

PSYCHOSYNTHESIS QUARTERLY

The Digital Magazine of the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis

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June 2018

Developing Will in Parent Education - Ilene Val-Essen

Will and Surrender - Jan Kuniholm

IndoVEDIC Psychology and Psychosynthesis - Part II - Cristina Pelizzatti

The Age of Aquarius - Shamaï Currim

Self-Identification “Everyday Hygiene”: Assagioli - Isabelle Clotilde K ng

A Question of Place - Diederik van Rossum

New Dimensions in Psychology-Addendum - Roberto Assagioli

A “Healthier” Model: Two Approaches - Shamaï Currim

The Synthesis Center’s Final Training

Psychosynthesis Coaching Philadelphia

8th International Meeting - The “Casa Assagioli Experience”

A Journey to Self Through the Beauty and Magnificence of Florentine Art

A Journey to Places of the Higher Self in the Green Heart of Italy

Supporting AAP Scholarships

A Glimpse of History

Who and What is AAP?

Psychosynthesis Quarterly

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Psychosynthesis Quarterly is available as a free download to all current AAP members and to others who are interested in our work. To view previous issues and an index of articles [click here](#).

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Notes from the Editor

This issue presents the second in a series that traces some roots of psychosynthesis to Indovedic Psychology, as Cristina Pelizzatti leads us into a fascinating journey to sources. In the coming year you will have the opportunity to take other real-time journeys with a psychosynthetic emphasis, as Phyllis Clay will lead an exploration of Self through great Florentine art in Italy, and Catherine Ann Lombard and Kees den Biesen are guides to a Journey to Places of the Higher Self in the Umbrian Apennines of Italy. These are opportunities to journey inwardly and outwardly at the same time.

A different journey is available for those who are suffering loss and grief, at a Retreat in Arizona this year with Dawn Harward.

Shamai Currim explores both the Age of Aquarius, living the seven core principles of psychosynthesis, and two approaches toward wholeness in A “Healthier” Model. Ilene Val Essen shares an aspect of her Quality Parenting program in an article on Developing the Will in Parenting Education, while Jan Kuniholm explores the relationship between Will and Surrender.

We share a glimpse of history with a photo of Roberto Assagioli and colleagues in Switzerland in 1909, and The Synthesis Center makes current history by offering its final training after decades of preparing students for a life in psychosynthesis. At the same time new shoots appear as Psychosynthesis training is now offered in Philadelphia.

Speaking of shoots, Diederik van Rossum explores the garden of life, and the question of “where you are” in A Question of Place.

While teaching students a classic psychosynthesis exercise, Isabelle Clotilde Küng discovered that the French and Italian versions of Assagioli’s book *Psychosynthesis* do not contain exactly the same text as the original English version, and are in fact missing an important paragraph. But Assagioli clarified the matter in his last book. Still, it may be important for us to see what happened in a historical hiccup that is both amusing and enlightening.

Ms. Küng also enlightens us about our previously published essay by Assagioli on the New Forces in Psychology. She shared the actual ending to the article, and we pass it on to you. It was missing in our previous publication (September 2016).

We appreciate your support of AAP, which makes this publication possible. We’d also appreciate your comments on what we do. Email us by clicking [here](#).

Thanks for joining us for this issue! The written word is one of the ways that our work can go out into the world. If you write about psychosynthesis, please consider sharing your thoughts on these pages. You can contact me [here](#).

Jan Kuniholm



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Who and What is AAP?

Dedicated to the evolution of wholeness and spiritual integration worldwide, The Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis was established in 1995. It is the first professional psychosynthesis organization in North America and is open to all who are interested in supporting the evolution of Psychosynthesis .

We are therapists, coaches, teachers and artists who utilize psychosynthesis in professional contexts, as well as people interested in personal and spiritual development who utilize psychosynthesis principles and techniques to support wholeness. Our organization offers an opportunity to grow personally, interpersonally, and professionally while contributing to the ongoing growth and development of Psychosynthesis.

Vision: AAP provides resources for people to cultivate peace and purpose.

Mission: Our mission is to advance the theory and practice of psychosynthesis to benefit individuals and society.

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much" - Helen Keller

WE NEED YOU!
TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

If you love psychosynthesis, and would like to make a contribution to help “spread the word” please consider joining us and volunteering in one of the existing committee areas or suggesting new ones by bringing in your own unique talents.

Education - Training, Webinars, Conferences

Marketing - Applied psychosynthesis, Social Networking, Branding/vision/mission

Networking Outreach - Connecting with PS and nonPS individuals and groups nationally and internationally

Resources - Publications, Newsletters, Archives, Grants, Scholarships

Communication - Emails, Website, FaceBook, LinkedIn

Membership - Fees, Benefits, Engagement

Other - bringing in your own unique talents

Website: www.aap-psychosynthesis.org

Email: communication@aap-psychosynthesis.org

SELF-IDENTIFICATION “EVERYDAY HYGIENE”: ASSAGIOLI

Aligning the Translations of Assagioli’s Manual

Isabelle Clotilde Küng

From 1964 to 1981 I taught self-formative psychosynthesis to young adults at my mother’s private school in Switzerland, which my husband and I eventually directed. After closing the school, I occasionally gave these courses to private persons on request.

I based my teaching on what Assagioli had told me during my didactic training and the lessons and talks he gave in Florence over the years. Additionally, I had always relied for reference on the first English version of *Psychosynthesis: A Manual of Principles and Techniques* (1965).¹ Assagioli had given this book to me and my husband as a wedding present in March 1966. Earlier, he had already shared the mimeographed preprint version. I therefore did not even think of looking through the Italian and French versions of Assagioli’s *Manual* when they came out in 1973 by Astrolabio in Rome and in 1976 by L’Epi in Paris, respectively. I assumed that they were identical (synchronized). But it turns out they were not! How did I find out? Well, it was like a slap in the face!



From 1994 to 1996 I was happily giving a self-formative Psychosynthesis class to a small group of adults (*at left, a photo in the garden 1996*). A woman named Danielle (in jeans in the picture) had asked me to give the course. She was also training in Jungian Analytic Psychology and frequenting the Paris Psychosynthesis Centre. She said, “We have a problem with the exercise of identification with the transpersonal Self; would you please facilitate it again?” Of course I was more than willing to do so, and we sat on the carpet of an all-wooden cozy chimney room and went through the Self-identification experience.

Ten to fifteen minutes later we took a break, and after a refreshing drink that brought us all back to earth, here comes Danielle. She looks at me and says, in a shy and yet assertive tone of voice, backed by the silent approbation of the other participants, “But Isabelle . . . [deep breath] . . . you are teaching something other than what is written in Assagioli’s book!”

That’s what felt like a “slap!” I thought I had not heard well. What! Me? What are they referring to? So I asked them, “Which book?” And they showed me the French version of Assagioli’s *Manual of Psychosynthesis*, which I used to recommend to French-speaking persons. And they added: “You see, you talk about identification with the Self first, but that is not how the exercise of disidentification is presented. In the book it begins with the exercise of disidentification, and only then culminates with the formula of identification with the transpersonal Self, and that’s it; whereas *you*—you begin with identification with the transpersonal Self, and after that you transmit the four stages of that exercise: after you present the three stages of disidentification, at the fourth stage you again affirm our identity with transpersonal Self.”

(Continued on [page 6](#))

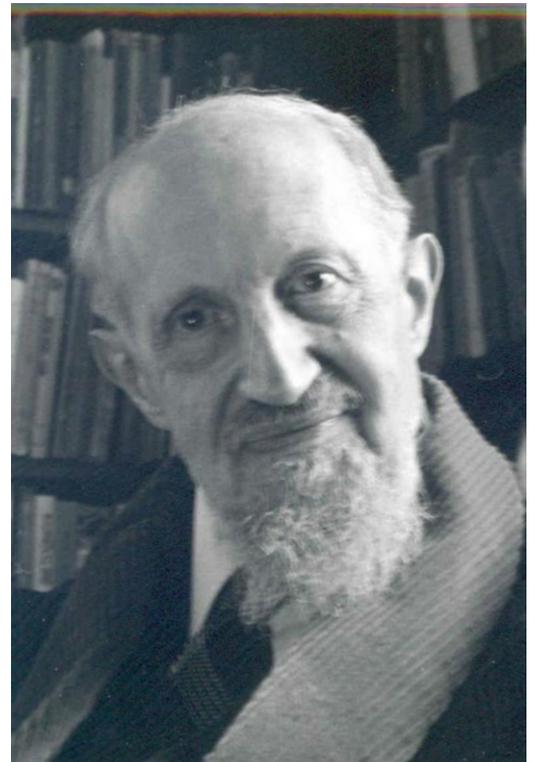
(Continued from [page 5](#))

The least you can say is that they had been most attentive learners: it takes quite a bit of reflection and “thinking through” to reach to the point they raised. And that point happens to be most important. And they were right, because the many techniques that are appropriate to practice in the psychosynthetic approach are incidental to the therapy or self-actualization process. These can be borrowed from various sources, such as psychoanalysis, gestalt, transactional analysis, or sophrology, as long as they are put in practice from a psychosynthetic, and therefore detached, relative, timely, harmless, responsible and non-dogmatic point of view.

So this gave me the opportunity to deepen the subject with them. And thanks to them, I discovered that the Italian and French versions of Assagioli’s book were not synchronized with the English version.

As soon as the group left, I plunged into my French version of the book and compared it to the English version I had received from Assagioli. . . Yes, indeed, only in the English version do you find this main title **Self-Identification**, beginning at page 111 (page 98 of the Synthesis Center edition of 2000—*Ed.*), followed by the subtitles **purpose, rationale**, until page 114; and then from page 114 to page 116 followed by **procedure**. In the Italian and French, the discussion jumps, after the **Critical Analysis** technique, directly to **Exercise in Dis-identification and Self-Identification** and the exercise proper, which in the English goes from the bottom of page 116 to the top of page 119. The Italian and French versions *skip* the fundamental complementary information given at page 120 of the English edition (page 106 in the 2000 edition—*Ed.*). So there is a paragraph that is missing in the Italian and French versions. It is so useful and of such practical value that I wish to quote it in full:

As the technique of self-identification is a basic technique not only for therapy but for education and personality integration, it can be considered also as a defense mechanism against the constant stream of influences, inner and outer, which try to capture the ego and demand identification. This technique can also be considered as a matter of everyday psychological and spiritual hygiene, and in therapy it is needed even more. Therefore, we advise the patient to use it as frequently as he feels is possible; once a day is sufficient, but that is a minimum. As mentioned above, it should precede the use of the other techniques because it helps the patient to use them more effectively.²



Roberto Assagioli in Florence, 1969
Photo by the author

And then the English version from page 120 to 125 discusses additional material that is missing in the Italian and French versions: **Indications** and **Applications**, then **Limitations and Contra-Indications**, then **Borderline Cases and Psychotics**, and finally **Summation and Combination with other Techniques**.

From there on, the Italian and French and English versions are again synchronized, continuing with the topic of the **Will**. Here Assagioli limits himself to a short description of the **Techniques for the Development of the Will**. These sections he will completely recreate and develop into his last book, *The Act of Will*, published in 1973.

And indeed, *The Act of Will* somehow bridges the differences between the versions of the *Manual*. In **Appendix One**, on page 213, under the title **Disidentification and Self-Identification**, Assagioli includes the discussion on

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the advantages of identification with the Transpersonal Self. There he presents pretty much the same considerations as those already mentioned in the English version of the *Manual* (but skipped in the Italian and French versions), along with a few enriching variations. So all is well, and I think one could even say that both explanations (in *The Act of Will* and in the English version of the *Manual*) warrant being studied.

Here are the main points, worth paying attention to. They aptly motivate one to practice this exercise and thereby benefit from its lasting effects. Note that the whole passage of page 213 in *The Act of Will*, on the Disidentification and Self-identification exercise, is worth reading. Here I only copy for you those excerpts that, read in a flow as given below, shed a light on the need to practice this exercise, as advised in the *Manual* (page 120)—possibly daily, as a psychological hygiene practice. By analogy, we need to turn on the motor before driving the car! When introducing the topic of the Will, Assagioli liked to point out with a sly grin, “Instead of attempting to push the car from outside, with its brakes still on, wouldn’t it be easier to just sit in the driver’s seat, insert the key, and turn on the power? And then drive—that is, learn to drive.” This pinpoints the problematic nature of our will and motivates one to discover how it works and to learn to use it effectively. And then he would often add, “You would be astonished to see how many people actually stick to pushing the car from *outside* rather than driving it from the driver’s seat! *Inside*.”

Here are excerpts to motivate one to do both the exercise for disidentification and for Self-Identification, and to discover the reality of our main function, the will:

If a continuing identification with either a role or a predominant function leads often, and almost inevitably, to a precarious life situation resulting sooner or later in a sense of loss, even despair . . . *no frantic clinging to the waning old “identity” can avail.* The true solution can only be a “rebirth,” that is, entering into a new and broader identification. This sometimes involves the whole personality and requires and leads to an awakening or “birth” into a new and higher state of *being*. . . . This process often occurs without a clear understanding of its meaning and often against the wish and will of the individual involved in it. But a conscious, purposeful, willing cooperation can greatly facilitate, foster, and hasten it. It can be best done by a deliberate exercise of *disidentification* and *self-identification*. . . . Thus we can learn to master, direct and utilize all the elements and aspects of our personality, in an inclusive and harmonious synthesis. Therefore this exercise is considered as basic in psychosynthesis.³

As to my story above, where I described how my students put me right, as soon as they left I also ordered Assagioli’s first *Manual* in Italian, to check whether it is like the English or like the French. I was a little afraid the French one would be the only one to differ. When I received the Italian *Manual*, I double checked to find that the French and Italian were identical as regards what was missing. And I noticed that some short passages were in the French and Italian but not in the English. What had happened? Why was the core, the very heart of Assagioli’s psychosynthesis, missing in the Italian and French versions?

I would say it was just coincidence, circumstances, chance!

You see, the first Italian version, translated by Elena Zanotti from the English, was published by Astrolabio in Rome in 1973. Assagioli was then completely absorbed in the writing and publication of *The Act of Will*. He knew he had little time left (that will be the subject of another article), so he probably did not feel like correcting the matter. The new book was more important. But there is an indication that he had noticed. I visited him for three days in July 1974 to invite him to sign the founding act of the educational psychosynthesis center at my school, and he gave me a bundle that had been packed up the day I left, July 14. He said, “please send this to Paris, it is better they have this version for the *Manual* they offered to publish.” Returning by the night train, I was robbed!

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No, not the bundle, just my handbag with ticket, passport, money. But would you believe it . . . bad luck was again watching. I sent that bundle, but it too was lost, probably because of the postal strike! Oh, how I regret not having sent it immediately. Nevertheless, in 1976, two years after Assagioli had passed away, the French version was published—translated into French by Maria Panizza (photo) from that Italian translation Elena Zanotti had done from the English for the 1973 first publication in Italian. (Do you follow me here? Apparently the bundle I sent, which was lost, contained Assagioli's corrections to the Italian version. So the French version was based on an uncorrected Italian version.) That French version was the very book which my French-speaking students had told me about!

As a corollary, here is a personal viewpoint, based on my experience teaching psychosynthesis to young adults, and practicing it *volens nolens* for myself: the rather technical explanation which is the object of this article happened to bring to the fore in a quite obvious way the reason why the transpersonal Self, in a necessarily limited two-dimensional egg-shaped diagram of the psychological constitution of the human being, is depicted as it is. The symbol of the transpersonal Self, the Shining Sun, is placed indicatively at the top of the “egg,” and precisely half in, half out of it, because the transpersonal Self is that Reality which we *are* energetically. That is the reason it is relatively invisible and so needs to be represented by a symbol. It—yes, the transpersonal Self—bridges us with our everyday field of work. It mirrors itself in our personality, with its tools—the psychological functions. (Might we call them the human soul, given that Assagioli chose to represent them by a star?) Rereading the excerpts of Assagioli's explanations will make this crystal clear! When I say that this Sun symbolizes the transpersonal Self, I mean that it hints at the threshold to *that* which confers dignity to human life. The symbol it represents is that of the *soul*. Without it we may jolly well be well-groomed humans, but without purpose we are readily tossed by adverse blows . . . like “puppets on a string” commanded by the will of others, whoever they be.



Maria Panizza, translator of Assagioli's articles
Capolona, Italy 1963

A “belated birthday present” for Assagioli.

My gift is simply the “restoring” or bringing back to public visibility or calling back into the present, one basic principle. He gave his whole life to bring this principle to public recognition: that the realization of the transpersonal Self is the heart of the psychosynthetic approach or attitude toward existence. That is what empowers the practice of the many techniques and exercises fostering self-realization, and warrants integrating them into the art of daily living “in perfect harmony.” Furthermore, as he observed during his lifelong practice as a psychiatrist, the transpersonal Self is an *experience* that can be induced. He represented it by the Shining Sun icon, a reminder of the “elevating” effect the transpersonal Self exercises on the personal areas of the often problematic “horizontal expression.” It is obvious that this is why the place of this icon is at the top of the egg-shaped diagram of the psychological constitution. (This is symbolic, of course, just as the whole diagram is only a static symbol standing for a dynamic, ever-moving psychic “metabolism.”) Also, the fact that Assagioli placed the Shining Sun symbol of the transpersonal Self half in and half out of the field of the personal ego indicates that the domain of psychosynthesis is personal-ego harmonization and development as well as harmonization of the contents of the higher unconscious, which latter he called spiritual psychosynthesis. (See *Manual* p. 166 as to why he names the personality “ego,” as quoted below, at the end.)

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By fostering the realization of the transpersonal Self, psychosynthesis leads to the threshold of higher consciousness, *and stops there*. Assagioli recognized, as he mentions in the French (p. 37) and Italian (p. 32) versions of his article “Dynamic Psychology and Psychosynthesis,” that there is “a spiritual Reality beyond and above the transpersonal Self.” He did not wish to discuss it there (at the personal-and spiritual-psychosynthesis level), given that it raises questions of a “meta-psychological” dimension. He himself had a vast and far-reaching comprehension of the “inner worlds” and wrote courses for development on those levels. However, he considered it of paramount importance that students in those subjects be able to master harmlessly the high voltages that awareness of the inner dimension unlocks. (It is comparable, but not identical, to the harnessing of nuclear energy.) He felt that they first ought to harmonize their personality and be able to master the personal forces. He wanted them to have conquered or “remembered” (symbolically speaking) consciousness in the transpersonal Self, and realized it harmlessly; that is, be able to work it out also in daily-life circumstances.

If my anecdote about the lack of synchronization between the various language versions of Assagioli’s *Manual* made these points clear, it illustrates how a “problem” may have constructive and useful effects—and make the belated birthday “present” to him also one for us.

In a statement from one of the many poetic, heartfelt, mystical dreams that he shared, Assagioli gave a synthesis of this work of his, which is potentially every human’s task on various levels of Reality. He cultivated these levels without mixing and confusing them. Here it is. It speaks equally to the simple beginner in the work of self-actualization, and someone striving to realize his transpersonal Self—as well as the most advanced and learned human being: “*May the wave of new life descend from the Supreme Being of our planet, and pervade our daily existence.*”



Parc Bertrand, Geneva - Photo by the author

That says it all. In other terms one could say: let us connect to our transpersonal Self (our true Self) and thus perceive the regenerating power of the Infinite which throbs in our heart. Let us make appropriate use of this power within the sphere of our responsibilities: our little kingdom which we must defend with the radiation of this energy of the Self. It is also alive in every atom of our body! If you remember your anatomy classes, your physics and chemistry lessons, and the general science topics you studied, you will feel that connection with yourself as Self, as well between you as Self and yourself. . . For consciousness is the key, and it is in your hands.

