmation of the physical self. If we do not understand the importance of spiritualized consciousness, we are forever hurting ourselves with our thoughts. The more pleasurable the thoughts, the more harmful they may be. Where a man's pleasure is there will his pain be also.

As mentioned above, mental discipline is not easily attained. It requires years of devotion and practice, plus a real, deep understanding of what it means to be a spiritual being. Human beings are preoccupied with their physical sensations. Everything in the human condition revolves around feelings and sensation in the body; therefore, human beings are forever thinking about how to invite pleasurable experiences. They are thinking, for instance, about what they will eat, drink, what they will wear, how they will improve their bodies, etc., and how to have more and more interesting, exciting and pleasurable experiences. This is what human

existence revolves around — sensations, feelings, emotions, etc.

Discipline must not be confused with control. Control is based on “should” thinking, which is willfulness. Discipline is based on wisdom, love, and understanding of what is good. “Discipline” is derived from the word “disciple.” Discipleship means following the teachings of a master. When we love the wisdom of the master, we become naturally disciplined.

The most remarkable physical sensation, of course, is sexual arousal and climax. Therefore, sex plays an important role in the quest for human pleasure. All sorts of complicated methods and practices are invented to achieve orgasmic sensation. The few seconds of intense physical sensation are often considered the ultimate good of human existence — the *summum bonum vitae*. When we gain a little perspective on the human condition, we see the futility and emptiness of this entire quest. In addition to the short-lived nature of the pleasurable experience, there are longer lasting consequences of an unpleasant nature connected with this mode of being-in-the-world.

Interestingly enough, our physical illnesses are part and parcel of our preoccupations with physical sensations. Therefore, sooner or later, we have to lose interest in these pursuits and we must come to discover what it means to be a spiritual being. God did not create human beings. God knows nothing about human beings. God only knows spiritual beings because God is Spirit, and anyone who wants to communicate with God must be spiritual.

Network Meeting Summary January 22nd 2010 Meeting by Charlotte Wolovsky

At the January 22nd, 2010, meeting of the Association for Spirituality and Psychotherapy, Dr. Henry Grayson and Dr. Ken Porter gave a presentation on the integration of psychotherapy and spirituality. They are both highly competent and experienced master clinicians with unique and complementary approaches to healing. Dr. Porter works from a model of healing developed by A.H.Almaas, an integration of Western depth psychology with Eastern mysticism. Dr. Grayson is a psychoanalyst who integrates a form of Energy Psychology that he developed, with attitudinal healing and mindful awareness.

Dr. Porter presented a case of a man who felt stuck in an unfulfilling love relationship that he was unable to improve or leave. Dr. Porter worked with him to:

- Shift his identification to his core spiritual self or authentic self.
- Disidentify with his old personas and his false self.
- Fight his inner critic.
- Allow the witness to emerge.

Dr. Porter stated that the therapist does this with his own presence. The therapist also directs the patient to get in touch with his own physical sensations while exploring any positive or negative feelings.

Dr. Grayson emphasized that we are all interconnected and that we need to get out of our “little self” that thinks we’re separate. Our pain is caused by our belief that we are separate from love, from source, from each other. We must move past our illusion of separateness. Dr. Grayson focused on negative thoughts as a source of suffering and that we must change those thoughts in a conscientious way. He said that we all have barriers to happiness. We hold negative beliefs such as: “I don’t deserve to be happy,” or “It’s not safe to be happy,” which fuel deep resistance to change. Dr. Grayson believes that trauma, negative emotions and beliefs can be systematically cleared with potent energy psychology tools.

That evening was well attended. Over one hundred people participated in a rich and meaningful interchange. Once again, thanks to Bruce and Diana Kerievsky for overseeing the event, providing a warm welcome, and excellent refreshments. Dr. Bernard Starr presided over the meeting and was instrumental in creating this format.

UPPER EAST SIDE PEER SUPERVISION GROUP

**Join us to discuss integrating
Spirituality and Psychotherapy
Bi-weekly- Wednesday mornings
call: Ira Bindman -212 369-447 or
Fran Calafatello-212 355-5354**