

Psychosynthesis Quarterly June 2022

The digital magazine of the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis



This issue's theme:
Embodiment as a Path to Transformation

AAP provides resources for people to cultivate peace and purpose.

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

The Psychosynthesis Quarterly is published by The Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis (AAP) four times a year in March, June, September and December. The AAP provides resources for people to cultivate peace and purpose. Our mission is to advance the theory and practice of psychosynthesis to benefit individuals and society.

The AAP was founded in 1995 and is a Massachusetts nonprofit corporation with tax exemption in the United States. AAP membership supports this publication and the other educational activities of AAP, including scholarships. Membership and donations are tax deductible in the United States.

The Psychosynthesis Quarterly accepts announcements, ideas, reviews of books and events, articles, poetry, art, exercises, photos, and letters. Tell us what has helped your life and work, what can help others, and examples of psychosynthesis theory in action.

We hope our suggestion of from 250 to 1500 words may serve as a guideline that helps your writing. We prefer that you use the APA style guide when possible, for things like punctuation and references.

Announcements, book reviews, and upcoming events are also welcome, with a request that nonmembers who wish to submit advertising make a donation to AAP. To donate, click here.

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*Note: We receive submissions from all over the world. You will see the authors “native” spelling in their articles.

With thanks to Peter Stewart for copy editing

Letter from our Guest Editor Abigail DeSoto

We talk a lot about *mindful living, waking up, being present/ here and now, and presence*. Though we may understand the concept of the sabotaging small self run by fear and doubt, rooted in the past and/or planning for the future, and more or less realize life can only be lived in the here and now, ***how exactly do we stay present?*** How do we live in the here and now? How does one cultivate ‘presence’, and as a therapist / guide, accompany others to ‘be here now’?

Mankind (particularly in the West) tends to focus on one dominant center, while leaving the two others dormant, or asleep. For many of us we allow the thinking or intellectual center to control our lives, and loose connection with both the body’s inherent wisdom and that of the heart. Yet without a strong tripod as a base or foundation, we go around in life wobbly, wonky. Relying on only one center of awareness, or having only one *online*, we are actually asleep. My invitation is to wake up, and learn how. There *is* an instruction manual to cultivate presence and awakening! In the AAP webinar September 25th we will explore and articulate it. See you there! In the meantime, *be here, now!*



Transformational coach/psychosynthesis guide, Abigail studied psychosynthesis at the Psychosynthesis and Education Trust (P.E.T.) in London and with Molly Young Brown’s online program in *Personal & Spiritual Psychosynthesis*. Abigail has Master’s degrees from N.Y.U. and Tufts University, and offers coaching and personal growth programs worldwide to individuals choosing to release pain and trauma in favor of exploration, highest potential, and happiness. She is the creator of ***YIN DANCE -Your Inner Dance TM***, and an experiential workshop entitled ***Life T.A.N.G.O.S.*** exploring embodied qualities for conscious living and highest potential.

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Embodiment: Mending and Transcending the Cartesian Split

By Rev. Dr. Cacky Mellor, Ph.D., RSME/T, SEP
July 2022

Introduction

What exactly is embodiment? Western academic thinking seems to be highly polarized around the concept of embodiment. Western culture has long lost the roots of Ancient and Indigenous wisdom calling for strong cultivation of embodiment—roots tended to by the likes of Assagioli and Jung (1974). In Western academia, the pendulum swings between the highly Cartesian mind-body split and what could be seen as a depersonalized emphasis on body—an intellectual centering leaving the wisdom of the body and heart dormant (Bourgeault, 2003). I appreciate the “Middle Kingdom” (Overton, 2008, p. 3) position as presented by Overton in their article, “Embodiment from a relational perspective.” This article pairs beautifully with Colombetti and Thompson’s (2008) article, “The feeling body: Toward an enactive approach to emotion.” Both articles argued for a contiguous reality that co-arises from mind and body forming “indissociable complements, and not competing alternatives forever segregated into pure forms” (Overton, 2008, p. 3). This is not about opposing hierarchies, pitting mind against body, in a struggle for dominance in the origin story of lived experience. It is a spectrum that breaks down the false dualism calling forth a co-arising answer to the infamous chicken and egg riddle.