For let us admit it: even if we live with our feet on earth—and we had better do so indeed—we however cannot, today and as educated beings, ignore that the universe is infinitely vast. Its laws, by which life on this planet can unfold, are the embodiment of an infinite intelligence. Or as Dante poetically illustrated it in his *Divine Comedy*: “*Luce intellettuale piena d’Amor*”—**Intellectual Light substantiated by Love**. We are a spark of that. That energy is all there is, so we too are energy. We have the opportunity to *act* through our personalities. It behooves us to measure up to this huge opportunity by urgently willing to learn to use this energy in a benign manner and integrate it into our everyday realities. It is up to us. Knowing how to handle these energies protects us from being dominated by who knows what. It is for this that Roberto Assagioli worked.

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To end, a quote from Roberto Assagioli's *Manual of Principles and Techniques*, page 166 (page 147 in the 2000 edition—*Ed.*): “We must become aware that each of us has within himself various self-models or models of *the ego*, or—more exactly, using our terminology—of *the personality*” (my emphasis). ◻

Notes:

¹ Hobbs Dorman & Company, Inc. New York

² Page 120, R. Assagioli (1965) English edition

³ *The Act of Will* page 213.

Isabelle Clotilde Küng was trained from 1963 to 1974 by Roberto Assagioli to teach Psychosynthesis to the students of Institut Bleu-Léman in Ville-neuve, Switzerland. After closing her school, Isabelle worked in international corporations and now writes about her experiences as a pioneer in teaching Psychosynthesis, both as a subject matter and simply as an “Attitude that matters.”



a glimpse of history



In the center is Édouard Claparède standing next to his wife, Hélène Spir, next to Father Agostino Gemelli, Giulio Cesare Ferrari, and then at his shoulder Assagioli. It was probably taken at The Congress of Psychology in Geneva, Switzerland in 1909.

—Catherine Ann Lombard

Photo downloaded 21 April, 2018 from the *Archivio storico della psicologia italiana. Studi e ricerche*, <http://www.aspi.unimib.it/collections/object/detail/4128/>

Istituto di Psicosintesi - Gruppo alle Fonti
8° INTERNATIONAL MEETING AT CASA ASSAGIOLI
Firenze, September 13-16, 2018

THE “CASA ASSAGIOLI EXPERIENCE”

We kindly invite you to attend our yearly appointment in Casa Assagioli: a wonderful, four-day "full immersion" experience, giving you the chance to explore the world of the founder of Psychosynthesis in his own home, study the materials in the archives and in the library, and join a group of fellow co-workers gathered from all over the world.

Over the years the International Meeting has grown in depth and extension, thanks to the interest and collaboration of friends in the Psychosynthesis community. While the foundations of our work are always the same, the group relationship has grown in quality and in intensity, year after year. This gives us the chance of fostering *unity in diversity* as we meet friends from all over the world, and it also creates the perfect environment for an “inner” experience, adding to it a special dimension.



Indeed, the Experience at Casa Assagioli is a wonderful opportunity to:

Work on your research: explore the origins and development of Psychosynthesis and materials related to Roberto Assagioli’s diversified fields of inquiry. This kind of in-depth research is much more than a look at the history of Psychosynthesis — the depth of Assagioli’s insights, his articles and handwritten notes thrive with energy and always generate new ideas.

Tread an intuitive path: the possibility of contacting deep levels of one’s inner space is facilitated by the insights in the manuscripts and the articles and books in the library. Gruppo alle Fonti has created a number of special activities that support openness and inspiration.

Intensive group work: the welcoming atmosphere fosters meaningful and profound human relationships, a growing sense of belonging to the broad Psychosynthesis community, and it offers the possibility to initiate new collaborations within an ever broader and more aware planetary network.

Last year we also launched a number of new initiatives, including:

- a psychosynthetic guided tour of a place of art in Florence
- an encounter with one of Assagioli’s collaborators or students - with all the richness of their testimonials

And the Experience at Casa Assagioli would not be the same without the excellent lunches in the garden, delicious Italian dinners and time for fun together!

The meeting will be held in Italian and English, with the help of volunteer interpreters.

We invite you to register in advance to benefit from our early-bird registration fees!

See Related Events (after this meeting) on Pages 32 and 39 of this issue.

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INFORMATION

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 24

LANGUAGE: English and Italian

SCHEDULE: 13 September 10.00 am to 7.30 pm
14-15 September 9.30 am to 7.30 pm
16 September 9.30 am to 1.00 pm

REGISTRATION FEES, including vegetarian lunch and dinner, refreshments and snacks:

Early bird (by 31 March)	€ 370,00
Standard (by 31 July):	€ 420,00
Last minute:	€ 470,00
Under 30:	€ 220,00

Grants available for low income applicants upon request

Withdrawals before 30 June: €200,00 refund, nothing thereafter

TO APPLY AND PAY YOUR REGISTRATION FEE, please follow these steps:

- E-mail your application form to: info.psicosintesi@gmail.com
- Wait for our e-mail confirmation with instructions for payment;
- Pay your registration fee;
- Confirmation of registration will reach you after your payment is received.

VENUE

CASA ASSAGIOLI

Istituto di Psicosintesi, Via S. Domenico, 16 - 50133 Firenze (Italia)

Please note that Casa Assagioli is a 4-storey building — floors are accessible by stairs only.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation is not included in your registration fee. We suggest you book your room well in advance. Below is a list of suggested hotels, B&B and hostels close to Casa Assagioli:

Villa La Stella - www.villalastella.it

Alberomago B&B – www.alberomago.com

Hotel Ungherese – www.hotelungherese.it

Dimora Salviati B&B– www.dimorasalviati.it

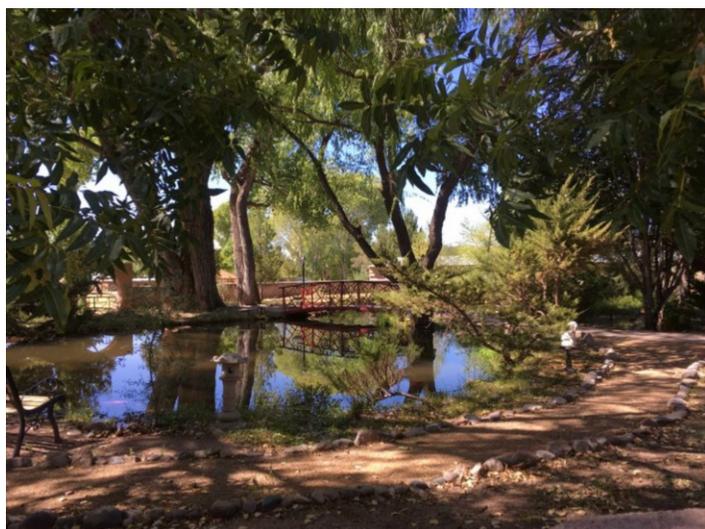
Foresteria del Convento di San Domenico (hostel)- www.sandomenicodifiesole.it/foresteria/

Please help us spread the word! Forward this invitation to your peers, colleagues and friends!
Looking forward to seeing you in Firenze,

Gruppo Alle Fonti
Istituto di Psicosintesi
Firenze

To obtain an application form please email to: info.psicosintesi@gmail.com

The Warrior's Heart Grief and Loss Retreat



When: September 24th – 28th, 2018

Where: St. David, AZ, at the Holy Trinity Monastery (located about an hour southeast of Tucson, Arizona)

What: Grief and Loss Retreat specializing in but not limited to *Suicide Loss Survivors and Postvention*

Program Coordinator/Facilitator:
Dawn Harward, MATP, BHT, IHCSS

Enduring a broken heart:

“‘The only whole heart is a broken one.’ No awake spirit can move through this world without enduring a broken heart. There is nothing real that makes life painless. Accepting the pain of living, knowing one's heart will — and should — be broken, is the beginning of wisdom.”

— *David Wolpe, Making Loss Matter: Creating Meaning in Difficult Times.*

The Warrior's Heart Grief and Loss Retreat is a guided transpersonal hero's journey into the transformative grief process as well as a communal rite of passage. Death and loss create spiritual distress. Our ability to heal is reliant on creative problem-solving and innovative solutions to transcend our sorrow and suffering. Creativity is an innate survival skill that has allowed humans to thrive since the beginning of time. Imagination is integral to a healthy response to grief and loss.

This workshop will focus on the power of intention (a mindful decision), fostering hope (imagining the possibilities), intuition to discover meaning (spiritual significance), and creativity and innovation to manifest divine purpose (the reason this happened in your life).

The warrior's heart is the soul that has learned to let go of *Why me?* in favor of *Why not me?* This shift in perspective, a spiritual overview, allows wisdom and grace to heal the wounded heart and open the mind to the possibilities that are gifted through the tragedy, thereby allowing the individual to manifest a life of meaning and purpose because of, and despite, the tragedy.

This retreat provides a safe and supportive environment to explore the depths of grief using therapeutic art (no artistic skills required), meditation, contemplation, nature walks, reflective writing, authentic movement, and laughter. While the work is serious and deeply challenging, our goal is to ground your journey in the joy of life rather than the suffering, while excavating the opportunities for personal growth in your tragedy.

The Warrior's Heart Retreat intention is to aid the bereaved in recognizing that the struggles they are currently experiencing are offering them an opportunity to become the Hero of their own lives. Carol Pearson writes, “Heroes take journeys, confront dragons, and discover the treasure of their true selves.” This is true, and it is our human right to become empowered to walk this path. We are here to help you, counsel you and inspire you.

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We will spend four days immersed in the creative grief process with the intention of facilitating a spiritual awakening while fostering the development of intuition as a tool for personal transformation.

“I felt like I just spent three days with God.” – Amy H., March, 2018

The retreat is for:

- Anyone experiencing grief and loss for any reason.
- Anyone feeling stuck in their sadness.
- Healing from the death of a loved one.
- Recovering from traumatic loss.
- Looking for help learning to live again
- Making peace with the loss of a loved one and becoming ready to move forward.
- Seeking a new vision for life, a new direction, and the inspiration to embrace them.
- Aspiring to live a meaningful purpose-driven, passionate, and HEARTFUL life.



The retreat is *not* for:

- The newly bereaved.
- Individuals who are clinically depressed, unless they are under a doctor’s care.
- Children under the age of 18.

Other information:

- Since grief and loss are difficult emotions and associated with trauma, the Retreat is limited to 10 – 12 participants per 2 facilitators.
- The cost includes food and basic (semi-private) housing.
- Transportation between retreat and airport is not provided.
- Additional nights at the monastery for personal reflection are available and arrangements can be made directly.

For more information Contact:

Carole Dawn Harward, MATP, IHCRSS, Certified Transpersonal Life/Grief Coach, Psychosynthesis certified, Retreat Facilitator, Suicide Postvention Specialist, and Artist.

Phone: (520) 982-4203 (B) or (520) 247-3676 (H)

Webpage: www.suicidesurvivorcoach.com

Email: suicidesurvivorcoach@gmail.com

FacebookPages:

<https://www.facebook.com/suicidesurvivorcoach/>

Event tickets:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-warriors-heart-grief-and-loss-retreats-tickets-44084919180?aff=ereexpmlt>

Other payment options are available—contact retreat coordinator.



A “Healthier” Model: Two Approaches

Shamai Currim

The new fad today is a watch that monitors our hearts and our steps. We're checking to make sure we aren't sick. Many people think “flu” when their stomach hurts. I see a sore stomach as a sign that my body is cleansing and truly knows how to take care of itself, if I stay out of the way and allow it to do whatever it needs to. Most of us are truly ingrained in the belief that we are *ill* and need to be cured; when rather we need to believe and trust in ourselves and our own *health*. We go to doctors to find out what is wrong with us, and most times they will find something to give us: a pill, a treatment, a referral to a specialist.

I go to my homeopath to talk about what is going *well* in my life while checking to see if anything needs support in “doing its job”—a healthier model, in my experience. The more we think we *are* sick, the sicker we become. I sat at the table in a restaurant with a friend last night, and she was speaking to her son on her cell phone, telling him which meds to take for his anxiety attack and at what dosage. I really had trouble with that, at many levels. Many of us run to the pharmacy to buy over-the-counter drugs to take care of our pains, our anxiety, our dis-ease.

What truly is “health,” and what does it mean to be “healthy”? Dr. Archelle Georgiou states that:

the root word for ‘health’ and ‘healing’ is the same. They are both derived from the Old English word ‘hale,’ meaning ‘wholeness, being whole, sound or well.’ While health and healing are complementary, the definitions of these words are completely different. The most broadly accepted definition of ‘health,’ as established by the World Health Organization: ‘*A state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.*’ Health is a noun. Healing is a verb. It refers to the process of restoring health. And, just as the definition of health is multidimensional, the range of healing processes is equally broad. Healing can refer to the physiologic processes that mend an injury, and also to the emotional, spiritual, or psychological processes that relieve stress, achieve acceptance, and promote hope. Understanding the difference between health and healing is important—not just as a matter of grammar, but because it is empowering. Healing is about taking action. It includes the body’s repair mechanisms, the interventions of clinical professionals, as well as the behaviors you engage in that positively influence your health. While health is an outcome, healing is a choice.¹

In Iran and many other Eastern, Mediterranean, and Oriental countries and cultures, the emphasis is placed on healing, a concept intimately tied to notions of spirit and comfort—not morbidity and mortality. In our Western world there seems to be no attempt to restore order or return the body to its natural state. For many people in other parts of the world, “medications are for sick people; herbs and natural supplements are augments to a healthy life, taken by healthy people.”²

Thomas R. Egnew tells us that:

healing may be operationally defined as the personal experience of the transcendence of suffering. Physicians can enhance their abilities as healers by recognizing, diagnosing, minimizing, and relieving suffering, as well as helping patients transcend suffering. In the wake of such success, physicians, trained as biomedical scientists, have focused on the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of disease. In the process, cure, not care, became the primary purpose of medicine, and the physician’s role became “curer of disease” rather than “healer of the sick.” Healing in a holistic sense has faded from medical attention and is rarely discussed in the medical literature. Psychological conceptions of healing involve reordering an individual’s sense of position in the

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universe and define healing as “a process in the service of the evolution of the whole person’s ability towards ever greater and more complex wholeness. These definitions of healing focus on issues of social organization, roles, meaning, and personal growth. Healing has been defined as the process of bringing together aspects of one’s self, body-mind-spirit, at deeper levels of inner knowing, leading toward integration and balance with each aspect having equal importance and value.³

When our bodies get the correct combination of nutrients they need, and when toxins and damaging foods are eliminated, they become able to progress towards health, reversing the disease processes by detoxifying, repairing and rebuilding all cells and tissues.

There are many different ways that we can become active participants in our own healing. Two of these ways are healing meditation and music.

Meditation and Healing

In the book *Meditation as Medication* by Rajinder Singh,⁴ many authors (medical doctors, cancer researchers, psychiatrists, psychologists, chiropractors, brain researchers, neuroscientists, and those involved in alternative medicine) offer evidence of the benefits of meditation for spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional health; for improving brain function and performance, and for achieving balance, wellness, and pain management.

Dr. Saraswati Suumar, professor of the Oncology Breast Cancer Program at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, in Baltimore, MD, asserts that the practice of meditation is the most effective technique for bringing the body and mind into a deep state of relaxation, restoring balance, and allowing healing to begin. She states that the evidence connecting the state of the mind and its effects on physiological states of the body are incontrovertible. Rajinder Singh tells us that meditation plays a role in preventative medicine, in supplementing medication and speeding recovery after many procedures. Dr Matthew Raider, a primary-care physician, talks about age-related changes in every organ system and the beneficial influence of slow alpha waves of meditators on hormone levels produced by the adrenal gland. Research indicates that regular meditation can help people with high blood pressure, lowering the reading by 10-12 mmHg—about as much reduction as that produced by one blood pressure pill. One syndrome that is particularly difficult to treat with conventional medicine, a chronic illness called fibromyalgia (“FMA”—chronic diffuse pain, fatigue, insomnia), is usually treated with painkillers which have a dismal record in relieving symptoms. After a ten-week program of meditation, slightly over half of those FMA sufferers enrolled in the study reported improvement.

Music and Healing

Some people use music to help them with meditation. The name given to music for meditation and deep relaxation is called Psychoacoustics, a branch of science dealing with the perception of hearing and sensations produced by sound. Some people see it as a form of music psychology. The tones, textures, melodies, harmonies and tempo of a piece of music can affect us psychologically, emotionally and even physically. Music containing binaural beats can even alter the frequency of our brainwaves in such a way that our mind is coaxed, quite directly, into a state of deep meditation. Soothing tones, slow tempo and gentle harmonies are great for unwinding and slowing down our thoughts. The soothing sounds of nature are innately peaceful, and listening to them can help us to reconnect a greater whole.

Music can certainly become a part of our healing process and be incorporated into a healthier lifestyle. Roberto Assagioli, in his article on *Music as a Cause of Disease and as a Healing Agent*,⁵ tells us that:

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The psychological life of the individual as well as that of his body has its various and complex rhythms: the rhythms of elation and depression; alternations of sorrow and joy, of fervour and lassitude, of strength and weakness, of extraversion and introversion. All these conditions are extremely sensitive to the influence of the rhythm of music. There are also certain activities wherein the rhythms of the body, the emotions and music interpenetrate and become fused in one integral rhythm. This happens in dancing, which one may truly call living music, expressed with one's whole being.

Who hasn't had the experience of listening to a beautiful musical composition and finding tears running down our cheeks? *Music, of the right kind and proportion*, can exercise a beneficent influence on both body and mind. Its effect can be wonderfully restful and refreshing. Many men and women do not know *how* to rest, or even what real rest means. They are accustomed to constant movement and noise so that they are unable to keep still and endure silence. Music can be used to bring us into a meditative state and can sooth a sleepless night. Music can also arouse the will and incite it to action. Music can also quicken and facilitate intellectual activity and favour artistic and creative inspiration. It can help us to retrieve reluctant and elusive memories. Music can transmute and sublimate impulses and emotional energies, rendering them harmless, and helping them to contribute to the deepening of experience and the broadening and enriching of the personality.

Assagioli reminds us that when we approach spiritual psychosynthesis, inter-individual psychosynthesis, and cosmic psychosynthesis, music may awaken higher psycho-spiritual elements in us without our conscious awareness. Music may lift us up into the ethereal realms, or higher awareness, where light, love and joy reign. Music can express collective emotions and aspirations.

Toward Wholeness

According to John Firman and Ann Gila,⁶ in developing psychosynthesis Assagioli sought to use the principle of synthesis in understanding how human growth moves toward increasing wholeness, both within the individual and in the individual's relationship to the world at large. Assagioli agreed with Freud that healing childhood trauma and developing a healthy ego were necessary aims. He also held that human growth could not be limited and he sought an understanding of human growth as it proceeds beyond the norm of the well-functioning ego into the blooming of human potential (Maslow's self-actualization) and further still into the spiritual or transpersonal dimensions of human experience.

Music and meditation are just two of the many alternative forms of healing in the world. I believe that Assagioli didn't hold true to our Western views of taking a pill for whatever ails us. If he were here today, I think he would remind us of the importance of our life journey and the ensuing healing process that guides our evolution into a better self. He would tell us to use all forms of therapy that bring us to a higher state of life.

