

Kathleen Lacey Article to be Published by ACA

The article "Introduction to Psychosynthesis and its Application in Psychotherapy" by Kathleen Lacey of the Psychosynthesis Center of Wisconsin has been selected for the new American Counseling Association online virtual counseling library.

ACA will make counseling documents available to members and list them in its *VISTAS 2006* print publication. ACA invited Kathleen to write this article after accepting her presentation for its 2006 annual conference—to be international and cohosted with the Canadian Counseling Association in Montreal March 30 to April 3 (see ACA Web site www.counseling.org). ACA has more than 43,000 members. Kathleen has an M.S. in educational psychology and is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.



A psychosynthesisist (Edwin Miller) at the Minn. conference in June, caught in a moment of conferring with Self. (Do attempt this at home, but don't expect identical results.)

"Opera, from page 1"

ing curriculum. For more information on the program please read: "The Will: Application of Psychosynthesis in an Adolescent Psychoeducational Setting," *Reflections On The Will*, March 2002.

Leah Wilson, a student in that program, went on to the University of Redlands, graduating in June 2005. She wrote, translated, composed and directed the opera, *Peter and Melusine*, which was performed at the university in May. In her one-act, four-scene work (based on one of Grimm's Fairy Tales) Peter, the main character, ignores his inner voice to follow a religious creed and societal pressures — and this leads to his demise.

Leah states that her experiences at the Well Being Center gave her permission to express her inner ideas. She was in New Mexico this summer for an internship with the Santa Fe Opera.



AAP News

The Newsletter of the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis

November

Fall

2005

People People People People People

Hedwig Weiler Moves to East Coast

Still actively guides Wisconsin Center

In this new feature, "People," Carla Peterson, with help from other former students, paints a profile of the woman affectionately known as Hedi.

Following World War II at age 12, Hedi's first travels brought her to the States from Hungary/Yugoslavia. She was accompanied by her mother who was



a U.S. citizen, and her younger sister.

Later on, as a graduate student in Mental Health/Psychiatric Nursing, Hedi became interested in

the body and mind interaction. This led to eighteen months of independent study on a research unit at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, learning how people's attitudes affect their bodies/health.

She continued to explore through travels to India, a year near Mount Shasta, and study of the ancient wisdom teachings. Along the way were other teachers and guides: Florence Garrigue of Meditation Mount in Ojai, California; Piero Ferrucci in Italy; the Psychosynthesis Institute and the Psychosynthesis Trust in England; Robert Gerard, who had helped Assagioli edit *Psychosynthesis*; and Tom Yeomans in the United States.

Hedi incorporated psychosynthesis into private counseling in Madison, Wisconsin, and in 1990 she founded the Psychosynthesis Center of Wisconsin. She began to formally teach psychosynthesis, modeling collaboration from the start, by inviting others to teach with her. She taught about a hundred students, and mentored 15 to 20 professionals who use psychosynthesis in mental health fields, teaching or consulting. Hedi said: "different ones of us may be called to work on different

parts of the (psychosynthesis) territory. We have accepted different assignments which need tending to."

Guided by her soul to fulfill a long held desire to live with her sister, she has just moved to North Carolina. Yet she continues to be active in guiding a flourishing psychosynthesis community in Wisconsin where she conducts an annual psychosynthesis retreat, guides the Center's evolution, and mentors several of the new teachers. She envisions a summer school with both week and month-long classes, guidance and mentoring sessions.

Her move has jump-started creative thinking: "Others are deciding that they

"continued on page 6"

Empathetic E-mail?

The synthesis of tech and heart

By Dave Shirley



What are my credentials for writing this? Thirty years of *not* showing e-mail empathy! The sender often doesn't notice a lack of empathy—the recipients do. Psychosynthesis helped me balance technology and empathy, producing these four guidelines.

1. **Don't "SPAM" your friends.** It is so easy (and free!) to create a distribution list for e-mail. I can send copies of my communications to thou-

sands in seconds—including hundreds not interested. I hate company-broadcast e-mail, often called SPAM. Would I ever want to "SPAM" my friends? Of course not. Have I ever done it? You bet!