Bridging the Divide

Colombetti & Thompson (2008) extensively discussed the growing attempt in academia to transcend the mind-body split showcasing the challenge to the long held belief that cognition is manipulated abstract representations, alternatively proposing that “cognition emerges from the coupled interactions of the brain, body, and environment” (p. 46). The authors went on to make the distinction between the body as object and the experience of “a subjectively lived body” (Colombetti & Thompson, 2008, p. 57) which necessitates the marriage of body and mind to experience being. The mind and world cocreate the mind and the world; they are symbiotically dependent on one another. There can be no mind without body, no life without embodiment. Even dissociation is a bodily experience that requires a carnal existence. Life is a sensorial experience which calls on mind and body to take part in tandem. Assagioli (1974) recognized these interwoven phenomena, championing returning to the body as a pathway to presence and a fully lived life.

While both Overton (2008) and Colombetti & Thompson (2008) have similar efforts to integrate body and mind, they take different entry points into this conversation. Overton (2008) utilized an emphasis on a person-centered standpoint to unify the split, proposing that if embodiment necessitates “the *body as lived experience actively engaged*, then a phenomenological and person-centered standpoint of relational synthesis becomes a necessary vantage point for understanding embodiment as a whole” (p. 6). In other words, if one is a person, they must have a body and interact with the world through that body. This bridges mind, body, and sociocultural experiences, highlighting a critical interpersonal quality of embodiment and inter-corporeality that is fundamental to Assagioli’s (1974) approach to psychosynthesis and embracing life in all its ever occurring changes.

The Connection of Embodiment

As Cornell (2015) explained, when we are speaking of the body, we are speaking of our relationship with the Other; “the body is misleading because it leads one into relationship, and so towards the perils and ecstasies of dependence and surrender; it reminds us... of the existence of other people” (p. 461). Levinas (1997) professed that our a priori responsibility as human beings is to attend the suffering of the Other. Only by entering into the field of relational embodiment can connection ripple through “space including the ‘space’ of one another ‘as if’ they actually could feel the changes taking place within the other person’s body-mind” (Little, 2014, p. 255). The encounter that takes place in dyadic ritual, such as therapy, touches both parties. Touch is a bidirectional act. To touch is to be touched in return. Manning (2007) explained, “touch involves a return, a return not to the self-same but to the body as it has shifted through the process of making time and space with an other” (p. 24). Being embodied while sharing

intentional presence with another embodied being inextricably changes both parties and the co-created field they share. A transcendent third emerges in the embodied-to-embodied connection—opening a sacred experience of higher states of being.

Assagioli (1974) was an early voice in modern psychology illuminating the nexus point of being and embodiment, drawing a link between sensation and emotion. Similarly, Colombetti & Thompson (2008) utilized the psychosomatic nature of emotion to contest the “disembodied conception of cognition” (p. 45) in mainstream theories of emotion and the slow evolution in academia to bring the body back into the conversation. Emotion is a tangible example of the intrinsic link between mind and body (Colombetti & Thompson, 2008). Bodily sensation can help one understand emotions and it can be very difficult to determine if the origin of the emotion was in the mind or the body. The sensorimotor network of the nervous system acts autonomously to bridge feelings—both emotional and physiological—and demonstrate the contiguous nature of body and mind in embodiment (Colombetti & Thompson, 2008). This emphasizes the intrapersonal dimension of embodiment and interoceptive awareness. The contrasting approaches were especially interesting to me as I realized my preconception of this relational embodiment as interpersonal. I quickly discovered that it is equally about intrapersonal relational embodiment—creating deeper connections within the Self. This bias may trace back to my embeddedness in Western culture and the Cartesian dualism that is baked into the zeitgeist.

Bodies Born, Bodies Lived

Our cultural predisposition towards a Cartesian understanding of the world biases our ability to explore these concepts. It seems that we have to go back to infancy to more accurately be able to see the spectrum of connection between mind and body (Brauer, 2015; Porges, 1993; Trevarthen, 2001). As Brauer (2015) succinctly stated, early childhood is the time in life, “in which the discovery of the (lived) body is as significant to the proactive process through which both self and reality are formed and generated” (p. 382). Much of one’s interoception is established in infancy and shapes our experience of embodiment and how we move through the world throughout the lifespan.

Expounding on this understanding, Overton (2008) explained that “human beings are creatures of the flesh. What we can experience and how we make sense of what we experience depend on the kinds of bodies we have and on the ways we interact with the various environments we inhabit” (p. 1). Every body is unique (e.g. gender, race, ability, body shape, size, the way we adorn our bodies, development, environment, etc.) and the culmination of all of those individual idiosyncrasies shape that way we move through the world, the kinds of experiences we have, and the distinctive lived experience of embodiment. My life-time of experiences in this body has shaped my “motoric convictions” (Brauer, 2015, p. 381), my body-born values and ethics, as a Somatic Movement Therapist and Educator, acutely aware of power dynamics and the necessity of agency and autonomy when engaging with fellow embodied beings. I profoundly honor that each individual is the expert in their lived experience. This opens up sacred curiosity and desire to better understand, what is this individual’s experience of embodiment?