If we can remember that we are truly part of a whole, then perhaps we can find peace in our existence and achieve the healing potential that we can all explore, and truly live, in pure health and joy. ■

Notes:

¹ <https://www.caringbridge.org/resources/health-vs-healing/>

² <https://psmag.com/social-justice/treating-vs-healing-understanding-what-wellness-means-to-patients>

³ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1466870/>

⁴ Radiance Publications, 2012

⁵ <https://kennethsorensen.dk/en/music-as-a-cause-of-disease-and-healing/> and Assagioli's article is also included in the anthology *Music: Physician for Times to Come* by Don Campbell (1991) Quest Books. https://www.amazon.com/Music-Physician-Times-Don-Campbell/dp/0835607887/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1518029753&sr=8-1&keywords=Don+Campbell+Music+Physician+for+Times+to+Come

⁶ Firman, John, and Gila, Ann. *Psychosynthesis: A Psychology of the Spirit*. Chapter 1. SUNY Press 2002.

A Snapshot of the Philosophical Library: Florence, Italy, 1922

Catherine Ann Lombard

While conducting research, I often become like Alice in Wonderland, chasing rabbits down the garden path. I am continually amazed how much can be discovered from my little studio in the Italian Apennines via the Internet. Most recently, I came across a fascinating book, written by George Davis Herron (1862-1925), an American clergyman, lecturer, and writer from Indiana. In his book *The Revival of Italy*, published in 1922, Herron has a beautiful passage describing Roberto Assagioli as the inspiration for the Biblioteca Filosofica. (Philosophical Library) in Florence. A lively center of philosophical discussion, this library was initiated around 1903-1905 by those studying theosophy who wished to deepen their understanding of Oriental philosophy. The library members loaned books, organized classes and conferences, and published a bulletin.

Assagioli was one of its more frequent visitors.¹ The Philosophical Library's intent was to create a "free university for philosophical and religious studies" where the public could come and learn more about the current cultural movements such as Pragmatism, Idealism, and Modernism in a non-academic setting. In his book, Herron acknowledges Assagioli's series of lectures on "The Phases and Methods of Spiritual Development."² In 1942, the library was incorporated into the library for the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy at the University of Florence, and today has more than 9800 volumes.³

A Closer Look at Nella Ciapetti

In his account, Herron notes that Assagioli is "possessed of unusual discernment of mind as well as purity and power of spirit."⁴ But what delighted me even more, after reading Herron's brief description and interview with Assagioli, was to find Herron's acknowledgment of Nella Ciapetti (1893-1973). He describes Ciapetti as the founder and inspiration of the Lamp-Bearers,⁵ a women's movement that stated in its prospectus: "There exists, under all the diversities of races, creeds or tendencies of thought, the same fundamental and sacred humanity."⁶

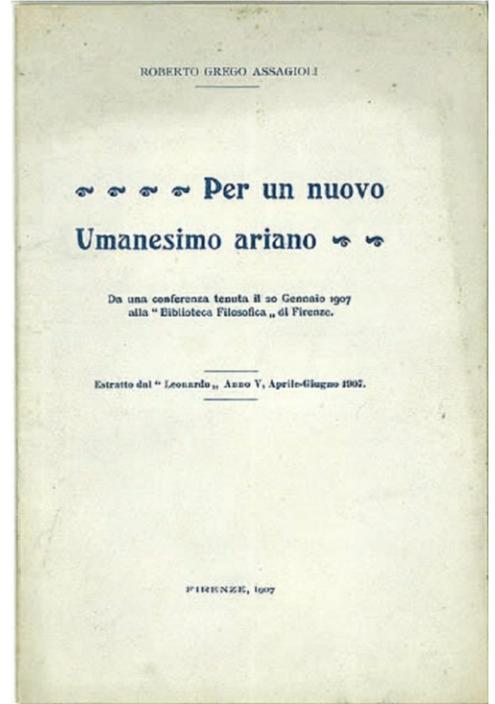


Figure 1. Assagioli's article "Per un nuovo umanesimo ariano" ("For a new Arian humanism") published by the *Biblioteca Filosofica* of Florence in 1907. Note that his use of the word "Arian" means Indo-European, or coming from India.



Figure 2. Roberto, Nella and Ilario in 1923.

Besides finding Roberto and Nella referenced side-by-side (by an American no less!), I was particularly happy to find such a positive description of Assagioli's wife-to-be. They would soon be married on 12 August 1922,

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¹ Petra Guggisberg Nocelli. *The Way of Psychosynthesis*, Lugano, 2017. p. 12.

² George D. Herron, *The Revival of Italy*, London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., p. 106-109. Retrieved 28 April 2017 from <http://purl.dlib.indiana.edu/iudl/inauthors/VAC1018>

³ "Biblioteca filosofica (di Firenze)". *Biblioteca dei filosofi*. Retrieved on 30 April 2018 from <http://picus.unica.it/index.php?page=Filosofo&id=95&lang=it>

⁴ Herron, p. 106

⁵ During the early 1920s, Ciapetti became the coordinator of the woman's movement *Portatrici di lampade* (Lamp-Bearers) and belonged to a special committee of women who collected memberships for the *Rivista Spirituale Femminile* (*Women's Spiritual Magazine*; Esposito, p. 38).

⁶ Herron., pp. 107-108.

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and would be together until Nella's death in 1973. Ciapetti always seems to appear either as a footnote in Assagioli's biographies or as a complex and fragile character in the margins of his activities. She is perhaps best known as the long-suffering mother who endured their only son's long illness and premature death. (At the age of 15, their son Ilario contracted tuberculosis, and died in 1951 when he was just 28.) But in Herron's account, she is vibrantly alive, "a young woman of great spiritual and intellectual power."

I know of three other accounts that include anecdotes of Ciapetti and Assagioli's life as a couple. The earliest appears in Luisa M. Lunelli's biography *Roberto, Nella e Luisa (Roberto, Nella and Luisa)*⁷. Lunelli met the Assagiolis in 1930 and was a long-time friend of the family. She was even present at Villa Serena when Assagioli was arrested by the Fascist police.⁸ Paola Giovetti uses much of Lunelli's narrative in her biography of Assagioli,⁹ augmented by statements from Donatella Ciapetti, the daughter of Nella's brother, who also lived for several years with the Assagiolis in Florence. Finally, William Esposito actually begins his "Introduction" to the collection of Assagioli's theosophical writings¹⁰ with a quote of Ciapetti's, an excerpt from her article "L'amore della donna" ("The Love of a Woman") that was published in the magazine *Ultra* in 1925. Written as a new wife and mother, Ciapetti's words are especially powerful:

The new spiritually awakened man ... fervidly searches for his true companion, equal to him in interior stature, who can be his inspiration in the highest and most original sense of the word, the comprehensive friend, the collaborator of his works ...

This couple can create a new synthesized human, almost a new, great, and powerful being in which the feminine and masculine characteristics join to be considered, interwoven, and merged into a glorious superior unity.¹¹

Ciapetti was very active in Rome's Lego Teosofica Indipendente (Independent Theosophical League), organizing conferences and writing articles, both before and after her marriage to Assagioli. Esposito notes that *Ultra* described her as "a distinguished lady" who was able to express herself "with great clarity of ideas and elegance of form." He continues with a quote from a 1916 bulletin in *Ultra* that described her as "young and cultivated ... with a heart inflamed for the theosophical doctrine of which she is worthy to espouse ... very much lauded for the exquisite form of her discourse."¹²

While Esposito imagines Roberto and Nella's love for each other growing during the years they worked together on theosophical conferences and articles for *Ultra*, Giovetti states that Nella had actually been a patient of his, seeking help for depression after falling in love with another. In her account of the Assagiolis as a married couple, Giovetti quotes their niece Donatella Ciapetti Assagioli: "The atmosphere in their house was of peace. When they were old, I could hear them in their room playing like two kids, laughing and teasing each other. They were very united, and they both had a great willingness to let the other do what he or she wanted."¹³ Lunelli also notes that "They were different people, but complementary and communication between them was easy."¹⁴

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⁷ Luisa M. Lunelli. *Roberto, Nella e Luisa*. Centro Studi di Psicosintesi 'R. Assagioli', Firenze, 1991.

⁸ Roberto Assagioli. *Freedom in jail*. C.A. Lombard, (Ed.). Florence, Italy: Istituto di Psicosintesi, 2016.

⁹ Paola Giovetti, *Roberto Assagioli: La vita e l'opera del fondatore della Psicosintesi*. Rome: Edizioni Mediterranee, 1995/

¹⁰ Roberto Assagioli, Considerator, *Il Mondo Interiore*, William Esposito. (Ed.). Vicenza, Italy: Edizioni Teosofiche Italiane, 2008, pp. 35-46. (All translations from Italian into English are mine.)

¹¹ Nella Ciapetti Assagioli, "L'amore della donna", *Ultra*, 1925, n. 4, p. 50 as cited in the Introduction by Esposito, W. in Roberto Assagioli, Considerator, *Il Mondo Interiore*, p. 35.

¹² Esposito in Assagioli, Considerator, *Il Mondo Interiore*, p. 37.

¹³ Giovetti, p. 50.

¹⁴ Lunelli, p. 54.

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Similarly to Herron, Esposito notes Ciapetti's role as the coordinator of the women's movement "Portatrici di lampade" (Lamp-Bearers) in 1920. In 1924, Ciapetti held a conference on "Spiritual Motherhood," (Ilario was just a year old at the time). And in 1926, when the young couple relocated to Rome, their home became the seat of the Istituto di Cultura e di Terapia Psichica (Institute of Culture and Psychic Therapy), which in 1933 was renamed the Istituto di Psiconsintesi (Psychosynthesis Institute). In addition, the Assagiolis continued to hold theosophical activities at their home, courses for members every Tuesday evening, public conferences, meditations during the full moon, and annual festivals such as the "Festa del Loto Bianco" (The Festival of the White Lotus held on 8 May).¹⁵

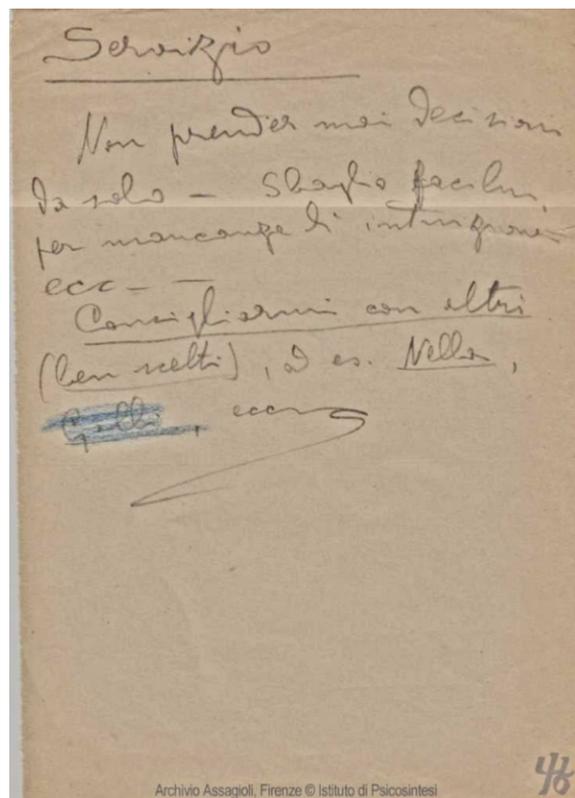
Lunelli relates a number of anecdotes about the couple in her book. Perhaps the one I find most endearing is her account of how "their long and loving couplehood conserved hints from their youth." Whenever Ciapetti would dress for an elegant event, after she finished with the selection of her bag, gloves and perfumed handkerchief, Assagioli would enter the room to help pick out her jewelry. He would then place the selected ring on her finger, latch her necklace around her neck and help her fasten her earrings. Once finished, he would withdraw slightly to take a good look at both the particulars and at her altogether. Lunelli remembers one time in particular:

He would look at Nella with the pleasure of a husband who is going to present a beautiful wife to his friends. Nella was very beautiful. And then I mischievously asked, "Roberto, when are you going on another honeymoon?" "We will put it in immediately on the program!" he lost no time in responding to me.¹⁶

Perhaps this note (Figure 3) from Assagioli's archives speaks best about the couple's relationship:

Servizio – Non prender mai decisioni da solo. Sbaglio facil. per mancanza di intuizione, ecc. Consigliarmi con altri (ben scelti), ad es. Nella, ecc.¹⁷

[Service – Never take a decision alone. I easily make a mistake for a lack of intuition, etc. Consult with another (well-chosen), for example Nella, etc.].



The image shows a handwritten note on aged, yellowish paper. At the top, the word "Servizio" is written in cursive and underlined. Below it, the text reads: "Non prender mai decisioni da solo - Sbaglio facil. per mancanza di intuizione, ecc. Consigliarmi con altri (ben scelti), ad es. Nella, ecc." There is a large, sweeping arrow drawn at the bottom of the page, pointing from left to right. In the bottom right corner, there is a small handwritten mark that looks like "4/8". At the very bottom of the page, there is a small printed line: "Archivio Assagioli, Firenze © Istituto di Psiconsintesi".

Figure 3. Assagioli's note from his archives in which he talks about Ciapetti.

Nella's spiritual intuition and consultation as a wife was accompanied by a practical side. As described by Lunelli in *Freedom in Jail*, the night Assagioli was arrested in 1940, Ciapetti quickly went into action. She immediately called the prison to arrange for proper meals to be delivered to Roberto's cell, sent a telegram to psychosynthesis friends in the U.S., called friends in Rome, and tidied up the papers on his desk. Afterwards, she spent most of the night in prayer "for Roberto in jail and for Italy at war."¹⁸

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¹⁵ Esposito in Assagioli, *Considerator, Il Mondo Interiore*, p. 39.

¹⁶ Lunelli, p. 54.

¹⁷ Roberto Assagioli, *Archivio Assagioli, Istituto di Psiconsintesi, Florence*. ID # 9425.

¹⁸ Roberto Assagioli, *Freedom in Jail*, pp. 78-82.

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Rev. George D. Herron: Christian Socialist and Pacifist

I have included the excerpt of Herron's observations of Assagioli and Ciapetti in the next section. Meanwhile, you might be wondering who this Rev. George D. Herron was. And what was a preacher from Indiana doing in Florence hanging out with the Italian intellectuals of the day?

Herron was born of devoutly religious parents of Scottish origin. His childhood, as he describes it, was obsessed with premonitions of a religious world mission and of an imminent kingdom of Heaven on Earth.¹⁹ In 1883 he married Mary Everhard, entered the ministry and further educated himself through reading and independent reflection. Herron first attracted public notice in 1891 when, as pastor of the First Congregational Church of Lake City, Minn., he addressed the state Association of Congregational Ministers upon the theme: "The Message of Jesus to Men of Wealth." This address, published that same year, was an earnest and moving appeal for the application of Christian ethics to business.

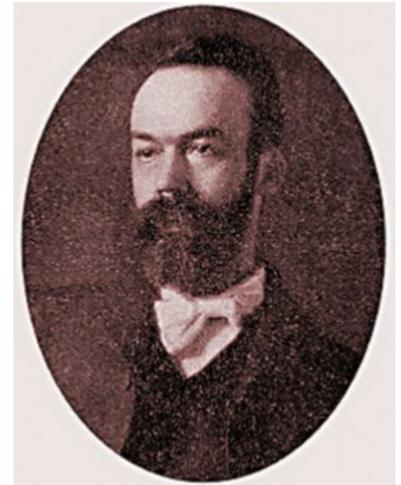


Figure 4. George Davis Herron in 1900.

As a result, he received a professorship of applied Christianity at Iowa College (later renamed Grinnell College). During the six years of his service, Iowa College became the center of nation-wide interest because of his attempt to translate Christianity into social, political, and economic terms. He brought to this work a fervor and eloquence which attracted students and impressed many men and women of insight and influence. His scathing criticism of existing institutions, however, aroused bitter antagonism and ultimately alienated many of his most loyal supporters. As a consequence, he resigned his professorship in 1899.

He then joined the Socialist party and tried to organize within it a "social crusade," hoping to give religious character to the movement. Mrs. E. D. Rand and her daughter, Carrie Rand (1867–1914) cooperated with him in various undertakings. This mother and daughter team were involved in social causes for most of their lives.²⁰ While Mrs. Rand helped to fund and create departments at Grinnell, her daughter Carrie was also prominently involved at the same college as a physical education instructor, "principal of women," and as a financial supporter of the construction of the E. D. Rand Gymnasium for Women.

In March 1901 Herron's wife divorced him for "cruelty culminating in desertion." Polite society was scandalized as Herron had abandoned his wife and five children to have a love affair with the younger Carrie Rand. The court ended up awarding his former wife and children Carrie Rand's personal fortune of \$60,000. Later that year, he and Rand were married in New York City by a ceremony wherein "each chose the other as companion," thus dramatizing his avowed opposition to "all coercive institutions." (It is interesting that Herron and Assagioli were both married, divorced, and remarried to second wives who were heiresses of vast estates.) Herron was at once defrocked from the ministry and shortly afterward, in order to escape publicity, took up permanent residence with his wife and her mother upon an estate near Fiesole, Italy.

During World War I, Herron was greatly valued for his intelligence and analyses of the Italian and German situation. Having the confidence of both President Wilson and the German emissaries, Herron helped to forge negotiations

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¹⁹ The condensed description in this section comes from C. M. S., *Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. VIII as cited by "Indiana Authors and their Books," retrieved 10 May 2018 from <http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/inauthors/view?docId=encyclopedia/VAA5365-01.xml&brand=ia-books&brand=ia-books&field1=text&freeformQuery=herron&startDoc=1&chunk.id=ina-v1-entry-0399&toc.id=ina-v1-entry-0399>

²⁰ This condensed description of the Rands comes from: Herron, Carrie Rand. (n.d.) *The Cambridge Dictionary of American Biography*, by John S. Bowman. (1995). Retrieved April 27 2018 from <https://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Herron%2c+Carrie+Rand>

(Continued from [page 21](#))

for peace in 1918. Through his influence on the German representatives, he was able to convince them to trust Wilson's power to enforce upon the Allies conditions favorable to Germany.

Towards the end of his life, Herron turned to Italy as a final Utopian hope. During the 1920s, Herron probably met Assagioli while attending one of the events held at the Philosophical Library where "crowded audiences gather to hear lectures upon innumerable subjects."²¹ Herron published articles in European and American periodicals, expounding his "ecstatic confidence" that Italy would become a "more Christly society than the world has yet known."²² He died in Munich in 1925 at the age of 63.

Excerpt from *The Revival of Italy* by George D. Herron²³

... But the Modernist Movement is only one of numerous kindred activities in Florence. Of especially fair portent are the groups gathering about the Philosophical Library, founded some years ago by Mrs. Julia H. Scott,²⁴ a revered and remarkable American woman. These groups are led and inspired by Dr. Roberto Assagioli, a young psychologist known to English and Americans, and possessed of an unusual discernment of mind as well as purity and power of spirit; and also by Professors Ferrando and Marrucchi.²⁵ Under their direction, the Library is the centre of varied intellectual pronouncements and efforts, each with a spiritual purpose, and all marking a high tide in the spiritual springtime. Crowded audiences gather to hear lectures upon innumerable subjects—upon the social psychology of Christ; upon Buddha and Buddhism; upon Tagore²⁶ and Young India²⁷; upon William James²⁸ and Walt Whitman; upon sexual education and civic morality; upon whatever men and movements may, in any and every part of the world, be making for the reconciliation of classes and nations. Also at the Philosophical Library was created the Association for Religious and Moral Progress, instituted by Professor Puglisi.²⁹ It was initiated by a

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²¹ Herron, p. 106.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 106-109.