2. **Use your "Subject:" line to say clearly what's in your e-mail.** A clear subject line assists initial reading and later referencing. Recently I skipped over an e-mail called "IMPORTANT NOTE"—which, had I read it, would have changed my expectation about a class. The instructor could have prevented my resentment with a clear subject line, such as "IMPORTANT CHANGE to ---- Class"
3. **Limit the number of requests in each e-mail.** This is also empathic to *yourself*—if you like to be heard. Use the "rule of three." It's challenging to read more than three requests in an e-mail and suggests that the intention of the writer is not clear. If you have more to say, remember there's always *the phone*.
4. **Use the spell check!** And I am waiting for an improved grammar checker. For today, for this article, I am relying on the skills and empathy of the newsletter staff!

A New Generation Steps Up

Student Writes Opera

By Mary Kelso

From 1990 to 2003 the Los Angeles County Office of Education's Division of Alternative Education and the Affiliated Wellbeing Center taught a very unique psychoeducational program. I offered group sessions several times a week based on psychosynthesis principles, and Patricia Love taught a very creative learn-

"continued on page 8"

Explore This Issue:

- Available now: Kentucky Conference Workshop proposal form
 - New PEOPLE section spotlights Hedi Weiler
 - Hakomi "Probe": a guiding tool
 - "New" committee conducting survey
 - Cochairs: Steering Committee active
 - Centers and AAP: beefing up connection
 - You—a Steering Committee member?
 - Write for *Conversations* on the body and psychosynthesis
- And much more



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AAP News

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Yes, Send Your Ideas

Please send ideas that have been helpful to you in your life and work. We're glad to have your poems, book reviews, art work, articles—especially about your use of psychosynthesis

Help Your Editors Edit

The volunteer editors ask for all submissions to the newsletter to be as “camera-ready” as possible. Tip: Get another person to review your copy carefully before you submit it. **Goings On** notes are to be 75 words or less and **articles** 500 words or less.

Submission Deadlines

Dec. 15, May 15, June 15, Sept. 15

Letter Guidelines

The “Letters to Editors” page is for readers to state their views and exchange ideas and information related to the psychosynthesis community. Views expressed on the letter page (and in the newsletter generally) are not necessarily those of the editors or the AAP. *AAP News* may edit submissions for grammar, syntax, and size.

How to Reach Us

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The Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis, founded in 1995, is incorporated as a nonprofit association with tax exemption in the United States. It is dedicated to advancing and advocating on behalf of psychosynthesis and conducting educational programs in psychosynthesis.

GOINGS ON

Psycho-Political Peace Institute

Dr. Margaret Rueffler conducts seminars in Bali, Indonesia, and Staefa, Switzerland, from October 2005 through March 2006.

Titles include *Aligning with the Song of the Earth*; *The Psychology of Nations* (a series including *Prevention of collective violence, Empowerment of groups, The individual and the national collective psyche, and more*); and *Unfolding the Personal Potential*.

Staefa, Switzerland
Tel. +41 (0)44 926 8182; Fax 926 8110
www.pppi.net
inst@pppi.net

Judy Dunlop

In October Judy Dunlop began new courses based in spiritual psychology lasting four or six weeks: sliding scale and handicapped accessible.

Titles included *Reconnecting with your self*; *Choosing forgiveness: Moving from misery to peace & health*; *Breathing lessons: finding an oasis of peace in a too busy world*; *Sharing our stories with kindred spirits*; and more.

Marblehead Mass.
(781) 631-7956; Fax (781) 631-1198
judydunlop@comcast.net

Connecticut Institute for Psychosynthesis

Summer included an ongoing Eidetic Imagery course, and a chamber music network session. This Psychosynthesis Community numbers more than 40. The Counseling Service, with nine counselors, is “very busy.”

Available this autumn: Feldenkrais, Psychosynthesis training, supervision, sessions, coaching, Open Houses, and Creative Retirement.

Each month an Open Sunday welcomes the community at large; in the spring: another retreat.

(203) 377-2421
psynnie@aol.com

The Synthesis Center

The 2005 Professional Training Program, one weekend per month: October through June of 2006.

The Center hosted an Open House in October, focusing on “Conversations on the Wisdom of Aging.”

Annual Reunion Conference, Spring 2006: Graduates or friends welcome to join in conference planning.
Amherst, Mass.

www.synthesiscenter.org
(413) 256-0772.