Embodied Spirituality

It is necessary to honor the role of the finite body in our experience as infinite spiritual beings. To find the Divine, we must look within and traverse our own anatomy. To maintain the life force and psychic energy of the Divine, we must utilize metaphor and hold it gently. Feuerstein (1989) proposed that “the key to mystical language and religious metaphor is not theology or cosmology but anatomy” (p. 7). She went on to explain that many religious metaphors are symbols for anatomical features of the higher functional structures of the human individual. Those who enter deeply into the mystical dimension of experience soon discover that the cosmic design they expected to find in their inwards path of ascent to God is, in fact, simply the design of their own anatomical or psycho-physical structures. (Feuerstein, 1989, p. 7)

The type of embodied metaphor Feuerstein expressed is foundational to my understanding of the potential medicinal quality of psychosynthesis—bridging the anatomical and psycho-physical structures opens a cosmological language of mysticism that simultaneously draws one further into their body and closer to the Divine. This calls for embracing this seemingly paradoxical tension of the opposites—embodiment and Divinity. Engaging in psychosynthesis could potentially be an initiation and “paradoxical doorway into transcendence” (Stein, 2014, p. 39) as it is providing a portal to intentionally engage with embodied spirituality. Flesh is our connective tissue to the world (Merleau-Ponty, 2013). Embracing conscious

embodiment breaks down the subject-object way of seeing the world and forces us into a relational and numinous existence that illuminates a path to better allowing us to explore our selves, relationships, and the world. In other words, conscious embodiment beckons us into living fully alive. An embodied practice, such as psychosynthesis, can open the path to transformation and awakening.

Conclusion

All of this to say, perhaps “What is embodiment?” is just the initial question in the inquiry... Bringing in Gurdieff’s Three Centered Awareness (Bourgeault, 2003) I am curious, what is your experience of embodiment in this moment? How can we meet each other more deeply in this dynamic, lived place? I look forward to meeting you there.

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Dr. Cacky has spent the past 15+ years studying the power of words on the body, mind, soul, and society. In undergrad, she studied art therapy and holistic psychology at Lesley University. After which she received her Masters of Education in art-based activism and social entrepreneurship from Lesley's Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences.

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Dr. Cacky has cultivated a diverse somatic toolkit to support clients on their healing journey. She is a Registered Somatic Movement Therapist and Educator, Somatic Experiencing© Practitioner, and RYT-500. Additionally, she is an experienced Reiki Master practitioner and has done training in energy work, embodied social justice, EFT, NLP, and somatic attachment therapy. She is also a non-denominational reverend. Dr. Cacky draws from her eclectic background to meet each client's unique needs and goals.

Dr. Cacky's current work is centered around the internalization of language, narrative, and trauma on a somatic level and how it affects interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships. She is deeply passionate about social justice, the arts, intergenerational trauma, and somatics.

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Paintings by Gillian McConnell

Reflections ' is the more recent painting and I tend to paint after a significant event which in itself can be transformative and the action of painting being awakening and healing, allowing me to rid myself of anger or sorrow.



REFLECTIONS

The morning and dancing painting was done after a young man in palliative care married his 18-year-old girlfriend half an hour before he died. I painted that picture to Help transform myself out of sorrow.



TODAY IS FOR MORNING, TONIGHT I GO DANCING

I thought that my picture Today is for Morning, Tonight I go Dancing (oil on canvas) relates to both death and the weather which in itself speaks about Transformation and Awakening.
Reflections (acrylic on canvas) can be related to looking back and looking forward.



I have been a psychosynthesis practitioner for over 20 years and I'm based in Toronto Ontario Canada. I started out life as a fashion designer and have been painting all my life on and off. I have also been volunteering with the dying both in palliative care hospices and in the community and working with clients who are bereaved for nearly 40 years.

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The Vibrating Dot

By Cliff Ishigaki

“I have always fought not to project but to be myself. To retain my own scale, which is a dot, but a vibrating dot, a pulsating dot which we can reach out to the whole world, to the universe.”
Chandralekha

Chandralekha was an Indian dancer known for integrating classic Indian dance with other varieties of dance and martial arts. She felt that the duality of masculine and feminine required questioning, that the Self was neither masculine nor feminine. She felt her calling was to link the inner and outer spaces that began with understanding the body and its vital parts so that we could bridge the inner and outer worlds we live in.