²⁴ Mrs. Julia H. Scott was a wealthy American theosophist and friend of Harriet Isabella Cooper-Oakley (1854-1914), prominent theosophist and author. Scott founded the Philosophical Lending Library in Florence. She spent many years teaching theosophy, despite ill-health and advancing years, first in England, then in Italy, and finally in Switzerland.

²⁵ Guido Ferrando (1883–1969) and Father Salvatore Minocchi (1869–1943) were both speakers at the Philosophical Library. Minocchi was an important exponent of Catholic modernism. Ferrando taught English language and literature at the University of Florence until the early 1930s. In 1935 he moved to the US, where he became a philosophy professor at Vassar College, New York State. During the Second World War he moved to Ojai, California, and in 1946 participated, together with Aldous Huxley and J. Krishnamurti, in the creation of a school inspired by Theosophical pedagogical methods, Happy Valley School, later renamed Besant Hill School. This had been a long standing project initiated by A. Besant herself in the late 1920s. (Marco Pasi, "Theosophy and Anthroposophy in Italy during The First Half of the Twentieth Century," *Theosophical History*, XVI: 2, April 2012, p. 95 and fn. 78, p. 115.)

²⁶ Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), Bengali poet and Nobel Prize winner, was invited by Mussolini in 1926 to visit Italy. Assagioli was part of the entourage, along with Carlo Formichi and Giuseppe Tucci (both eminent scholars in oriental studies from the University of Rome), accompanying Tagore during his two-week visit. Assagioli wrote three articles about Tagore: 1) "Tagore", *Il progresso religioso*, VII-VIII, 1922, pp.161-178. 2) "Impressioni sulla visita di Tagore in Italia", *Ultra*, 4, 1926, pp. 234-239. 3) "Rabindranath Tagore poeta, mistico, educatore", *Rassegna Italiana*, CI, 101, 1926, pp. 684-694.

²⁷ It is unclear exactly what Herron is referring to here, but *Young India* was the name of the weekly Indian journal published by Gandhi from 1919-1931, in which he spread his unique ideology and thoughts with regard to nonviolence in organizing movements.

²⁸ William James (1842–1910) was an American philosopher and psychologist, and the first educator to offer a psychology course in the United States. In 1906 James published in the *Journal of Philosophy* his well-known paper on "G. Papini and the Pragmatist Movement in Italy" in which he vividly describes the enthusiasm for pragmatism of Giovanni Papini and the small band associated with the journal *Leonardo*. *The Philosophical Library was a meeting place and conference center for the Leonardians. Assagioli was intensively involved with this group. By 1907, he was the magazine's administrator, one of its financiers and the chief editor* (Guggisberg Nocelli, pp. 6-8).

²⁹ Professor Mario Puglisi Pico (1867-1954) was a philosopher, theologian and ecumenical Methodist. The Association for Religious and Moral Progress (Associazione per il Progresso Morale e Religioso) had branches in Torino, Palermo, Genova, and Rome, and from 1922-1931 issued the bimonthly *Il progresso religioso*. In 1922, the magazine published Assagioli's article on Tagore (see footnote 27) and in the March-April 1931 issue, there is a summary of a talk Assagioli gave in Rome entitled *Le crisi di Crescenza spirituale* (The Crises of Spiritual Growth; p. 66). To see a copy of the 1931 issue, go to http://www.tpsalomonreinach.mom.fr/Reinach/MOM_TP_129645/MOM_TP_129645_0001/PDF/MOM_TP_129645_0001.pdf

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powerful appeal on the part of Senatore Alessandro Chiappelli³⁰ for the creation of a spiritual synthesis of the east and the west, of inner regeneration and constructive activity. This appeal has appeared in the review, *Il Progresso Religioso*, published by the Association.

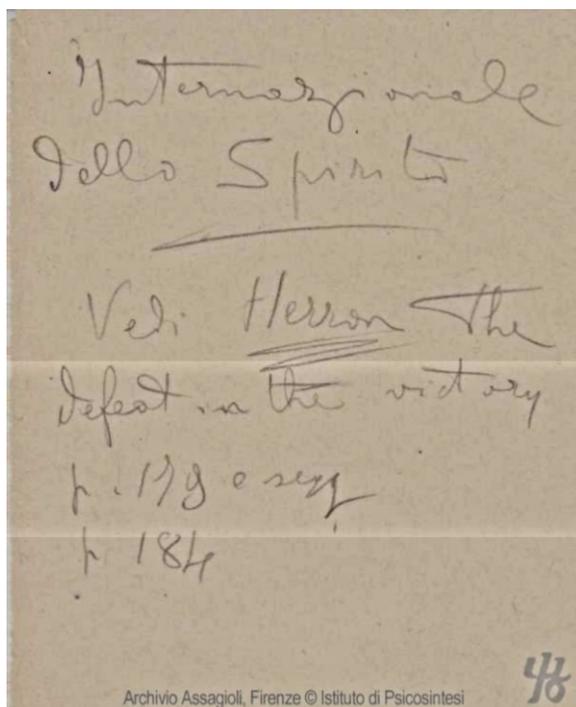


Figure 5. Assagioli's note from his archives in which he cites Herron's book *The Defeat of Victory: "Internazionale dello Spirito - Vedi Herron, The defeat in the victory, p. 179 e segg. p. 184"* (Doc # 19372).³⁶

Dr. Assagioli would accredit the spiritual ferment in the Italian Youth to their "great dissatisfaction with old forms and old methods in every field: religion, philosophy, education, social and political activities. There is in them a deep yearning, a passionate impatience, for something new and better." They are "eagerly searching, looking into the past and toward the future, to the East and to the West," for something to satisfy their spiritual hunger. "There is still confusion and groping," but the young men and women "are finding their way," and finding it through a quest that is at once "spiritual and practical, mystical and constructive." And Assagioli himself, if asked for his purpose, and if asked to state wherein it is typical of the Italian revival, would say that he is seeking the formation of a true "science of the soul" — in which science may be included a vital synthesis of all recent discoveries and developments of scientific psychology with the intuitions and inner experiences and methods of oriental spiritual experience and Christian mystical consciousness. He has recently expressed his conceptions in a course of lectures on "The Phases and Methods of Spiritual Development."

movement centres, in the person of Countess Matilde Marfori Savini.³¹ The movement was founded and is inspired by Miss Nella Ciapetti, a young woman of great spiritual and intellectual power. But the work of the Lamp-Bearers was preceded and predicated by the admirable movement started in Rome, under the name of *Vita Morale*, by Professor Guglielmina Ronconi,³² a true apostle of love, knowing the hearts of the women of Italy, and understanding the Italian peoples, even unto the down most outcasts. The movement has taken its motto from Mazzini,³³ and has

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³⁰ Alessandro Carlo Francesco Roberto Bruno Chiappelli (1857-1931) was a philosopher, Italian scholar, and university professor. From 1910-1913, he was a City Counselor of Florence charged with the mission of research and study on Florentine Renaissance art throughout the archives and libraries of Florence. (Retrieved 5 May 2018 from "Senato della Repubblica," <http://notes9.senato.it/web/senregno.nsf/1574bd814f1ff77dc12571140059a42d/86785fb59833a2b24125646f005a16cf?OpenDocument>)

³¹ Countess Matilde Marfori Savini was the wife of Filippo Malfori Savini (1877-1952), painter and engraver. In 1916 he founded the International Academy of Painting and Graving in Florence. In the same year he was given the silver medal of the *Belle Arti* Society of Florence.

³² Guglielmina Ronconi (1864-1936) was an Italian philanthropist who devoted herself to welfare work at the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1907 she founded the *Vita Morale* (Work of Moral Life), an educational organization whose goal was the moral elevation of the Italian people. Later, she carried out intense philanthropic activity in many Italian prisons, in particular in Rome, at the Mantellate prison. There she created an educational and rehabilitation system to reintegrate minors into society.

³³ Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-1872) was an Italian politician, journalist, activist for the unification of Italy and spearhead of the Italian revolutionary movement. His efforts helped bring about an independent and unified Italy. Assagioli has a picture of Mazzini in his office, hanging alongside photos of his wife and son. Assagioli greatly admired Mazzini, seeing him as a leader of spiritual internationalization. Many of Mazzini's beliefs reflect psychosynthesis concepts. For example, Mazzini formulated a concept known as *thought and action*, in which thought and action must be joined together, and every thought must be followed by action. One quote of Mazzini's from Assagioli's archives is: "*Credo in una religione futura che rivelerà i rapporti dello spirito colla società universale.*" (I believe in a future religion that will reveal the relationship of the spirit with the universal society.) (Assagioli Archives, Istituto di

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made of his writings somewhat of a gospel. “We desire to feel,” so runs a sentence in a Lamp-Bearer prospectus, “that there exists, under all the diversities of races, creeds or tendencies of thought, the same fundamental and sacred humanity.” These young women have a very complete programme of inner spiritual work, of individual regeneration, of mutual spiritual and practical help, of education on modern advanced subjects, such as the new free methods of teaching in the schools, sexual instruction, social work among the children of the workers. They also devote themselves to prison reform and moral help among the prisoners. And one of their chief purposes is the promotion of international goodwill and fraternity, through seeking to bring together, in mutual understanding and various services, the women of all nations and races.

The work of the Lamp-Bearers is, of course, but part of the great awakening and amazing progress among Italian women in recent years. Among these kindred movements may be named the *Unione delle Donne Cattoliche*,³⁴ whose large membership is well organised and kept in hand by the Church authorities. These are doing useful social work, though of a restricted kind, and also somewhat in opposition to the more progressive feminist movements. Then there is the *Consiglio Nazionale delle Donne Italiane*, which promotes and co-ordinates the activities of all other free feminist movements. It is ably led by Gabriella Spalletti Rasponi,³⁵ an indeed superior woman, who combines genuine religious fervour with clear intellectual insight and practical efficiency and adaptability. Under her wise leadership, the Italian feminist movements have avoided the excesses of militant feminism of other countries; and this while working vigorously for all the rights of women as citizens and for their education and preparation for public activity and position.



Figure 6. Contessa Gabriella Spalletti Rasponi, the first President of the Psychosynthesis Institute in Rome.

Final Thoughts

Nearly 100 years later, we can wonder at this vibrant, active community of philosophers, writers, and spiritual thinkers – men and women – who gathered at the Biblioteca Filosofica in Florence. Assagioli and Ciapetti were both not only present, but leading others towards a new vision of humanity as well as what it might mean to be a couple. The early 1920s were born out of “The War to End All Wars,” which garnered the hope needed to catapult a period of social, cultural and spiritual transformation. Windows were metaphorically thrown wide open and anything seemed possible. As a new European republic, Italy, was especially poised to assume its role and Florence, the city of Dante and the Renaissance, even more so. Today we can only imagine the sound of the philosophers’

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Psiconsintesi, Florence, Italy, ID#12800.)

³⁴ In 1908, the *Unione delle Donne Cattoliche* (Union of Italian Catholic Women; UDACI) was organized by Catholic women under the guidance of the Marquise Maria Cristina Giustiniani Bandini, and continued to operate until 1970. They had a more conservative agenda in line with the Catholic Church’s directives than the National Council of Italian Women *Consiglio Nazionale Donne Italiane* (See also footnote 34.)

³⁵ Contessa Gabriella Spalletti Rasponi (1853-1931) was the first President of the Institute of Psychosynthesis in Rome, which in 1926 was initially called the *Istituto di Cultura e Terapia Psichica* (Institute of Culture and Psychic Therapy). Assagioli greatly admired her and her work as an international leader. In 1904, she founded and was president of the National Council of Italian Women (*Consiglio Nazionale Donne Italiane*; CNDI), an organization that promoted women’s labor equality and justice in terms of legal, social, familial rights and occupational safety. They also believed in women’s suffrage. (Catherine Ann Lombard, “Psychosynthesis Granny Power.” Retrieved 8 May 2018 from <https://loveandwill.com/2018/03/04/psychosynthesis-granny-power/>)

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mingled voices, envision their nodding of heads, feel their excitement upon learning of oriental spirituality. We can only imagine ... and yet we can also prosper from what we have inherited from them — the opportunity to synthesize high intellectual understanding with worldwide spiritual perceptions. ■



Catherine Ann Lombard, MA, is a psychosynthesis psychologist, counselor, and researcher. She has published numerous articles on psychosynthesis, including a detailed comparison of Jungian psychology and psychosynthesis. You can download this article (along with others) and follow her bi-monthly blog at loveandwill.com. You can also join her from September 17-23 for Journey to Places of the Higher Self. The focus of this journey is to calmly and peacefully allow for encounters of the Higher Self in majestic forests and sacred places found in the beautiful region of Umbria, Italy. For more information, visit poeticplaces.org.



Without forgiveness life is governed by . . . an endless cycle of resentment and retaliation.

— Roberto Assagioli

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A Question of Place

Diederik van Rossum

“Where are you?” is the first question that is asked in the Bible (Gen. 3:9). This seems a remarkable beginning. The First Landscaper has just laid out a heavenly garden with all the trimmings and decides to start an experiment in it called *human being*. Would he forget the place of such a fragile and new experiment in his own garden and suddenly not know where Adam and Eve are?



I once laid out a garden myself. When the job is done, you know perfectly well where everything is! In the places in the garden where you have hidden some seeds, you even put a card in the ground to remember that place. You do that also in case someone else would think that where nothing can be seen nothing is alive.

The Garden of Eden’s Landscaper does not ask *who* you are or *why* you are here, he asks *where* you are. Perhaps, he didn’t want to know where Adam and Eve were in the literal sense. Otherwise, Adam would surely have shouted: “We’re here!” But that is not Adam’s answer.

“Where are you?” is not only the first question, but may also be the most important question. When you realise where you are, you don’t have to think very long about why you are there and what you have to do. Just try it when you are, for example, in the supermarket.

The echo of this first question still reverberates via social media. When I listen carefully while travelling by bus or train, I fancy myself among gardeners in a modern-day Garden of Eden. A mobile phone rings, somebody answers the phone, listens and asks: “Where are you?” Several times a day we answer to this first and foremost question. If you have activated your “show location” button, you can let everybody know where you are all the time. Just as a drop of water doesn’t excavate a stone with force, but by continuous falling (as Ovid once wrote), we might, through the perpetual confrontation with this first question, start to realise where we are.

Looking at this question in this way, we live in a heyday of spiritual geography. Everything is a question of place. Where are you in relation to yourself, to the other, and most of all, where are you in relation to the world? Where are you in your imagination and where are you in an ethical and spiritual sense? It is indeed only this one question in countless disguises, over and over again. You cannot *find* the answer to this question; you can only give your answer. In fact, every time you dare to give your answer to this timeless question, you are in your place.■



Diederik van Rossum is the director of the Dutch Institute of Psychosynthesis <https://psychosynthese.nl/>.

This summer Diederik will teach the course “I”—The story of the Self in English during the Dutch Psychosynthesis Summerschool from July 5th until July 9th 2018. Take advantage of this unique opportunity and sign up now. Want to get an idea what the Dutch Psychosynthesis Summerschool is like? For more information visit <https://psychosynthese.nl/event/i-the-story-of-the-self/>.

Will and Surrender

Jan Kuniholm

In an article called *FRITTO MISTO (a kettle of fish)* that appeared in the June 2017 issue of *Psychosynthesis Quarterly*, Isabelle Clotilde Küng wrote

I vehemently complained to Assagioli, in one of our unabashed conversations in his study-room, that I just could not understand that nice people, kind people—devotees too—and even *smart* people, would exclaim with a sigh, when they failed, “Oh God: Thy will be done, not mine!” To my surprise, Assagioli gently but firmly answered that my instinct, in this case, was sane and that God “*non ha a che fare con persone di volonta debole cio é pocco sviluppata!*” God “has nothing to do with weak-willed people; that's something that must be developed!” . . . So ever since he told me that “the weak—that is persons who have not thoroughly developed their will—cannot serve God efficiently,” I was reconciled with that popular exclamation, which I changed into “May I develop my will in such a manner that it aligns with God’s Will.”

Recently, after the great 2017 fire in Southern California, the blog at Meditation Mount printed a quote from a former patient of Carl Jung’s that, the Meditation Mount people wrote, may have given Roberto Assagioli much strength in accepting the reality he was facing during World War II as a prisoner of the fascists:

Out of evil much good has come to me. By keeping quiet, expecting nothing, remaining attentive and by accepting reality, taking things as they are and not as I want these to be, by doing all this, rare knowledge has come to me and rare powers as well as I could never imagined before. I used to think that when we accept things they overpower us in one way or another. Now this is not true, it is only by accepting them that one can learn the right attitude toward them.

So, now I intend playing the game of life, being receptive to whatever comes to me – good or bad, sun and shadow that are forever shifting and, in this way, also accepting my own nature with positive and negative sides. Thus everyone comes more alive to me. What a fool I was! How I tried to force everything to go according to my ideas.¹

In *Freedom in Jail*², the account and notes of Assagioli’s time in prison edited by Catherine Ann Lombard, Assagioli wrote,

I asked myself, “What attitude to take? What to make of it?” —a wholehearted, generous acceptance: elimination of vain rebellion, irritation, self-pity, and all kinds of negative reactions . . . it is magical, it transforms and transfigures the situation . . . acceptance: *not* a passive, sad “resignation,” but a positive/serene acceptance of an unavoidable condition, an elimination of all useless emotional reactions and rebellion — an active search of the best way of utilizing in the fullest measure the opportunities offered by the new situation.

In many classical spiritual disciplines one is exhorted to surrender one’s will to the will of God, as in the quote attributed to Jesus in The Gospel According to Luke (22:42) that Isabelle Küng repeated above. I find myself in times of great stress and trouble pondering this issue. Both Jung and Assagioli have written on the need for one to accept reality, and yet Assagioli in particular stressed the need to develop one’s own will in order to “serve God efficiently.”

But I am concerned on another level, because will is something I *encounter* as well something I am or employ, even within myself. And *which* will? I encounter will in my subpersonalities, in my “personal self,” in my higher Self. And in my inner dialogue (or sometimes it is better called a food fight) they (or we—all the voices within) all, of course,

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claim and use the word “I.” When I am struggling to grow, to learn, am I trying to get one of my subpersonalities to “surrender” to *my* will? Is acceptance of reality a kind of surrender? But—importantly—Assagioli, when Ms. Küng brought up the concept of surrender, responded that some people surrender only when they have failed to accomplish something!

When I first encountered the “great inner voice” in a hospital bed 40 years ago, I was inwardly presented with the necessity to make a *choice* to live or not to live, yet I was assured that the power that sustained me was at a “deeper” level than that of the self who was afraid of dying. I was assured by that inner voice that the sustaining power would see that my choice was realized.

It was, and so I am still here. Several times in subsequent years I — the “me” of everyday life—have encountered what I now choose to call my higher Self, at moments when an important choice or decision was to be made. Each time, I “received” something that allowed me to feel that the choice of a certain path of action was the (best) one for me to choose—yet always with the full knowledge that I could freely choose another way if I wanted to. I experienced a curious blend of feeling that I was freely making my own choice, that it was truly the best choice, and yet at the same time that this choice was inevitable—a synthesis of my personal will and the will of one “higher” than me. In each case I made my choice (*knowing* that I could freely choose otherwise) and then relaxed—surrendered, perhaps—into the flow of events; and in each case I have never, even decades later, regretted the choice I made, even when that choice led me through hardship and pain.