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Conversations For All

I was glad to read [in the Summer issue] an AAP invitation to submit items for the next *Conversations* [an AAP publication for members], on *Psychosynthesis and the Body*.

Here's proof *Conversations* is not *either* for professionals *or* for laypersons: A new client arrived early for a first appointment last Thursday, picked up an issue of *Conversations* while she waited for me, and mentioned aspects of it several times throughout the session. She's hooked on psychosynthesis from that brief intro.

Hooray for *both-and*!
Love to you all,
Phyllis Clay
Kansas City, Mo.



Art work by Abby Seixas

Why I Love Being on the Steering Committee

The AAP search committee is looking for Steering Committee candidates—maybe you! Here's a Steering Committee member's experience.

By Janet Messer

When asked to run for the Steering Committee, I was an isolated psychosynthesis practitioner with no other AAP members within hundreds of miles. I had joined the AAP, read the newsletters, and wished I could meet or work with “famous” people I read about there.

In my “I'm Not Popular” subpersonality, I figured no one would vote for me, but I ran and got elected. At my first SC meeting, I hardly knew anyone and worried I would not be able to contribute. By the end of the first day, I was aware of a transformation in myself.

The AAP Steering Committee is different from any group I have ever been a part of. Members make sincere efforts to “walk the talk” of psychosynthesis and pursue social psychosynthesis. We begin meetings with meditation and dedicate our energy toward the best actions for the AAP and its members. We treat one another with respect, welcome differences, and value what each person offers, even when we disagree. On the SC, I have learned more from people who are different than from those who are like me.

This SC skillfully balances process- and task-oriented agendas. Members monitor their behavior and emotions and are willing to examine themselves when their opinions or needs seem at odds with each other. We use the concepts of the observer and subpersonalities. I work hard to stay self-aware in meetings so I can help the group function well; this benefits me and others. I have contributed talents, been appreciated, and learned to truly appreciate other members. I have taken this learning into my family and therapy practice and now more deeply understand tasks couples and families must master to work together with love and respect.

I have also made friends, which cannot be overestimated. In addition to all I have gained on a personal and spiritual level, I get to do tangible work toward the growth of psychosynthesis. I write articles, help people connect with colleagues, raise money, and plan conferences. Being

able to act for goals I believe in feels like a blessing. Maybe you are ready to step up and join in this work.

Search for New Steering Committee Members

You're Welcome

Since the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis began, in 1994, its steering committee has guided the organization's stability and growth. The steering committee comprises 15 volunteer members who serve three-year terms.

Four members will complete their terms in June: Edwin Miller, Veronica Fisher, Walter Polt, and Hedi Weiler. We thank them for their generous contributions and service to the AAP. For the organization to move forward, we look for others to contribute gifts.

Requirements for serving on the steering committee:

- AAP membership
- Experience with and enthusiasm for psychosynthesis
- Time, energy, and skills for committee participation, special tasks, and monthly phone conferences
- Access to email
- Phone access for monthly meeting
- Willingness to cooperate, listen, find common ground, and work toward consensus decision making

The committee meets once a month by phone, several days in conjunction with the annual conference, and four days at a fall working retreat.

Members serve as cochairs, secretary, or treasurer; they work in committees on membership, newsletter, group life, the website, publications, and a yearly conference. It is a unique opportunity to experience the pleasure of working with others who share a commitment to the advance-

ment of Psychosynthesis.

To nominate yourself or someone you know to serve on the SC beginning in June, please contact any SC member... or contact one of us by Dec. 15:

Didi Firman, dfirman@comcast.net,
Debby Onken, DSOnken@aol.com,
Joann Anderson, jma2000@charter.net, or
Karen Pesavento, kpesave@mchsi.com
(search committee members).

Members Sharing Circle

How Psychosynthesis Found Me

In February we invited readers to tell how they found Psychosynthesis—or vice versa. Here's one of your Stories.

Priority Mail

As I was reading Joan Borysenko's book *Guilt is the Teacher, Love is the Lesson* in the early 1980s, a sentence on Psychosynthesis sounded like the answer to my search for a method to use as a counselor. I prayed for guidance to find out more.