It seems to me that Assagioli was cautioning against the misinterpretation of what Jesus said, “Father, if thou art willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done.”³ The context of this quote from Luke was that Jesus was facing the prospect of betrayal, torture, and execution, and a part of him prayed that this prospect might be removed from him—but in the end, he recognized that will operates on many levels, and that his commitment required him to follow through with what he recognized as the purpose of his life, even if it led him through suffering and death. This was an act of surrender of the will, but not an act of sad acquiescence in the face of failure. It was an act of decision, of *alignment*, of the personal will *with* the higher will. The word “surrender” often connotes a kind of self-abnegation, a kind of “I am nothing, you are everything.” In distinction to this kind of surrender, Roberto Assagioli was teaching Isabelle Küng that the kind of surrender that Jesus made was one of great affirmation, the result of a lifetime of willed activity. And yet, many who make such a surrender do, in fact, often feel that it is precisely the attitude of “you are everything” that makes this surrender possible. This is not self-abnegation, but the arrival at non-duality.

Rumi tells the story of one who knocks on the Beloved’s door.

“Who is there?” a voice asks.
“It is I,” the seeker responds.
“There is no room here for you and me,” says the voice.
The door was shut.
A year later the seeker again, after much experience
and some illumination, knocks at the door.
“Who is there?” the voice asks.
“It is You,” the seeker responds.
“Enter,” says the voice, and the door was opened..



For some, a sign that such surrender is truly a *decision* for alignment with higher Self, or with God, is that the one making this decision feels great, even overwhelming, peace about the decision—a kind of peace that feels like being happily carried along with the grand, serene flow of a mighty river rather than the “peace” of self-abnegation and failure. My own experience is that a variety of synchronicities and syntheses often accompany a decisive type of

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surrender. Events often seem to align to support the decision; apparent opposites such as “will” and “surrender” seem to melt into a synthesis or whole in which there is a feeling of “destiny” or “inevitability.”

So I am suggesting that after one has trained and developed one’s will and has come in conscious contact with an inner—higher—Self, then the alignment of will at certain choice-points will *feel* like surrender—and it will feel very *good*. Not the absence of will, but the fulfillment of it.

I think it is essential that we keep in mind that there are levels of human being, just as there are levels of geologic strata and levels of atmospheric activity. If you stand outside on a windy day it is quite possible for you to feel the wind in your face blowing from east to west, and while looking up at the clouds you may see them, and the greater wind current, moving rapidly from west to east. Assagioli’s descriptions of subpersonalities, personal self, and higher or transpersonal Self are descriptions of the layers or levels of the human being, and it is helpful for us to recall that each level has its own will—even though it may be said that all levels are subsumed by the highest level. I use the word “highest” here in an analogy, again, with the earth’s atmosphere. The “highest” levels of the atmosphere include or subsume all the lower layers or levels, even though the direction of energy on one level may appear to be the opposite of the flow at another level. So while a subpersonality may feel like a failure if one of its choices or projects is not fulfilled, this “failure” may fit exactly in a higher Self’s “life plan” that *includes* the personality. An example of this was the crisis I went through in getting cancer 40 years ago, in which the “business as usual” attitude of my personal self was seemingly threatened with extinction—as a result of many years of self-destructive attitudes and behavior—unless and until I decided to surrender to a greater flow into Life, which required change. Ordinarily we do not expect a subpersonality to have much awareness of the higher Self without training and concentration, but rather it is enough (for personal psychosynthesis) if the personal self opens up awareness of itself and its subpersonalities, and attempts to integrate them. Even then, how does one—at any level—move from failure, opposition, separation, to unity, alignment, integration?

Roberto Assagioli wrote of genuine will as opposed to what he called “the Victorian conception of will.” I prefer to use the term “coercive will” because “Victorian” requires us to have some knowledge of the history of British culture and of the coercive forms of action and repression that were not only common but celebrated and encouraged in 19th-century Great Britain, as well as in many other nations. The “coercive will” is the one we use when we try to “make ourselves” do “the right thing,” and we find it in people of all nations and cultures. Assagioli pointed out, in *The Act of Will*, that the coercive will is actually a caricature of will, for the function of will is not to *force* the accomplishment of one’s purposes, but to direct, regulate, balance and utilize all the other activities and energies without repressing any of them.⁴ I think there may often be a lot of negotiating and persuasion done between levels, yet the strongest motive for integration within us is unconditional love and acceptance of ourselves—our parts and aspects, our subpersonalities, habits, perceptions, functions, and stories. Love is the threshold of surrender.

The Oxford Dictionary defines “surrender” in its primary use as follows: to “stop resisting an enemy or opponent and submit to their authority.” When we note that a common condition of dysfunctional subpersonalities is that they are often in *opposition* to other aspects of the personality, to the overall personal self, and the higher Self, we can see that the end of resistance is the first step toward integration. Unfortunately, western culture is so imbued with violence and coercion on so many levels—and celebrates it—that even our language is permeated with it, so that surrender is commonly defined as submittal, in a battleground sense of the submittal to an enemy. But what if we are intending surrender *to a friend—to a beloved*?

I had a dream one night 40 years ago, of myself being in a glass house that was being attacked by a gigantic dark creature who pounded on the glass walls to break through while I stood petrified on the other side of the glass. Suddenly the creature began to break the glass and come into the house, and I turned and ran away in terror—right out of the dream. But just before the moment of awakening I looked back and saw that the dark creature, as it broke through the glass, was turning into a beautiful young man dressed in white reaching his arms out to me (clearly, I used

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the common light-dark symbolism in a way that is predominant in European and American culture). Author Jane Roberts coined the expression “prejudiced perception”⁵ to indicate that our “normal” waking perceptions are more than distorted lenses: they are entire structures of mind that create the experience that we know and channel it into “approved” patterns and either distort or suppress all “unapproved” patterns.

It is only when we have made a decision, on some level of our being, to expand our consciousness that we may allow ourselves to consider alternate ways of perceiving reality and experience. What then may happen is similar to what happened in the aftermath of my dream: I was able to consider that what I had always considered a threat might, in fact, be the attempts of “a friend” to contact me, to help me to open up to benevolent energies that were greater than those I was accustomed to employing in my life. For the “creature” in my dream was clearly more “powerful” than I was. But also that same “great inner voice” I mentioned earlier was also at a higher level than my personal self, for it offered me the classic panoramic yet instantaneous view of my entire life from a point of deeper knowledge than I possessed—it was an “atmosphere” above me, and “included” me—and assured me that my decision to live—and surrender—in the face of cancer would be supported. And here I am, 40 years later, to tell the story!

The best term, I think, to describe the ideal condition of will within a human being is “alignment.” When the will of one level is congruent with the will of all other levels, when a human being is “unified,” there is no inner conflict, no dysfunction, no dis-ease. There is health, well-being, harmony, peace. In the ideal condition, the will can operate without hindrance. The question has always been how to get to this state. A particular kind of “peak experience” such as the one that I personally experienced, which was a kind of one-on-one direct contact between the personal self and the higher Self, can begin the process of alignment in a person who is highly conflicted, but this kind of “inner intervention” only begins the process; it does not complete it.

The reason that such a contact is not “conclusive” in affecting alignment is that all the levels of the person have, and continue to have, free will. I discovered that this beautiful experience gave me an inner momentum that lasted for decades, but it did not *ipso facto* eliminate my prejudiced perceptions or my misconceptions; it did not automatically change the stances of my subpersonalities; it did not sweep through all levels of my being and “cleanse me.” It did not *coerce* me into goodness or wholeness. As it turns out, healing usually or always requires *continual* acts of will at each level of our being. The kind of deliberate, conscious act that aligns a lower—that is, more limited—level of one’s being with a higher—that is, more spacious—part of one’s being is what the spiritual traditions call *surrender of the will*. All the traditions affirm that this act is itself a supremely conscious act, not of failure, but a positive act of will. The traditions most often refer to it as an act of *self-surrender* because this act eliminates the *opposition* of the personal self. In it, the personal self deliberately and consciously accepts its true role as a projection or representative of the higher Self, rather than maintaining any illusion or assertion that it is able to exist independently. With this action the personal self becomes able, as Assagioli said, to “serve God efficiently.” But this “action” is in fact a lifetime of actions—of choices made and followed through, of adjustments, of learning, of developing, strengthening, and loving. ■

Notes:

¹ Jung, C.G. *Alchemical Studies*, Book 13 of Collected works of Jung, Princeton University Press 1983. P.47

² *Edizioni Istituto di Psicosintesi*, Firenze, 2016. P.21.

³ Gospel According to Luke, 22:42. Revised Standard Version.

⁴ Assagioli, Roberto. *The Act of Will*, David Platts Publishing Co. 1999. Chapter 2, Page 11

⁵ Roberts, Jane, *The Unknown Reality, Volume I*. Prentice Hall, 1977.



Jan Kuniholm is editor of Psychosynthesis Quarterly.

A Journey to Self Through the Beauty and Magnificence of Florentine Art

Florence, Italy, September 17-26, 2018
Facilitator and Journey Guide: Phyllis L. Clay, PhD

As a participant in this Journey to Self, you will be surrounded by the beauty of Renaissance, Roman, and ancient Etruscan art and architecture, as well as your own beauty. As you absorb the beauty of Florence, Italy, and its environs and allow the experience to take you deeply into your Self, you will have the opportunity to recognize yourself in new ways and move into choices that will sustain you in your life and work.

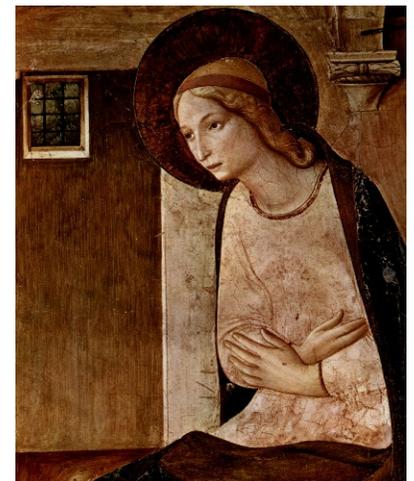


Experience the strength of millennia-old Roman columns and the intertwined arms of the Etruscan goddess. Sit in the forum of the pre-Christian upper world of Fiesole.

Visit the sparkling effervescence of the art of Beato Angelico. For those who know the work of Italian psychiatrist Roberto Assagioli, you may recognize part of his inspiration for the “egg diagram” (his map of human consciousness) in a fresco on the wall of a monastic cell of one of Fra Angelico’s contemporaries.



Be challenged to explore your own response to the call of Self as you step into Martini’s, Angelico’s, and Leonardo’s depictions of Mary’s response to the announcement of her call by the angel. (It wasn’t all sweetness and light!)



With Michelangelo’s sculptures of the prisoners, reflect on your response to aspects of your life that weigh you down. Find your own beauty and strength in his representation of David. And ask

yourself what you love to such depth that you would commit your life to it as Donatello’s Mary Magdalene did to the one whose feet she washed with her hair.



While this Journey does not invite us into a particular tradition, it does invite us each to deeply explore our own solitary Journey to Self: where we are, where we’re going, our responses to our own current situation, and where Self is calling us at this point in our Journey. Through journaling and our own creative expressions (reflective writing, poetry, collage, painting, scribbling, movement) and building on Assagioli’s map of human consciousness, Andean cosmology, and a helpful model for developing our own relationship with Self, we will play and work together for ten days as we each discover our own unique Journey to Self.

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Journeys to Self consist of extraordinary experiences with art, landscape, and history of place, as well as personal reflection in the form of journaling and resulting creative expressions. No prior journaling or creative focus are necessary. Watch it grow spontaneously out of the experience and reflection questions accompanying the Journey. All materials will be supplied. However, if you have favorite creative materials, feel free to bring them along. Plan to check in to Villa la Stella the evening of September 16. Breakfast will be available the morning of the 17th. We will begin our work/play together at 1 p.m. (13:00) Monday, September 17.

Phyllis L. Clay, PhD—Facilitator:



As your facilitator and guide for the Journey, I have deep love for the art and landscape we will visit. Many of the pieces feel like dear friends to me whom I will relish introducing to you. You, of course, will find your own friends among the places we visit. I will be eager to deepen my acquaintance with them, as well! I have found a depth of richness in my own Journeys to Self and have been delighted to observe and be told of the long-term impact these Journeys have on others' lives. I am delighted to companion you as you weave the beauty and meaning of the time together into your own life and discover its invitations to you in the current moment.

I live in the enchanted land of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and am a researcher, a psychosynthesis guide, teacher, and coach. I am the founder of Synthesis International. I am an ongoing apprentice to don Oscar Miro Quesada, Peruvian *curandero* and master ceremonialist and am an endorsed teacher of don Oscar's Pachakuti Mesa Tradition.

Comments about Journeys with Phyllis:

“My journey to Assisi, in conjunction with the amazing efforts and support of Phyllis Clay, brought me many gifts. It helped get me back in touch with my creative side and the necessity to feed and nurture that part of me. More importantly, it taught me to listen and trust that small, still voice inside in a way that I had never experienced before. For that and for so much more, I am eternally grateful.” —*Psychotherapist*

The Journey was “a powerful way to engage both with my Self and with a beautiful and inspiring place.”

— *Counselor/Expressive Artist*

“Starting a brand new chapter of my life, this journey was a good preparation for the next journey.”

—*Educator*

“Expect the unexpected.” —*Executive Coach*

“It wasn't at all what I expected...and it was so much more.” —*Self Healer*

Comments about Phyllis's facilitation:

"Phyllis has a unique ability to create processes that become ritual, which deepen, and deepen, and deepen, creating an environment that allows others to journey into their own experience and discover the wisdom they find there." —*Shamanic Counselor, Transpersonal Guide*

“Phyllis has created a rich combination of theory, experience, and practice.... Phyllis holds a sacred space in which we learn and grow.” —*Life Coach*

“Phyllis's work is a gift of joy, integrity, richness, and clarity, crafted artfully from many sources....I experience Phyllis and her work as wholly nourishing, genuinely satisfying, balancing, honest, and powerful.” —*University Professor*

“Phyllis has a sense of compassion, ease, and gentleness. She organizes to keep the day flowing.” —*Textile Artist/Yoga Teacher*

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Included: The registration fee for the Journey includes facilitation, all materials (with the exception of your personal journal), double occupancy lodging in lovely Villa la Stella in Florence (nights of September 16-26), local transportation from our lodging to Journey sites, all breakfasts, three lunches, and a celebration dinner the final night (September 26).

Check-in: Sunday, September 16. You will have a leisurely morning on September 17. The Journey will begin at 1:00 p.m. (13.00h) on Monday afternoon, September 17, with an orientation to the space, the materials, and our process together. We conclude with dinner on Tuesday, September 26 (lodging the night of the 26th is included). Limited single lodging may be available for an additional charge—inquire when registering.

Refund minus \$600.00 if requested in writing by August 1. Refund not available after August 1.

- \$3559 for registrations form and payment received by June 1
- \$3879 for registration form and payment received between July 1 and July 31
- \$4379 for registration form and payment received between August 1 until August 22
(registration deadline is August 22)
- \$4779 registration after August 22 is on a space-available basis—call or email to confirm space availability.
- \$320 Single Supplement (on a space-available basis—call or email to confirm space availability)

The registration form may be obtained by contacting Phyllis via email..

For answers to your questions, please contact Phyllis Clay (please specify “FI Journey”):

(505-918-4388 or synthesisintl@aol.com).

I would love to have you join us on this Journey to Self!

To register: contact:

**Phyllis Clay
Synthesis International
2924 Espanola St. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110**

e-mail synthesisintl@aol.com

This event begins the day after the International Meeting at Casa Assagioli. See Pages 11-12.

The Age of Aquarius

Shamai Currim

I was born under the sign of Aquarius, February, in the year of the water dragon, 1952, with the purported attributes of perseverance, farsightedness, and vigorousness.

Aquarians are usually thought of as future thinkers, and yet that is not really true; they are people who are living the future in the now. They see things that others can't yet see, and live things that others have not yet found. Aquarians can sometimes take for granted the experiences they have, believing that all others have lived what they take for granted. Some people see Aquarians as arrogant, and shy away from them because they seem to have the characteristic of joyfulness in the face of travesty. They can be seen as quick thinkers and pathfinders. With this kind of mind, they can be seen bulldozing through obstacles that others might find impossible and impenetrable.

Why do I tell you these things? Because I, like many others, am learning the lessons of living in Truth, of the understanding of sincerity and insincerity, of living authentically through the observance of self/Self in everyday life.

Assagioli gave us the tools of observation and the Seven Core Concepts:

- **The Personal Self:** a core concept that is sometimes referred to as "I". This is a central aspect of ourselves that observes external and internal (personal) experience objectively.
- **Disidentification:** a principle that operates as a practice in objective observation. It is a function of the Personal Self.
- **Will:** the ability to make conscious choices once we have engaged in the practice of disidentification.
- **Ideal Model:** the view that role models (people, ideas, values) influence our choices.
- **The Superconscious:** a core concept seen as a part of ourselves, our inner experience, that transcends or urges us toward greater levels of achieving and utilizing our inherent potentials
- **Transpersonal Self:** a core concept that recognizes that we are part of something greater than our personal experience.
- **Synthesis:** an organic process by which we evolve into fulfillment of our inherent potentials.

In Vera Stanley Alder's book *Initiation of the World*, she refers to the nightly review as a tool for concentration, meditation, and contemplation with resultant states of permanent self-control. She states that it prevents the reforming of new inhibitions and repressions while eliminating superficial worrying and thinking in favour of the expansion of the whole mental attitude.

According to Alder, Assagioli put down many human ills to the thwarting of soul development. He wanted to give people a fuller and deeper understanding of the conflicts going on within them and the glorious unfoldment which was striving to take place, a big improvement over psychoanalysis which presented man as a complex mass of reflexes and cravings, mostly of an unpleasant nature, producing deeper revulsions than those which it cured. Alder mentions the 'Ageless Wisdom' which, when followed, can give people hope and inspiration.

Doctors are only just beginning to understand the connection between the body and mind, and yet it is only when the science of the soul can be recognized that barriers of the human mind habits can be broken down.

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Diana Whitmore describes Assagioli's 'Evening Review' as a grounding technique for increasing awareness and self-recognition. It requires a quiet, safe space free of distractions in which you can review, in your mind, all daily occurrences, becoming aware of previously unconscious identification and patterns of behavior. You can allow yourself to be the witness, or objective observer, as you review, in reverse, everything that has occurred in your day. The mental imagery 'Door Exercise' is another useful tool for meeting subpersonalities and further self-awareness, as is the tool of 'Guided Daydreams.'¹

Philip Lindsay, in his article on *Zodiac and Ray Cycles in Esoteric Astrology: The Beginning of the Age of Aquarius*, suggests the year of 2117 as the true astronomical beginning. He states that 'There are ray, planetary and zodiac cycles, all of which have various contexts within the greater "yugas" or wheels' and even though he states that 'Time is an illusion—there is no beginning or end. Yet the science of cycles assists us in understanding the unfoldment of consciousness, the evolution of races and civilizations; ultimately comprehension of the Eternal Now.' Calling himself an "astro-ray-ologer," because he compares astrology to the seven rays, Lindsay suggests that accurate timing of the cycles 'helps to map the unfoldment of human consciousness.'

I am told that, as a person born under the sign of Aquarius, I am truthful, just, curious, affectionate, imaginative, unpredictable, detached, have a tendency to go off-track, and inefficient. Of course, if I name it, then I have to claim it because I am creating through the naming. I therefore assert that I will enjoy my unfolding, become effulgent in my self-awareness, and enthusiastically anticipate my future.