The *next day* in my mailbox at work was a flyer about a Psychosynthesis workshop to be given by Phyllis Clay of Synthesis International, Inc, Kansas City, Mo. I met Phyllis for coffee and talk—she arrived with literature in hand.

I chose The Family Synthesis Institute in St. Louis (from a list in a Piero Ferurcci book), and Deborah Onken, and Vivian King became my trainers. I am forever grateful: Phyllis and these months of training were a turning point for me as a clinician. Strengthening my inner self allowed me to “guide” (good terminology) others to a deep level of recovery. The travelers' journey changes as the psychosynthesis process takes on a life of its own.

—Lois Hamon, Gainesville, Fla.

Send *your* Story to
drjanetmessenger@yahoo.com.

“Hedi, from page 1”

want to do something too,” she said. “Now the center itself is a big space—held together by the ‘group soul,’ a magnetic force field that yet allows considerable freedom.”

Hedi continues as one of the directors of the Center for Awakening, a nonprofit group she and others established in Wisconsin.

Students’ Lessons Learned:

- Sue Clapp, artist: “I found Hedi’s open-mindedness to be welcoming.”
- Kathleen Lacey: “Subpersonality work changed my life and . . . my clients’.”
- Jean McIlheny: “Notice what makes your [group’s] energy go up.”
- Abbie Loomis: “We are not there to fix each other. . . . The soul will figure it out in a supportive environment.”

Read a fuller Hedi Story at:
<http://www.aap-psychoanalysis.org/articles/index.htm>

Retreat in the Valley of the Sun

Cochairs Report SC Activity for Members Is Not Just Hard Work

It is great to see the enthusiasm and hard work of the Steering Committee. We trust that the groundwork being laid by it and other non-SC volunteers—notably those who are part of the Nominating, Retreat, and Professional Development committees—will enable record growth, a sounder business container, and improved/increased services.

We held the steering committee’s annual fall business retreat—a highlight of SC service—in late October this year in the Valley of the Sun: Phoenix.

These actions on behalf of AAP members led up to the retreat:

- We transitioned the former Training Task Force into the Professional Development Committee, recognizing its double mission: developing teachers and encouraging theory development.
- The Publications group is preparing the next monograph, *Psychosynthesis and the Body*. It will be a benefit of membership (see notice on page 3).
- The AAP is moving to quarterly membership renewals, sending out renewal letters for an entire quarter at the beginning of each quarter.
- The newsletter continues to improve in layout, articles, and new features such as “Focus on the Centers” and “Day-to-Day Psychosynthesis.”
- The AAP distributed a trial “Goings On” electronic newsletter just to the New England area. This tool will circulate event dates and other items of interest to members and potential members cost-effectively and strengthen our connection with those who teach psychosynthesis.
- The 2006 conference planning is underway. The location (the University of Kentucky in Lexington), the keynoter (Huston Smith), the focus (Unity in Diversity), and the sponsoring center (the Kentucky Center), may make this our largest conference yet (see call for proposals on page 3).

And now a note from our sponsor—the AAP: As you begin to think ahead to tax season and closing down professional and personal accounts, remember the AAP appreciates donations toward the scholarship fund and the general fund.

May the approaching holiday times be filled with joy and love for each of you.

— Betty Bosdell and David Shirley, Cochairs, AAP Steering Committee

News Headlines News Headlines News Headlines

Synthesis Center Starts E-Newsletter:

Sends trial issue, “The Synthesist, in PDF form in early October. More to come!

Will Parfitt Posts New Psychosynthesis Journal . . .

It’s on-line with free PDF download. . . . Offers PS Avalon Publishing . . .

This publisher, www.psavalon.com, is poised to print your book.

. . . And Issues New Book, *The Heart’s Ragged Evangelist* (love poems for the greater love) by Jay Ramsay.

TTF Becomes PDC . . .

The Training Task Force, formed in 2002, is now a standing committee: the Professional Development Committee.

...and Announces Survey

Following a 2002 TTF survey and three years of Training Development Programs, the current PDC members (Betty Bosdell, Judith Broadus, Phyllis Clay, Vincent Dummer, Dirk Kelder, Mary Kelso, John Parks, and Brad Roth) will call current and former directors of training programs to survey past effectiveness and plan future strategy.

Fare Thee Well

It’s hard to say good-bye.