According to the Forrest Astrology Blog <https://www.forreastrology.com/blogs/astrology/age-of-aquarius>, the Age of Aquarius has already started and is said to be coming out of the age of the mystic and correlating with *genius*. *While mystical Pisces is about dissolving our individual identities into something greater, according to this blogger, 'Aquarius is a sign that emphasizes individuality above everything else. And certainly we see more and more focus on the drive toward independence and freedom everywhere at the individual level.'* Aquarius, being an air sign, is about ideas above words. The blogger suggests that, 'Canadians often call themselves a "salad," comparing their diverse society to the great American "melting pot." In Canada, the ideal has been that diverse cultures would co-exist in harmony, enjoying each other's differences while maintaining their own individual uniqueness. That is a much more Aquarian notion than a melting pot, which is very clearly Piscean. Perhaps in this regard, Canada is an early model of a positive human future—a world defined, not by nations, but rather by diverse associations of people working in synergy, each facing the shared human dilemmas in its own way, each one a laboratory coming up with original solutions to those dilemmas. Diversity does not necessarily mean conflict. It can also correlate with very high levels of innovation.

So then, how do we live the seven core principles in a time of great change and evolution? We use them as tools of greater awareness and self-realization. We take each day as an opportunity to understand, to a greater degree, what it means to be 'human,' and we allow ourselves to be motivated by our changing environment, encouraging greater thoughts to enter our minds and guide our daily living. In finding out who we are, authentically, we remove the persona of the past and make room for a greater be-ing. We allow ourselves to unfold, and marvel at the miracle. We begin to understand, at deeper and deeper levels, what our true purpose is, and we allow ourselves to live, in joy and love, on a daily basis. We begin to see the world through the eyes of Aquarius.

I wish for you a joyous and fulfilling life as you explore and experience that which is, and has always been, you. ☐

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Whitmore, Diana: *Psychosynthesis Counselling in Action*, Sage Publications, 2004

Notes:

¹ in Whitmore, Diana: *Psychosynthesis Counselling in Action*, Sage Publications, 2004



Shamai Currim, PhD, lives in Montreal, Quebec, Canada with her children, grandchildren, dogs, and grandkitties. She is a graduate of Psychosynthesis Pathways of Montreal and has served for many years, in many varied positions, on the Steering Committee of the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis. She is a retired psychotherapist, educator, and educational consultant and is currently volunteering in hospice and home care services.



A person who is able to be a living centre of peace in today's world and who is able to radiate that peace powerfully, ceaselessly, will be in a position to give needy mankind the benefit it lacks most and is in greatest need of.

— Roberto Assagioli



The Synthesis Center Offers Final Training

The Board of Directors of The Synthesis Center of Amherst, MA—Didi Firman, Ted Slawski, Jon Schottland, Susan Allen and Sara Vatore—are moving the Center towards a new iteration in its long history. For now, while the future unfolds in ways that we fully trust, TSC itself is running its last full training programs this year.

As we work together to create a vision for the future, we are affiliating with four (soon to be five) Psychosynthesis Centers that have emerged under the direction of our students, staff and Board members. In Italy, San Francisco, Vermont, Florida and soon Philadelphia, we have programs actively in process, fully directed and run by their staff *and* in collaboration with the TSC.

We see ourselves, now, as a holding environment for these centers, as a support system, a referral agency, a friend and ally. (These characteristics, by the way, we hold for all Psychosynthesis Centers, because, after all, that is the Life Work of TSC). While TSC will run an occasional workshop or program, and will work in alliance with other programs, it will no longer run training programs on its own.

The Synthesis Center will continue to evolve and transform and will continue to carry psychosynthesis forward. We will keep everyone updated as we process the endings and the new beginnings. Thanks for being our fellow travelers on this path. <https://www.synthesiscenter.org/>
And, in closing, a word from our sponsor:

Finally, all human individuals and groups of all kinds should be regarded as elements, cells or organs (that is, living parts) of a greater organism which includes the whole of mankind. Thus, the principle of, and the trend to, synthesis carries us from group to group in ever wider circles to humanity as an integral whole. The essential unity of origin, of nature and of aims, and the unbreakable interdependence and solidarity between all human beings and groups are a spiritual, psychological and practical reality.

—Roberto Assagioli



Journey to Places of the Higher Self

Five Days in the Green Heart of Italy

September 17-23, 2018



In our everyday lives we are often too busy, distracted, or caught in the mundane to be open to the places of the Higher Self. Journey to Places of the Higher Self is especially meant to be an open voyage of discovery and a direct personal experience of all that presents itself during its various stages. We will go slowly and quietly, allowing you the time and space necessary to directly experience the reality of the Higher Self, the key part of you that connects the personal with the transpersonal and, hence, the personal with the universal.

Throughout the journey, we visit medieval churches and mountain hermitages, allow our souls to soar from mystical mountains, discover beautiful villages and, of course, enjoy the *cucina locale*.* During this five-day journey, you will have a chance to discover places of transcendence in the green heart of Italy – the Umbrian Apennines – home to many generations of seekers and saints of the transpersonal.

This journey promises to be a font of inspiration for anyone seeking the Higher Self in the natural beauty and surroundings of Italy. We hope to provide you with a journey that might help transform and strengthen you when you ultimately return to your daily life. The sole focus of the journey is to calmly and peacefully allow for encounters of the Higher Self in majestic forests and sacred places found in a beautiful area of Umbria.

Organization and cost of the trip

The trip is organized and hosted by Catherine Ann Lombard and Kees den Biesen, the guides and facilitators. For more information, contact Catherine at loveandwill@live.com and see <https://dantetrips.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/journey-to-places-of-the-higher-self-2018.pdf>

Cost: € 1050.00 per person when sharing a double room; the use of a single room costs € 125.00 extra.

(*Local cuisine)

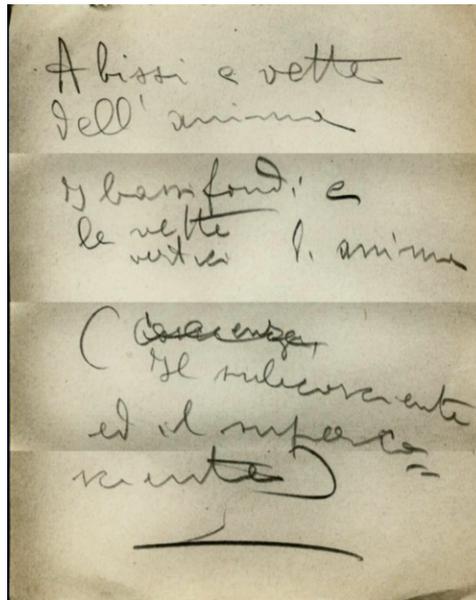
This event begins the day after the International Meeting at Casa Assagioli. See Pages 11-12.

Indo-vedic Psychology and Psychosynthesis

Cristina Pelizzatti

The first part of this series, published in the March 2018 issue of *Psychosynthesis Quarterly*, explored the concept of the Self as expressed in the ancient Vedic Wisdom tradition. This second part continues the study of Vedic concepts as they relate to Psychosynthesis, focusing on the unconscious—how the mind works, according to Vedic thought.

Part II: The Unconscious: Cittā and Hiranyagarbha



“Abysses and depths of the soul.
The subconscious and the superconscious”

How does the mind work, according to the Vedic thought?

Although the act of seeing is pure awareness, mental concepts shape our perception of what is seen.
—Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. 2.20

According to the Vedic teaching, the mind is the principle instrument available to the incarnated being to discover and understand “Reality.” It can be the best evolutionary tool or the worst obstacle along the Self-Realization process. The mind is considered an object, a subtle matter (*Prakriti*), an internal sense, an instrument with which the subject, the Self or *Atman/Purusha*, perceives the world through its conditioned reflex, *Ahamkara* (personal self or “I”), when it is in the state of “being incarnate” (*Jiva bhuta*).

The perception and representation of the world depend on the mindset of the observer.

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“What I am I do not know.
Vague lonely,
oppressed by the mind.
When the Firstborn of Truth came to me,
I gained participation at that same Word”
—Rig Veda. I. 164.37

Individuals wander between earth and sky in search of what they do not know, of themselves of their Self, of the meaning of their life and the meaning of Life itself. One becomes aware of participating in “Reality” at a time when the “Word” (The sacred Word is named *Vac* in Sanskrit) descends from the transpersonal levels. In Psychosynthesis Life Coaching, we think of this as the choice to actively respond to the “Call of the Self,” once it has been heard. The main tool that humankind has at its disposal to evolve through the “Knowledge of the True” is the mind.

The Self (*Atman/Purusha*) and the intrinsic relationship with its matrix, the Universal Self (*Brahman or Isvara/Prajapati*) is what must be known. This is the ultimate goal of the Vedic pathway.

If one knows the Self and recognizes oneself in it, what desire, what attachment can the person hold in the body? He who awakens has found the Self, incarnated in this composite dwelling, becomes the creator of everything, master of the world, it is the world himself. In truth here we can know all this. If it is not, go to the destruction. Those who know it become immortal, others remain prisoners of suffering.
—Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad 4.4.33

This is the finest essence. It is the Self of the whole world. It is reality. It is the Self. You are this, *Svetaketu*.
—Chāndogya Upanishad 6.8.16

When memory is purified, the ideas and memories of the past recede, only the awareness of the empty nature of the object remains.
— Yoga Sutras of Patanjali: 1.43

Thanks to the *samyama* on the heart (*Anahata chakra*) the nature of the mind is achieved.
— Yoga Sutras of Patanjali: 3.35

We must realize that the mind is actually an “instrument,” an inner tool from which we must disidentify ourselves in order to make use of it at will. As long as we are completely identified with the mind, we cannot control it. A certain “psychological distance,” a certain detachment from it, is necessary.
—Roberto Assagioli

How is it that the wind does not stop blowing? How is the mind not resting? Why do the waters, trying to reach the truth never stop, at any time to flow?
—Atharva Veda X, 7.37

For the one who has conquered the mind, the mind is the best friend; but for the one who fails in intent, the mind becomes the worst enemy.
—Bhagavad Gita c. VI v. 6

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The Lord of the mind, the One who perceives, is always aware of the mental substance in constant activity, because of the various effects.

—S.XVIII, Kaivalya Pada, Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

Because the mind can be seen and known, it is not the source of enlightenment.

—S. XIX Kaivalya Pada, Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

Man must use his mind to rise, not to degrade. The mind can be friends with the conditioned soul, but it can be its enemy.

—Bhagavad Gita c. VI v. 5

Who has conquered the mind and thus achieved peace has already reached the Supreme Soul. For him, joy and pain, cold and heat, honor and dishonor are the same.

—Bhagavad Gita c. VI v. 7

An experienced rider who wishes to tame a stubborn horse, lets the horse go for a moment where he wants, then, pulling the reins, gradually leads him on the desired path. Similarly, the supreme method of Yoga consists in carefully observing the motions and desires of the mind, and then gradually bringing it back under full control.

—Shrimad-Bhagavatam 11.21

Knowing who we are and why we are here is the core of our life, our main goal and ultimate goal; the paradox is that we are already ourselves but we strive to be other than what we are in essence, the Self, and/or try to make the other different from who they are. Through the path of self-knowledge it is possible to know the purpose of one's life while participating in the "Great Mystery of Life itself."

This Self of mine, situated in the heart, is smaller than a grain of rice, or of barley, or of sesame, or of millet, or of the nucleus of a grain of millet. This Self of mine, situated in the heart, is larger than the earth, greater than the atmosphere, greater than the sky, greater than all the worlds.

—Chāndogya Upanishad 3.14.37

If it is postulated that the mind (*Chittā*) is known by another, more remote mind, an unlimited number of connoisseurs are deduced and the whole of the memory reactions would tend to an endless confusion.

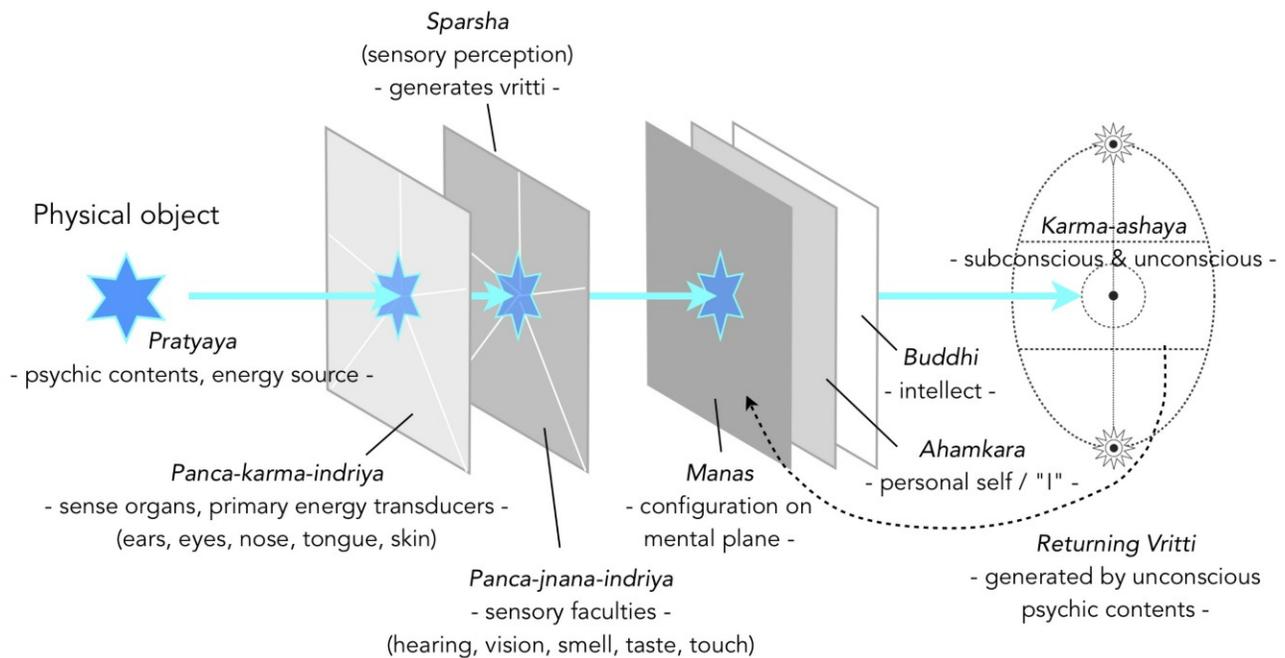
—S. XXI Kaivalya Pada, Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

The mind can not self-illuminate itself, being itself the object of knowledge

—S. XIX, Kaivalya Pada, Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

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Samkalpa: the process of perception, according to Vedic science
Pratyaya: a single thought, a person's basic tendencies or an object of focus.

Samkalpa is the process of elaboration through which the individual passes from the perception of an object, to the formulation of an idea, transmitted from *manas* (rational mind) to *Purusha* (the Self), passing through *Ahamkara* (personal self) and *buddhi* (Intuition). Along this process *buddhi* modifies itself, taking the form of the object *Vritti* (a return energy released by objects when attention is focused on them; there is a release of psychic contents from the objects themselves).

When the consciousness of the personal self (the "I") comes into contact, through the senses (the psychological functions), with the object on which the senses are focused, the emerging data are interpreted by the instrument available to the personal self/*Ahamkara*: the rational mind (*manas*).

The consciousness surrounding the "I" takes the form of the content: the "I" identifies itself with the object of the senses, overlapping this identification with its "real" image (the Self) and the mental field (*manas*) is pervaded by the contents coming from the object through returning energies called *Vritti*. They incessantly send data to *manas*, which is always active.

The subjects, who lose sight of their True Nature, experience this conditioning due to identification as if it were reality, precluding any possibility of gaining experience from another point of view. Consciousness narrows to a point that we call polarity in Psychosynthesis, creating separation and fissure within consciousness. *Ahamkara* (ego, personal self) becomes the director and observer of a system that is contradictory by nature, due to the incessant change of *Prakriti*, and the mind (*manas*), in continual movement, conditioned by the *Vritti*.

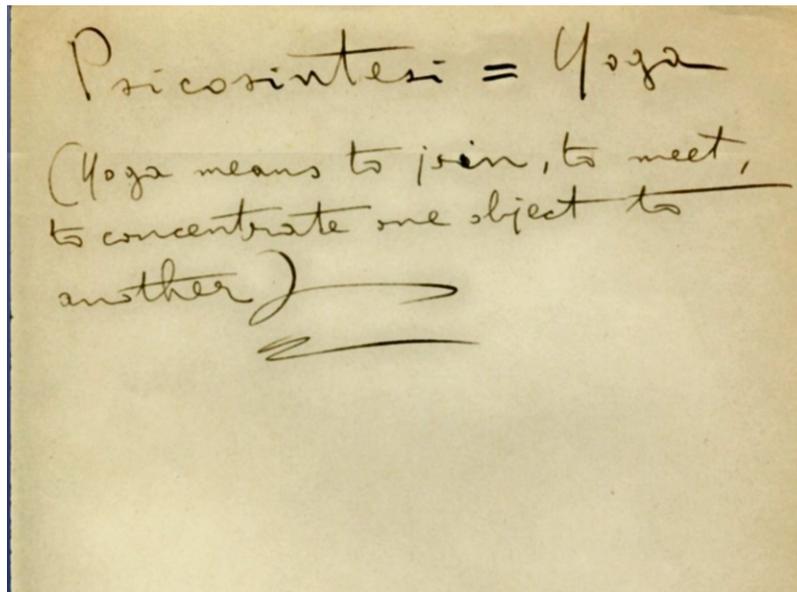
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Identifying oneself with "what is not", *Maya*, the individual moves away from his or her "True Nature" (the Self/*Atman/Purusha*) and experiences suffering, since the consequence of identification is attachment to what is destined to change, to vanish: the form. The teaching of the Vedas and Psychosynthesis consist in seeking and giving value to what remains unchanged during all the changes: the Self. The process develops through recognition of conditioning (Identification), and distancing oneself from it through non-attachment (*Vairagya*-Dis-identification), accepting the Self as Source with which to identify (Self-Identification). This represents a conscious participation in the "Self-actualization" process, through partial Synthesis, up to the realization of the state of Unity in diversity, or Nonduality, (*Achintya-Bheda-Abheda Tattva* theory) or Synthesis between the personal and the transpersonal level.

When this conditioning mechanism is recognized, the Self becomes aware of itself through its instrument, the ego on a personal level (*Ahamkara*): the superimposition between object and subject is relaxed. Through the light of the intellect (Intuition, faculty of the Self) information is obtained directly from content, without the filter of the conditioned mind (*manas*). The ego, which by its nature has no content, consisting simply of pure awareness and will, realizes the *Svarupa* of the object (the essence), beyond the coverings (*kosha*) of conditioning and its intrinsic energetic quality (*shakti*).

Through Psychosynthesis Roberto Assagioli has created a "bridge" between East and West, recovering and re-evaluating in a modern context the precious content of the ancient Vedic compendium, bringing it back to its original light, putting it at the Service of Humanity through a language and methodology suitable for modern times.



"Psychosynthesis = Yoga
(Yoga means to join, to meet, to concentrate one object to another.)"

yogaś-citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ
Yoga means to quiet the modifications of the mental field
—Samadhi Pada, s.II, Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

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Yoga means "reconnection, reunification" from the Sanskrit root "Yuj" (from which are derived the words joy, judge, judge, play, yoke, subjugate). Through the completion of the eight phases of Yoga, the "field of silence" or *Nirodha* is created in which the ego reconnects to the self.

Silence is the voice of the spirit expressed in the language of the sages. It fuses man with the soul of nature and brings human polarity closer to that of the divine, igniting the flame of creativity. It originates from the infinity of the Cosmos, of which it summarizes the stellar echoes.