It’s been very rewarding to be coeditor with Walter Polt these two years. I left the steering committee in June yet lingered after those three and a half years of AAP warmth, staying for two more newsletters. Meanwhile, Janet Messer, Jan Kuniholm and Karen Pesavento joined our editorial ranks.

I’m working full-time as a college nurse and enjoying life in California immensely, so now I’ll step back with members just discovering psychosynthesis and the AAP—and all who served on the steering committee and were newsletter editors before me.

Love to all. Carry it on.

Mary Eileen Kiniry

“Unity in Diversity”

2006 AAP Conference in Kentucky

The Conference Host Committee of the Kentucky Center of Psychosynthesis is well into planning AAP’s 2006 Annual Conference for Friday, June 16, through Sunday, June 18, at the University of Kentucky in Lexington.

The conference theme will be “Unity in Diversity” and the Host Committee has created the following mission statement:

Given the opportunity and privilege to explore our human diversity without bias or prejudice, we seek a new understanding of ourselves and the world in which our numerous spiritual traditions and points of view may be seen as petals of one flower converging to touch the center of our souls.

Friday will be a Community Day of Conversation focused on our “Unity in Diversity” theme. Psychologically-minded members of the Lexington com-

munity will be invited to meet with our Psychosynthesis community. This exciting forum for dialogue with members from various Lexington immigrant groups—each with its own unique culture, religion, and mother tongue—offers a unique opportunity to work toward understanding within this diverse group and to find new ways to soften barriers that have created “us-them” problems in intercultural relationships.

Saturday and Sunday will be devoted to workshops, with a keynote address by Huston Smith on Friday evening.

An architectural-award-winning building will be our conference headquarters. The first floor, with reception room, dining room, a large hall, and a giant kitchen

Call for Workshop Proposals

For June 17 and 18, 2006 Ky. Conference
Proposals due Nov. 30, 2005

Workshops can explore many themes:

- Psychosynthesis concepts such as “distinct but not separate”
- Human diversity without bias or prejudice
- Seeking new understanding of ourselves—and a world in which our numerous spiritual traditions and points of view may be seen as petals of one flower converging to touch the center of our souls.
- All topics of interest to Psychosynthesis practitioners, expressive arts therapists, trainers/educators, pastoral counselors, medical professionals, and psychotherapists
- Presentations by alumni from the Kentucky Center of Psychosynthesis
- Introductions to Psychosynthesis for “newbies”

Choose 1 of 3 possible time slots—90-minutes, 3 hours or a post-conference workshop

Proposals must be received by

Nov. 30, 2005. Because we seek CEUs for the presentations, it is important to receive the complete information (including a copy of your curriculum vitae) in a timely manner. This deadline will allow us to have the printed conference brochure available in March 2006. Please follow the instructions and see that all information relevant to your proposal is provided. Each proposal must be submitted on a separate form. You will be notified regarding the disposition of your proposal by December 31, 2005.

Order your proposal form:

Download electronic version (preferred) from:

<http://www.aap-psychoanalysis.org>

Vincent Dummer
436 West Second St.
Lexington, KY 40507
Tel. (859) 806-7138

has space for the AAP book store, impromptu conversations, ad hoc groups, refreshments, and all meals.

All conference facilities are within a short walking distance (or very brief shuttle ride), including the auditorium for the keynote address.

A limited number of guest rooms are on the second floor, with additional housing available just on the other side of its patio area.

The Host Committee looks forward to welcoming participants to Lexington and invites you to become a partner in creating the 2006 program.

Write for Conversations: ‘The Body and Psychosynthesis’

Please respond to one or both of the following questions, in 500 words or less total, for possible inclusion in the upcoming issue of *Conversations in Psychosynthesis*, which will focus on “Body in Psychosynthesis.”

1. How are you integrating *body* with your current Psychosynthesis practice, personally or professionally?
2. Describe how you incorporate *body* into one of the key concepts of Psychosynthesis: will, Self, “I,” identification/disidentification, subpersonalities, synthesis, or another key concept.

Respond ASAP (at least by mid-November)

dancingday@earthlink.net, or

Brad Roth
Dance Department, Wesleyan University
Wesleyan Station
Middletown, CT 06459

Note new submission
deadlines on page 2: For
next issue please submit by
Dec. 15.

TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY

Hakomi and Psychosynthesis

Hakomi has parallels to psychosynthesis. Here is a brief Hakomi intro and a "Probe," which in psychosynthesis terms involves self and choice—and can be seen as helpful for evoking and caring for a subpersonality.

By Marti Elvebak

Hakomi is a gentle but powerful mindfulness-based experiential approach to healing.

Exploring the interface of body and mind, Hakomi works with the whole person. This is necessary for changing limiting habitual patterns in the body as well as for transforming the core beliefs that organize the way we experience life.

Hakomi therapy begins with the deliberate development of a healing relationship and then typically progresses to a careful study in mindfulness of relevant

ness and bias our perceptions without our having conscious knowledge of their existence."

One Hakomi technique for making these mental models conscious is called a Probe. A Probe is a nourishing statement delivered to the client while in mindfulness in order to elicit an automatic response from the belief system. The positive quality of a probe is designed to make the belief "speak up" about its own reality and to deny the reality of the probe. For example, "You are important"

Delivering a Probe

1. Suggest the experiment, explaining what is to happen; get agreement to try it "I'm going to say some words to you, and I want you to notice what happens. Your response could be physical or emotional, maybe in images or memories or something you say to yourself. Just notice what occurs, even nothing at all."
2. Induce mindfulness; track for readiness "Settling in to the chair that is holding you, allow your eyes to close and take yourself inside."
3. Probe format: Invitation to study—pause—Probe statement "What happens when you hear . . . (pause) . . . 'You are important.'" The probe statement should be delivered in a calm, neutral voice and should always be a positive statement. It can be helpful and evocative to use the client's name: "Mary, you are important." It is helpful to repeat the probe a few times, gently.
4. Always get a report . A Probe is an experimental question and the most useful answer is a report. "My stomach just tightened; my chest feels heavy; I'm remembering being a little girl and feeling lost."

Now client and therapist can explore further the origins of the mental model, and have access to changing the beliefs.

present experience. Through focused attention on present experience in all its forms (thoughts, feelings, body tensions and sensations), we can become aware of the deep habits through which we live life, and the beliefs that are their roots.

Dr. Daniel Siegel in his book *Parenting from the Inside Out* says "science has shown that the brain, even in young infants, is quite capable of making generalizations, or mental models, from repeated experiences. . . . Mental models serve as a kind of funnel through which information is filtered, as lenses that help us to anticipate the future and therefore prepare our minds for action. These lenses are outside our conscious aware-

will elicit some sort of "No, I'm not!"

This denial now lets both client and therapist study how the belief manifests itself, since it is experientially present.

Although a probe works best if it is tailor-made for the client, based on your observations and their presenting issues, some sample probes are

You are safe here.

You don't have to please anyone.

It's okay to rest.

You don't have to hide your feelings.

For more info contact:

Marti Elvebak, at
marti.elvebak@mindspring.com or
www.hakomiinstitute.com.

BODYBODYBODY

Footfalls

By Brad Roth

Listen to the rhythm of your footfalls. They will tell you a lot about your mental and emotional states. They also offer you an opportunity to exercise your will physically, while practicing Assagioli's second psychological law: "Attitudes, movements and actions tend to evoke corresponding images and ideas; these, in turn . . . evoke or intensify corresponding emotions and feelings."



At first, just notice these rhythms as you go about your day—sometimes steady and even, sometimes uneven, sometimes increasing in tempo, sometimes decreasing. I hum them to myself as I step, step, step, step. Hmm, hmm, h, h, hmm.

Right away, paying attention to your footfalls brings you into sensory contact with your world, into your present action. Now, do you notice that some subpersonalities have particular rhythms to their walk? You can recognize their presence when their rhythms appear.

Accept them. Shhhh.... here's one now! Listen and learn.

Would you like to exercise your will (literally)? Try slowing down or speeding up your stepping rhythm deliberately. Try a direct or a meandering pathway. Try adding power to your step by pushing off the back foot more, or add lightness by increasing the sensitivity of your feet. Try walking with masterful control, or with fluent abandon. Play around! Take a walk!