—*Art and the Technique of Silence*: Assagioli Archives

In Psychosynthesis this space of reunion/reconnection is represented in the "Egg Diagram" by the dashed line that descends or ascends into the field of consciousness in an energetic movement that occurs between the ego and the Transpersonal Self. Technically in this silent space (*Nirodha*), the *Vritti*, the modifications of the mental field, are quieted, the light of the Self illuminates the personality, the "I" recognizes and remembers itself to be a spark of the Transpersonal Self, equal in quality, different in magnitude. The Synthesis takes place.

Because of the conditioning and the *Vritti* that interfere in the mental field (*manas* or rational mind) the clarity of vision is distorted and *Ahamkara* (or personal self), conditioned by the five great conditionings (*pancha klesha*), is led to believe it is the author and the beneficiary of the actions, forgetting its true origin. The Sanskrit term *Ahamkara* is literally translated as: "I am he who does."

ΨS
ΨS is in a sense
the Science of Relation-
ship (of right
relationships)
In another sense it is
the Science of (right)
proportions —
Specifically:
1 Right proportions between
extraversion and introver-
sion (so much need now,
when there is such an excess
of extraversion)
2 Right proportions between
the ascending life (↑-aspira-
tion - communion - penetration)
and the descending life (pre-
cipitation, manifestation). Also here

ΨS

ΨS is in a sense
the Science of Relation-
ship (of right
relationships)
In another sense it is
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Specifically:
1. Right proportions between
extraversion and introver-
sion (so much need now,
when there is such an excess
of extraversion)
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The ascending life (/ aspira-
tion - communion - penetration)
And the descending life (preci-
pitation, manifestation). Also here

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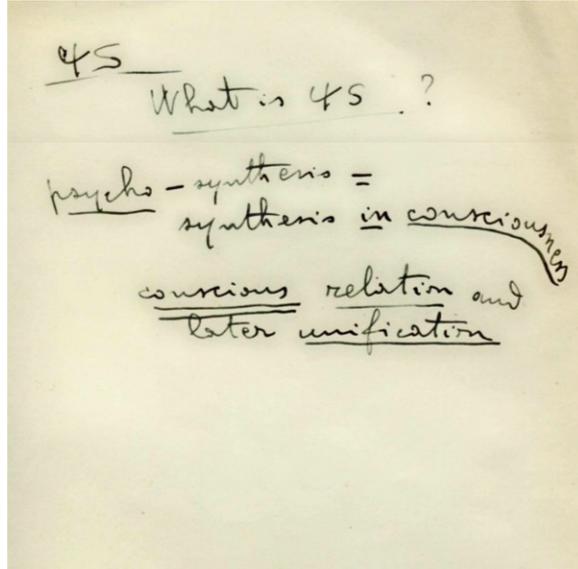
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The purpose of Yoga is to reach the awareness of the “confusion” between the perceiver (*Atman/Purusha*, I/Self) and the perceived (*Prakriti*, object of the senses), caused by Ignorance (*Avidya*), which self-awareness and the path to reacquire the awareness of the indissoluble bond with the Self, ignoring that the *Jiva* (The Being) binds to the *Samsara* knot (infinite cycle of death and rebirth). Through the discipline of Yoga it is possible to free oneself from this powerful bond, transforming experiences in the phenomenal world into awareness of the value of the relationship between subject and object and relative independence, a fundamental passage for spiritual evolution. This process leads to the “Synthesis in consciousness” of which Assagioli speaks to us:

ΨS

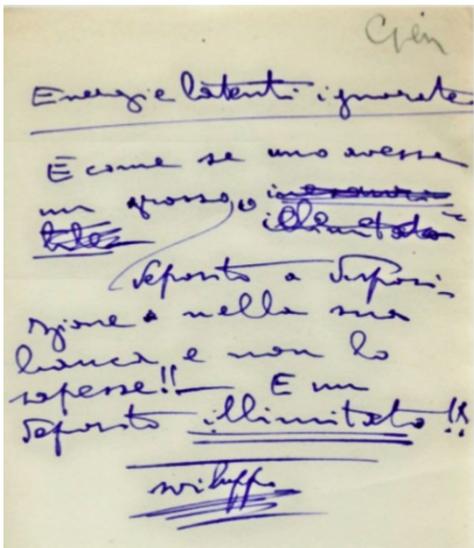
What is ΨS?

psycho - synthesis =
synthesis in consciousness
conscious relation and
later unification



In Vedic thought, ideas, thoughts, images, emotions, feelings are considered as psychic objects, real and consistent as much as physical ones. When the personal self reconnects to the Source and becomes aware of being a Self in expression through the personality, it recognizes the existence of a further reality that underlies and coordinates it: the Transpersonal Self, an energetic spark of the same substance and different magnitude of the Universal Self (*Ishvara / Brahman*).

Through its intrinsic faculties, the Will and the Awareness in Consciousness, *Ahamkara*/personal self/I, can choose to participate proactively in its evolution and liberation, reconnecting to its Source, (the Self/*Atman/Purusha*) benefiting from the transpersonal energies that generally lie latent in the upper unconscious, called *Vijñanamaya* or *Buddhi*. These are energies that lie unconscious and latent in the higher regions of the mind and that through the Knowledge of the True (Study of the Vedic Tradition texts or the personal and transpersonal Psychosynthesis path) can be brought into awareness and used to enhance the “I.” In Psychosynthesis Life Coaching we use the phrases, “Explore, Expanding, Empowering the I”.



“Ignored latent energies

It’s as if one had a great sum available in the bank and didn’t know it!!-

It’s an unlimited amount!!

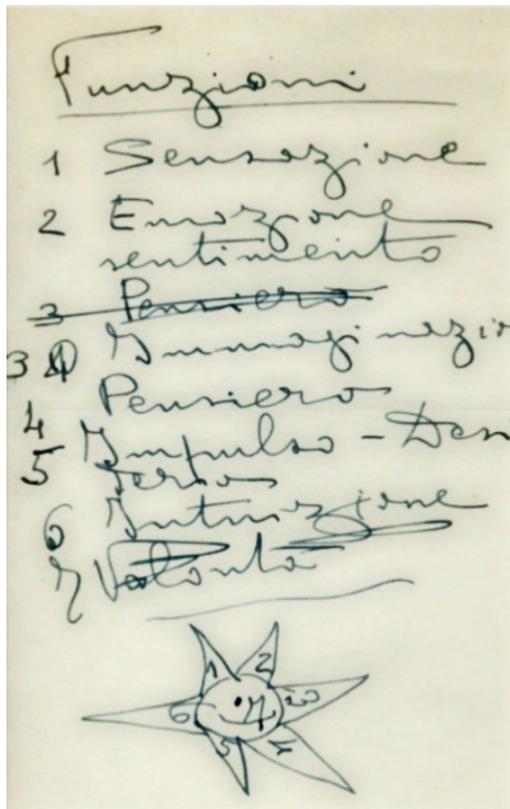
Develop”

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The I / personal self is the conscious subject, a spark of the Transpersonal Self, the one who experiences seeing, feeling, thinking; experiencing through *Ahamkara* (distorted sense of self or personal self) which in turn uses tools termed *Tanmatra* (the psychic functions described in Psychosynthesis through the Star Diagram) to experience the manifest world, and the organs of action, *Karmendryas*, the bodily vehicle.

- Functions
1. Sensation
 2. Emotion/sentiment
 3. Imagination
 4. Thought
 5. Impulse/Desire
 6. Intuition
 7. Will



- **Ahamkara**: *Aham* is the personal self or ego, *kāra* is all that has been done, and will be done. The set of *Ahamkara*, *Buddhi*, *Cittā* and *Manas* make up the inner organ called *Antahkarana*, described in the Vedas, represented in the Psychosynthesis with the mandala of the Egg Diagram.
 - **Antahkarana** refers to the totality of mental levels (unconscious) and also refers to the bridge that connects the lower mind (lower unconscious) with the higher mind (transpersonal unconscious).
 - **Buddhi**, the elevated intellect, corresponds to the Intuition, the Transpersonal level of the unconscious.
 - **Manas**, the intermediate level of the mind, corresponds to the middle unconscious
 - **Cittā**, corresponds to the lower unconscious, also called “Karmashaya”, the deposit of accumulated karma.

This remote region of the deep mind (lower unconscious) contains impressions, like the audiovisual recordings of a film formed by what remains of all experiences lived, moment by moment: energy. The maturation of *karma* takes place in *Karmashaya*; from here emerge energies called *Vasana* that lead to actions according to unconscious tendencies, conditioning the embodied being and determining the circumstances that will characterize the next incarnation, during the infinite cycle of *Samsara*.

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The "Liberation" from this infinite cycle can take place and is what happens through the development of awareness and the choice to act according to the Cosmic Order (*Dharma*). In Psychosynthesis Life Coaching this corresponds to acting in accord with the "Call of the Self." It is the desire deeply inherent within us to re-know who we are and to become who we really are, through the awareness of the "True Reality" and actions in line with the Purpose inherent in each living being, chosen according to the alignment of personal will with Transpersonal Will. Through research based on this desire, it is possible to find the ultimate meaning hidden in every event, the "Will to Meaning" described by Viktor Frankl. Through the Identification/Disidentification/Self-Identification phases in Psychosynthesis, we can achieve the status of Observer and Director, distancing ourselves from the contents that attract and emotionally attach us, remaining steady in the Center ("I"), the space that has no contents, pure Consciousness and Will.

What must be avoided is the overlap (identification) of consciousness (*drastr*) with the "thing" seen (*drsya*).
—Yoga Sutras of Patanjali 2.17

Listening to the "Call of the Self" is the fundamental choice that makes the difference between participating with conscious actions and choices in one's own evolution, or avoiding or contrasting the natural Synthesis process that takes place regardless of the subject's attitude. Participating consciously in the process of Self-Actualization means obtaining "Liberation," moving away from the conditioning which leads to suffering arising from Ignorance, towards non-attachment to the contents of consciousness: *Vairagya*, or Disidentification. When we are identified with the "seen thing" (objects, contents) we lose sight of "who we really are" and we identify with "what" we think we are.

The Vedic Tradition invites us to experience a "Knowledge" that is incommunicable and incomprehensible to the rational mind, a "Knowledge" that must be experienced subjectively by venturing into life itself, experiencing manifestation as a training ground for consciousness, experiencing itself, finding itself and its Source. This is the path of Self-Realization, or Self-Actualization as expressed in humanistic and transpersonal psychology. Psychosynthesis in particular emphasizes the importance and value of experimentation, of direct experience, since the rational mind cannot understand what belongs to a transpersonal sphere. Only through experience can we understand what the rational mind cannot decode, by its nature.

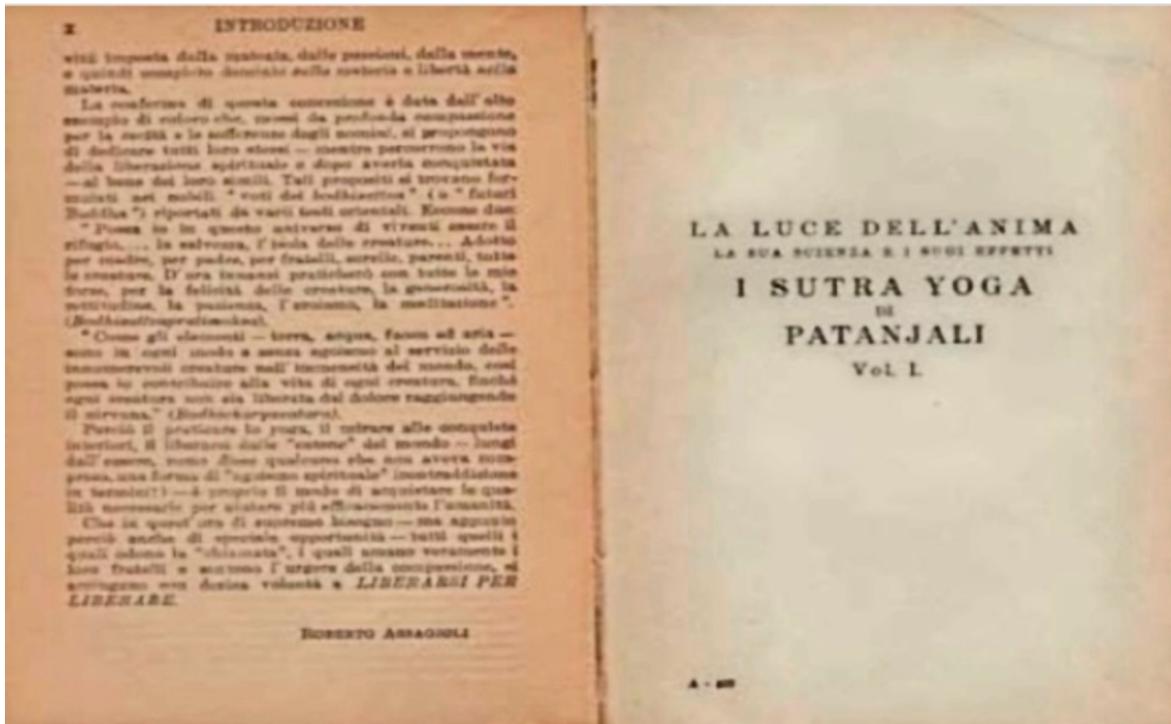
As Assagioli wrote in "Transpersonal Development,"

The reality of the superconscious does not need to be demonstrated; it is an experience and, when we become aware of it, constitutes one of those that Bergson has so well called "the data of consciousness" which have their own evidence in themselves. It is a direct experience like that of a color, a sound, a feeling.

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Assagioli knew the Vedic tradition very well, as can be seen in many of his notes. In particular he wrote the introduction to the commentary on the “Yoga Sutras of Patanjali” published by Alice Bailey around 1930:

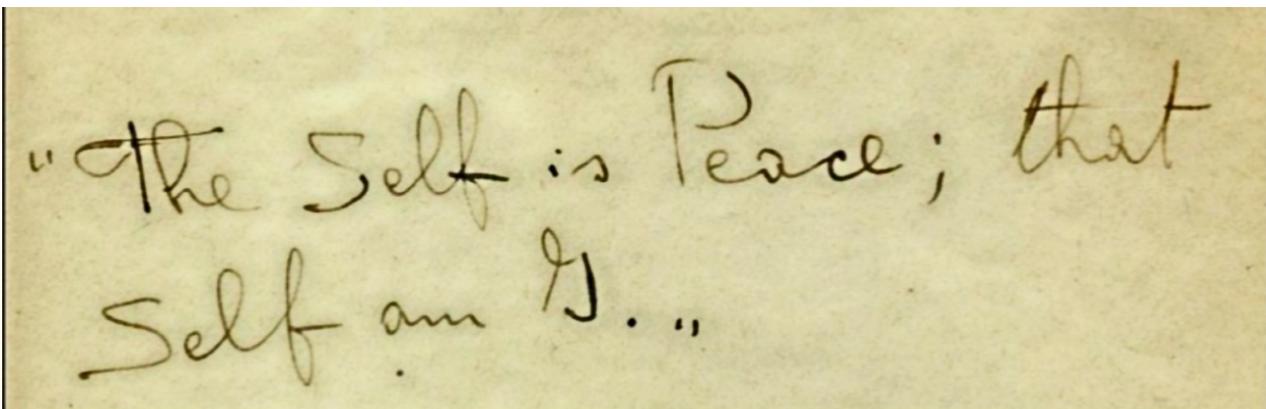


Assagioli's introduction to the Italian version of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras

According to Vedic thought, the psyche, as well as the physical body, is made up of subtle material energy (*Prakriti*). Consciousness subtends matter, in the microcosm and in the cosmic macrocosm. The body is intimately connected to consciousness (*Atman, Purusha, Transpersonal Self*) as the Cosmos is pervaded and sustained by the Cosmic Consciousness (the Universal Self), the original Source of the manifest universe, called *Brahman / Ishvara / Prajapati*.

This vision contemplates Consciousness as the essence at the foundation of everything, present at different levels of manifestation. Quantum mechanics is today substantiating what was proposed millennia ago by the Vedas, that there exists an Implicit Order derived from an Explicit Origin. As physicist David Bohm writes in his book “Wholeness and the Implicate Order,”

“We must learn to observe anything as part of an Undivided Wholeness”.



“The Self is Peace; that Self am I.”

Bring Out the Best in Your Child and Yourself: Developing the Will in Parent Education

Ilene Val-Essen, PhD

The class was crowded with parents eager to experience less chaos and more joy in their families. A father we'll call Tom confessed:

I just lost control and screamed bloody murder at the kids, again. I couldn't help it. Here I am on the phone, trying to hear the directions for tonight's meeting and they're making machine-gun noises at the top of their lungs and roughhousing all over the room. Three times I said, "Boys, I can't hear," and they kept right on, like I didn't exist. I felt so frustrated!

When I got off the phone, I really let them have it. "You don't think about anyone but yourselves. What's wrong with you! Go to your rooms and don't come out for an hour." Later, after I cooled down, I felt like I'd been a monster, screaming as if they'd committed a crime. Every time this happens I tell myself I'll never do it again—but then I always do (Val-Essen, p. 29-30).

Roberto Assagioli, MD, (2010) author of *The Act of Will*, provides some insight: "...though man has acquired an impressive degree of power over nature, his knowledge of and control over his inner being is very limited" (p. 3). "...the narrowing and eventual closing of the fatal gap between man's external and his inner powers—has been and should be sought in two directions: *the simplification of his outer life* and *the development of his inner powers*" (p. 4). "Fundamental among these inner powers, and the one to which priority should be given, is the tremendous, unrealized potency of man's own *will*" (p. 6).

"The will is one's power to choose, to bring about changes in oneself, in others, and in our environment" (Brown, p. 14). When parents develop this inner power, transformation can take place in the parent-child relationship. By practicing, training, and strengthening their wills, parents create and model an atmosphere of mutual respect—an ideal setting in which to support their children to become the independent and responsible youngsters they yearn to be.

Organization: What We'll Explore

We'll first identify the qualities of the will that are most relevant in parent education. Then, we'll examine the consequences children experience when parents demonstrate a lack of will. Next, we'll describe a Three-Step Process, which can help parents strengthen their wills. We'll conclude with an illustration of a mom effectively demonstrating her will and the positive results family members enjoy.

Qualities of the Will

Assagioli (2000) names seven qualities of the will (p. 19). We'll discuss the three that I believe can be most helpful to parents.

Mastery—Control—Discipline

This first quality of will (p. 22) involves using energy constructively. Parents can do this best when they're calm enough to think before they act. Many have expressed great pain—shame and guilt—when they have lacked this quality.

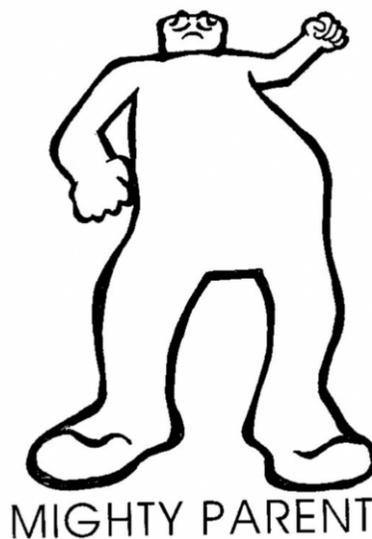
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In my *Quality Parenting* class when Tom shared his story about screaming at his sons, he felt so defeated and humiliated that he avoided looking at the other parents. Tom is not alone. “The Awful Secret,” a chapter in my first book, *Bring Out the Best in Your Child and Your Self: Creating a Family Environment Based on Mutual Respect*, describes how on occasion we all find ourselves experiencing out-of-control behavior. The chapter begins:

I know a secret about you. Sometimes you blow up or scream at your children. You lose it so badly that you wouldn’t want anyone to see your behavior. Or you become a doormat and let the children run all over you. Later you feel angry or ashamed. Yet time after time, it happens again. How do I know this about you? Because it’s true of every parent I’ve ever met (p. 29).

There are two distinct ways in which parents reveal a lack of will: they either become aggressive or nonassertive. We’ll refer to aggressive behavior like Tom’s as *Mighty Parent* (p. 77).



Alice, on the other hand, reveals the opposite extreme: she becomes nonassertive. She loses control by giving up her natural authority and caters to her daughter’s demands.

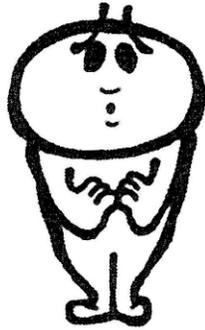
I’m really upset. This morning my daughter’s first grade teacher called me. She explained, “Taylor is reluctant to do anything without special help; she clings to me and shows less independence than the other children. It’s obvious that she’s bright, but she acts as if she’s been babied.

That’s what makes me feel so awful. I know it’s true. And it’s my fault! I don’t want to baby her, but take this morning, for example. We’re late getting ready for school and Taylor dallies around forever and complains, “It’s too hard for me to put on my socks.” We’re getting later all the time and I end up dressing her! I tell her she has to dress herself, but it just doesn’t work. That happens with a lot of things: I cut her meat, butter her bread, and fix her hair. I promise myself I’ll stop, but I never do. I hate when she complains, but I can’t tolerate the thought of being late. Now I see that I’m not only spoiling her; I’ve set her up for trouble in school! (p. 30).

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We'll refer to Alice's nonassertive approach as *mini parent* (p. 80).



mini parent

Whether parents act as *Mighty parent* or *mini parent*, out of control behavior often surfaces when parents experience a combination of stress and helplessness. As they develop mastery—control—discipline, parents discover they're able to use their will, finding more effective ways to deal with their children, even during challenging times.

Determination—Decisiveness—Resoluteness

The fourth quality of will (Assagioli 2000, p. 27) describes a person's willingness to put forth the time and effort that genuine change requires. Those parents who successfully improve family life consistently demonstrate this key quality of will.

Week after week, Celine shared that she reread the assigned chapters and did her homework diligently. Week after week, she also told stories of change. She became a model student in our class. Her commitment and effort inspired the other parents and soon they were actively practicing the skills they had learned with far greater success.

Persistence—Endurance—Patience

Assagioli's fifth quality of will goes hand-in-hand with the fourth. Parents can be accepting of the time it takes for all of us to develop new habits by celebrating the small changes they and their children make. And by showing compassion and encouragement when we face inevitable setbacks on this rocky road of growth.

Samantha used to berate herself when she raised her voice even slightly or became impatient when Jaime took forever tying his shoes. But through the eyes of her fellow parents, she finally realized there was steady progress for mother and son. With this new perspective, Mom lightened up and focused on the incremental changes. And Jaime noticed: "You're nicer to me. And you smile more."

How Children Deal with Mighty Parent

Imagine being a child with a parent whose attitude implies, "I've got the upper hand; you'll do as I say." Children deal with *Mighty Parent* power in the best way they know at the moment. Some cope by becoming *Mighty Child* and fighting back; others become *mini child* and give up. Either way, they don't feel good being angry and rebellious or anxious and insecure.

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Mighty Children find a variety of ways to fight back: yelling, bullying, blaming others, lying, stealing, or cheating. These paths can lead to more serious trouble during adolescence. Some children fight back by competing: becoming overachievers or “workaholics.” Those aggressive behaviors have positive elements, but when driven by feelings of insecurity or low self-esteem, there may be a price to pay later in life.

Mini children and teens give up; they withdraw into submission, fantasy, or isolation. Afraid to “make waves,” these youngsters become passive, trying in effect to make themselves invisible. Nonassertive, quiet, self-effacing children are the ones whose problems are most likely to be overlooked.

How Children Deal with Mini Parent

Children feel an enormous loss when being raised by a *mini parent*. They want to admire, emulate, and look to their parents for guidance. Youngsters need to depend on us to be strong and to keep them safe, even from their own impulsive behavior. They feel less secure when their parents—the most important people in their lives—fail to give them a feeling of confidence and clear direction. We can compare a family led by mini parent to a ship without a rudder.

Parents who fail to assert their needs often also hide their feelings, leaving their children with a loss of closeness with Mom or Dad. When parents disclose little about themselves, children may feel empty and incomplete. In this distant home environment, how can they learn about feelings and intimacy? Since nonassertive parents are generally too fearful to discipline their children, they regularly let them get away with unacceptable behavior. Resentment builds. Children sense this tension and feel less loved. Some may take advantage and become aggressive. Others mimic their parents and become self-effacing, training themselves to deny their feelings and needs. Many fail to develop a positive sense of self, unable to realize their potential. Mom or Dad also suffer when they don’t stand up for themselves; their lives may not be as rich and rewarding as they could be. Parents lose and so do their children, who need strong models they can learn from and look up to. Children also miss the joy and satisfaction that a fulfilled parent brings into the home.

The Three-Step Process

We all lose control at times, whether by being aggressive or nonassertive, and our children lose out. The Three-Step Process is designed to help parents strengthen their will, to gain greater self-control.

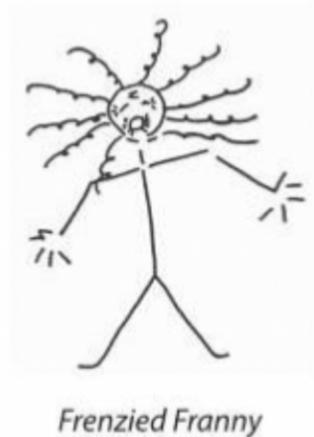
Step One: Recognize the Lower Self

Step one teaches us how to identify our out-of-control behavior. Awareness initiates the process toward growth. Parents take this step by engaging in a drawing exercise, which begins as they answer the question, *Who or what is that part of me that most interferes with a positive relationship with my child?* They use crayons or colored pencils to draw a picture of the image that comes to mind. After completing their drawings, parents give this character or *subpersonality* a name—one that conveys its essence (p.12). Lastly, parents answer the four questions below:

- How does it look and act?
- How does it feel?
- How does it think?
- What does it need?

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Frenzied Franny is a subpersonality I drew decades ago. Most lower-self characters act either as *Mighty Parent* or *mini parent*. When Tom drew his aggressive subpersonality, he named him “Monster Man.” Alice named her nonassertive subpersonality “Donna-Do-It-All.”

Step Two: Cross the Bridge to the Centered Self

Two simple yet profound exercises support parents to strengthen their wills, helping them to gain greater self-control. The relaxation exercise when practiced daily helps parents reduce tension. Less stressed, they’re able to remain calmer. In time, parents discover that they lose it less often and diminish the intensity when they do. The bridge exercise, practiced after the relaxation exercise, helps parents engage their wills and reminds them that they have a choice: they can choose how they act, feel, and think.

Relaxation Exercise

This exercise combines two well-proven relaxation techniques—focusing on the breath and visualization—used successfully by athletes, people in stress-reduction programs, and pain management clinics. Both techniques create measurable changes in the human body.

As parents practice the relaxation exercise below, they’re guided to breathe deeply and to visualize the transformation of tension into the tranquil energy of loving wisdom:

Relaxation Exercise

Preparation:

Find a comfortable sitting position: legs crossed or placed evenly on the floor. Spine erect, eyes closed.

Step 1: *Inhale slowly as you raise tension up an imaginary elevator, located behind your body, parallel with your spinal column.*

As you breathe in, visualize lifting tension from your solar plexus (an area just above the navel). Raise this energy so that it can be transformed by your loving heart—and then by your wise head.

Step 2: *Hold your breath as the energies of love and wisdom blend.*

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Imagine the energies from the heart and head fusing, filling your brain with the blended energy of loving wisdom.

Step 3: *Exhale the relaxed energy into the room.*

Allow the energy of loving wisdom to radiate out through the space between your eyebrows, filling your aura and the room with calm and tranquility.

Step 4: *Affirm that you changed tension into the relaxed energy of loving wisdom, creating peace and calm.*

Affirm what you did: you raised tension-filled energy from the solar plexus, lifting it in an imaginary elevator—first to your loving heart and then into your wise head. Through this action you created the relaxed energy of loving wisdom. You then radiated that energy from the area between the eyebrows, filling your aura and the room with peace and calm.

The exercise is complete when it is repeated three times.

Time Required:

28 seconds per cycle x 3 cycles = 84 seconds total

As parents transform tension into loving wisdom, they experience an altered state of awareness. Feeling calm, they're now able to see a range of options available to them.

Bridge Exercise

We've all had the experience of blowing up or giving in and not realizing it at the time. Then, at some point, we recognize what's happening and say to ourselves, "Uh-oh; I'm over the edge." It's as if *one* part of us is acting out while *another* part is able to watch it happen. The bridge exercise, which follows, helps us gain this all-important "dual awareness." Only with this capacity can we recognize the subpersonality when it comes onstage—or, preferably, before it enters—and make a conscious choice.

Bridge Exercise

Purpose: To recognize that you are more than the subpersonality—and that you have the choice to identify with the centered self.

Preparation: Relaxation Exercise

Directions: Remain in a comfortable sitting position with legs crossed or evenly placed on the floor. Be sure your spine is erect, eyes closed. Recall the drawing of your subpersonality and your description of it. Use that information to practice this exercise silently.

Step 1: Describe the physical appearance and actions of your subpersonality.

Affirm to yourself:

*I am more than the appearance and actions
of my subpersonality.*

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*I am the centered self.
I choose how I act.*

Step 2: Describe the feelings of the subpersonality.

Affirm to yourself:

*I am more than the feelings
of my subpersonality.
I am the centered self.
I choose how I feel.*

Step 3: Describe the thoughts of the subpersonality.

Affirm to yourself:

*I am more than the thoughts
of my subpersonality.
I am the centered self.
I choose how I think.*

Step 4: Describe who you are and the choices you have.

Affirm to yourself:

*I am the centered self.
I choose how I act, feel, and think.*

[The *Bridge* is an adaptation of the “Disidentification Exercise” found in Roberto Assagioli’s book *Psychosynthesis*.]

Parents agree that having a choice makes a profound difference. Here are two examples:

I’ve got a new routine now. When Sarcastic Sally starts yelling cutting things to the kids, I’ve learned to just stop. Then I say, ‘Whoa!’ out loud. The girls laugh and sometimes even I do. That helps. Then I can slow down, take a breath, and talk in a reasonable way. (p. 50).

More and more, I can sense when I’m about ready to blow up. But I can’t change on the spot. I tell the kids I have to go to the bathroom; that’s where I cool down. It’s just a beginning, but it’s better than becoming Bossy Betty. (p. 50).

Step Three: Express the Centered Self

When parents are able to use their wills, a world of possibilities opens. Once calm, parents can think before they act. They are able to access their skills—assertion, listening, planning, and problem-solving—and model mutual respect. And that encourages their children and teens to do the same.

The Will in Action

This incident doesn’t show perfection. But it does reveal a real parent developing her will and the family benefiting from her growth.

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The morning was pandemonium. “Did you comb your hair? Where’s your lunch money?” We’d just moved into a different neighborhood and the kids were going to a new school. “Do you have your note?” “I can’t find my sweater!” We were running late. I grabbed my briefcase and the map showing the new bus route and we hurried to the car.

We raced to the bus stop in time to see a cloud of gray exhaust as the bus pulled away. I told myself to stay calm, thinking, “I’ll just drive ahead to the next stop.” We raced ahead of the bus several blocks. Then I slammed on the brakes and told the kids to grab their stuff and pile out of the car. They insisted that this wasn’t the right place. I was sure it was. I was proud of myself for studying the map two days before and being well organized. Afraid I’d be late for work, I felt angry with them for dawdling. I was in no mood to listen. My head was busy with angry thoughts: “They hadn’t seen the map route I had so efficiently filed away. They were just little kids who couldn’t even get themselves out of the house on time!” The kids pleaded to no avail; they could see I was just getting more upset.

It took a while before I became aware of that tight, angry sensation in my chest. I realized I was in a state that led to trouble. I thought of techniques we learned in class—and managed (barely) to take a moment out. I cooled down enough to get a little perspective and apologize to the kids for the anger. I asked them to explain what they knew. They pointed me to the corner two blocks ahead and said they were sure that was the right place. Finally, I was able to set aside my ego and listen. To my chagrin, they were right. We met the bus (where they said we would) and were able to start our day with some mutual appreciation. Instead of anger and frustration, we shared a laugh over our near mishap and my momentary blindness. (p. 189-90).

Summary

As Assagioli states, “Fundamental among these inner powers, and the one to which priority should be given, is the tremendous, unrealized potency of man’s own will.” (p. 6). The Three-Step Process guides parents to develop their wills, helping them realize their dream of creating a family based on mutual respect. As parents help bring out the best in each child, they inevitably discover the best within themselves.■

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- Val-Essen, Ilene. *Bring Out the Best in Your Child and Your Self: Creating a Family Based on Mutual Respect*. Culver City, CA: Quality Parenting, 2010.



Dr. Ilene Val-Essen has been passionately serving parents for decades. An innovator in the field of parent education, she blends Western psychology with Eastern philosophy, bringing a unique voice to the global community. Her books, *Bring Out the Best in Your Child and Your Self* and *Parenting with Wisdom and Compassion*, along with her Quality Parenting programs, invite parents to enter a new paradigm of parenting. Family life becomes so much easier and more rewarding. This fall Dr. Val-Essen will teach an online course through UCLA, education extension, which will be for early childhood educators as a part of a certificate program. Val-Essen practices as a Marriage and Family Therapist in Culver City, CA. She lives with her husband and is a proud "Grammy" to her two grandsons.

Addendum
**“The New Dimensions of Psychology:
The Third, Fourth and Fifth Forces”**
Roberto Assagioli, M.D.

Including The Original Ending

We were pleased to publish Assagioli’s “The New Dimensions of Psychology: The Third, Fourth and Fifth Forces” in the September 2016 issue of *Psychosynthesis Quarterly*. What we did not realize was that the article as presented was incomplete. Isabelle Clotilde Küng has kindly provided some background along with the rest of the article.

The last paragraph of Assagioli’s article, as we printed it, ran as follows:

In conclusion it may be stated that all the developments briefly outlined above constitute the basis and the beginnings of a new direction and dimension of psychology, of a “Fifth Force,” which can be termed “Psychoenergetics.” The difference existing between psychoenergetics and what is called psychodynamics needs to be clarified. The latter is concerned with the interactions between the psychological functions in a specific sense (emotions, thought, will, impulses, etc.) and forces part of the “Third” and “Fourth Forces”. The aim of psychoenergetics is, on the other hand, to investigate all forces existent in the universe and their interaction.

This was page 14 of the typed manuscript. Ms. Küng has kindly provided page 15 of the manuscript, making clear that the final punctuation of the paragraph above is not a period, but a colon. Following that colon was this final page of the manuscript:

1. The physical energies, starting from the sub-atomic level and extending to the astronomical, galactic level.
2. The biological energies, the organizers of living matter.
3. Specifically psychic energies of all qualities and at all levels.
4. Spiritual, transpersonal, transcendent energies.

Sufficient has been said to convey the immensity of the field covered by scientific psychology in its widest sense, or with which it has close connections. It should be recognized, indeed clearly stated, that the Five “Forces”, or dimensions, of psychology active in this field are in no way in conflict with one another. There is no question of “choosing between” them; each is equally valid in its own section of the field or well-defined radius of action. The arguments and disputes between exponents or the various currents are in large measure artificial, and due principally to their attitude of denying scientific validity to any conception or method different from the one they have espoused.

It is to be hoped that psychologists will choose increasingly to acquire that broad vision, already possessed by some, and work in a growing spirit of cooperation. Thus can an integral psychological science be developed and lead to a unitary vision. Its numerous and various applications would be contributing to the creation of a harmonious psychosynthesis of individuals, of groups, and of the whole of humanity. ■

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In passing this on to us, Ms. Küng wrote that “this page 15 sounds like a ‘Testament’ of Roberto Assagioli, summing up what he created Psychosynthesis for.” The talk itself was presented at the *Biennale de Futurologie in Crans sur Sierre* in Switzerland on Aug. 30th, 1973. Edward Rowe read it. Dr. Assagioli sent Ms. Küng the below summary of his talk, accompanied by this letter:

Capolona, August 27th 1973

Dear Isabelle,

ISTITUTO DI PSICOSINTESI
VELLA ILARIO
52020 CAPOLONA (Arezzo)
Sede ESTIVA 27-VIII-73

Cara Isabelle, Ti mando il riassunto in inglese della mia conferenza perché forse gli organizzatori della Convention possono averne bisogno. Per le traduzioni del riassunto in francese e tedesco potresti prendere accordi con loro. Non ho fretta e considero la traduzione italiana. Attendo con interesse notizie. P.S. Grazie Rimorso e salute Affettuosi
Roberto

I send you the summary in English of my conference because the organizers of the Convention may probably want to use it. As regards the French and German translations thereof, you could see with them. We here will do and send the Italian translation. I am waiting with interest to hear about all (the Congress). Thank you again and affectionate regards,

Roberto

SUMMARY written by Dr. Roberto Assagioli

Dr. Assagioli traces a brief history of psychology from the period when it separated itself from philosophy and affirmed its own independence as a science up to the present days.

Psychology started with the investigation of the elementary psychological facts studying human beings and animals from the external point of view, and therefore was a bi-dimensional psychology.

Then, through psychopathology, was discovered the existence and importance of unconscious factors (Charcot, James, Freud, etc.) and thus psychology reached a third dimension in the depth, but “towards below”. Later was started the research of all the aspects of the psyche, and thus a true three-dimensional psychology was developed which has been called the Third Force.

On the basis of this “humanistic” psychology, and owing chiefly to the investigations of Jung and Maslow, was built up the so-called “transpersonal psychology” that studies the higher aspects of the human being, and was called the Fourth Force. It includes all that refers to spiritual experiences, to the “meta-needs”, to the peak experiences, etc.

But there is also more: we are now assisting to the birth of what may be called the Fifth Force of psychology. It concerns the discovery of a special “mental space”, governed by laws different from those ruling other “spaces” or levels: it investigates the relationships between matter, energy and psyche.

Specially in the U.S. and Japan, the action of psyche on matter and the mechanism of such action are being scientifically studied. It has been demonstrated that the different inner psychological conditions such as: relaxation, concentration, meditation, etc. produce specific electric waves, and that making the individuals aware about the different types of waves they produce in different condition, they can facilitate the phenomenon, and produce it at will.

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Parallel to this, there is the growing recognition in the medical field of the great influence of psychological factors in producing or complicating physical disturbances. Thus this Fifth Force can be called *psychoenergetics*.

Dr. Assagioli concludes and points out that all these five dimensions of psychology are not mutually exclusive; each is valid within its field of action.

The contrasts between the representatives of the various schools of psychology are largely artificial, and it is to be hoped that this recognition will lead towards an inclusive psychological science which will promote an harmonious psychosynthesis of the individuals, groups and of humanity as a whole. ◼



There is no certainty: there is only adventure.
— Roberto Assagioli

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