"Whether we conceive it as divine Being or as cosmic energy, the Spirit working upon and within all creation is shaping into order, harmony and beauty, uniting all beings with each other through links of love, achieving—slowly and silently, but powerfully and irresistibly—the Supreme Synthesis."

—Roberto Assagioli

"Darkness and the Soul's Journey"

Is it possible reaching for the "light" at times can't match being fully present with "the dark" and witnessing to it? Can combining subpersonality work with self-identification avoid the creation of unconscious projection and greater polarity? Here's an invitation to see for yourself.

By Kay Brownfield

This past August in Kristiansand, Norway, a group of 25 beautiful and courageous souls gathered together from Norway, Russia, Sweden, Germany, Canada, Italy and the United States to explore "darkness" in its many forms, shades and dimensions, and to meet and acknowledge darkness as an important and natural aspect of our individual and collective human experience. Drawing upon the group guidelines and dialogue process that Tom Yeomans has been teaching and refining for the past 15-plus years, we began as a circle and became a community almost instantly! We experienced the power of bearing witness, of not trying to "make it better," and of strengthening our capacity to tolerate the mystery of the Unknown. The paradox was how enriching it was to open to this.

On first impulse, we wanted to define darkness in a concrete way. However, our understanding grew, and with Tom's guidance we began to delineate the types of darkness that are common during the

various stages of our life and define how we might most effectively "work" with the different qualities of darkness during those different stages.

I believe that, not only is the explicit emergence of this particular topic timely, but also our willingness to explore it is an essential ingredient in our spiritual development as a professional community. It is born out of 30 years of our collective experience working with the transpersonal dimension, and more recently out of a collaborative dialogue. But specifically it is also a reflection of Tom's tenacity, dedication, and deep understanding that "to reach our full human spiritual maturity, the darkness must be integrated and befriended." At times we tend to reach for the "light," when what would truly serve is to be fully present with and witness to "the dark," thus avoiding the creation of greater polarity and unconscious projection.

(Read full story on Web at <http://www.aap-psychosynthesis.org>)

FOCUS ON THE CENTERS

How Can We Help Each Other?

Jan Kuniholm, the AAP Steering Committee's Liaison with the Centers, calls on Synthesis Centers around the country, around the world

Hi folks. I'd like to ask you to take a few moments to consider a couple of questions. Please share these questions with others associated with your work:

Imagine what kinds of support might benefit your work in Psychosynthesis, directly or indirectly. What specific things would you like to see us in AAP do to be of service?

How might you, or people associated with your work or center, best support the AAP?

Your responses can influence the direction of AAP.

Please help by emailing your thoughts jkuniholm@adelphia.net, or calling (413) 743-1703 between 7:00 and 11:00 PM eastern time. I hope to call and chat in the near future.

Thanks.

Jan



Day-to-Day Psychosynthesis

DESDEMONA

What's in a Name?

In Psychosynthesis class we learned about subpersonalities, and our teacher encouraged us to give our subpersonalities names. Later I discussed the class with my daughter. Sharing my newfound insights and wisdom, I brought her attention to the fact that *she* had a tendency to be quite dramatic when feeling sorry for herself.

My daughter astutely and with some sarcasm asked: "Well, Mom, I wonder where I got that?"

Without even thinking, I said: "Desdemona."

The name sounded very romantic and dramatic—it just seemed to fit!

After many Psychosynthesis classes, I had become aware of my propensity for playing the martyr. My martyr had been my muse in writing volumes of depressing, self absorbed poetry as a teenager. I felt deeper and more sensitive than everyone else. It also worked well for manipulating others and getting out of situations I wanted to avoid. Sometimes wallowing in self-pity just felt pleasurable. But best of all, as an adult I noticed how effective my dramatic tactics could be in bringing the family together if there was discord.

It wasn't until after I named her that the realization came: my martyr was just a *part* of me, not my essence. Giving this part a name and recognizing Desdemona when she made an appearance put her in perspective. Now I can smile when, in the midst of some family difference, she suggests: "We could have a heart attack."

Naming the part helped me separate from her, and it's interesting that Desdemona isn't around much any more. Life has taken on a less dramatic but increasingly satisfactory flavor.

—Cindi, III.

Do you have an example of how Psychosynthesis has made an impact on daily life? We encourage you to send your story to Karen Pesavento at kpesave@mchsi.com.