In this Quarterly edition we have been invited to move closer to embodiment as Psychosynthesis practitioners and students. In the early years of Psychosynthesis the students of Roberto Assagioli had to deal with many mental concepts that were beyond the realm of psychology at the time. If one was not mentally identified in participating in the concepts and principles of Psychosynthesis the work might have felt entirely too abstract and without benefit to students.

We have evolved as a community of learners and as such what was considered abstract and conceptual can now be articulated with tangible constructs and single and group experiences. The collective knowledge within groups studying Psychosynthesis became an accelerant to understanding and internalizing the ‘egg’ of oneself.

It may seem timely that the necessity of ‘embodiment’ within our Psychosynthesis journey is present. Those pioneers who have been called in earlier times to explore the inner world of our bodies and hearts must be truly thanked for laying down the pathways that would lead to the integration of our Self.

In the past our learning was much like a major university. Different colleges would enroll the student into the College of Science or the College of Music or the College of History or the College of Religion and Philosophy, etc.

In our own lives we represent this specializing of knowledge and experiences whether we've attended a university or college in our past. From our own beginnings in our family of origin we cannot discount the focus given to our mind or body or heart.

Many of us came from dysfunctional families so the emphasis was much more on survival issues of safety and basic belonging. Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs would over focus our world especially on safety needs. If trauma became a part of this origin story we can see the unfolding life path inhibiting the mind, body and heart then and now.

What role could Psychosynthesis play in the recovery of human functions? In the addiction and trauma communities we speak of 'recovery.' It is not recovery from a drug or behavior or traumas but a recovery of the Self

We cannot afford to become a specific school of recovery: of mental approaches, emotional approaches or body approaches. Our work would leave out the necessities of being a Human vs a survivor who must seek shelter in the mind, emotions or body.

Finding shelter, finding all forms of safety for the inner child, adolescent, young adult, adult and elder has become a pattern that is very apparent to many of us. If the guidelines for life are written around inhibition or acting our behaviors the recovery of the Self can seem fantasy based or what was derisively referred to as New Age bulls---t.

Psychosynthesis can become truly relevant if it is equated with recovering the human Self. It is becoming more common to describe the characteristics of a survivor based mind or survivor heart or especially survivor body even within mass media. We have accumulated reams of data that point to our restricted and inhibited minds, heart and body in recent years.

Our path to 'embodiment' as Psychosynthesis practitioners has taken the initial forms of subpersonality work with our students and clients. This has asked them to recognize a need exists as necessary to their wellbeing. Once a need is accepted then the will can be engaged to coordinate the meeting of that need and eventually integrate the need with other needs. The integrated self comes close to what Assagioli viewed as synthesis: the release of energy as an integrated body, mind and heart---- the 'soul infused personality.'

Our work in Psychosynthesis has the outline of integration impressed into personal psychosynthesis and spiritual psychosynthesis work. One of the advantages I've always been grateful for is the work in groups. As a trainer for students who took the 3 year training program in Pasadena, California with my gifted co-trainer, Vivian King, we consciously included in each weekend's training syllabus a time for mind, heart and body.

I had a background in a martial art called Aikido which I always felt was an 'embodied' form of Psychosynthesis that helped the students truly ground their experiences in the body, mind and heart. We come from many diverse backgrounds in our lives and yet the fundamentals that are directly connected to Psychosynthesis are not meant to be separated into one form of experience or interpretation. We have a 'body' of knowledge, a mind of knowledge and a heart of knowledge.

I do believe that as Practitioners we can act to bring together our 'specialities' that we have engaged in and build holistic lessons for our students and clients. We have wonderful opportunities in our task groups that lend themselves to moving our students and clients from survivor/trauma conditions to the path of recovery of our personal self and Higher Self.

'When one lives with concepts one never learns, the concepts become static. You may change them but the very transformation of one concept to another is still static, is still fixed. But to have the sensitivity to feel, seeing that life is not a movement of two separate activities, the external and the inward, to see that it

is one, to realize that the inter-relationship is this movement, is this ebb and flow of sorrow and pleasure and joy and depression, loneliness and escape, to perceive nonverbally this life as a whole, not fragmented, nor broken up, is to learn.”

Krishnamurti

May each of us do our part and may this be so.

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BIO:

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Incarnation as the Soul's Way to Perfection

By Ewa Danuta Bialek

Embodiment has at least two meanings for me. On the one hand, it relates to the incarnation that I experienced through a “deja vu” encounter and the karmic relationships in this life. Another meaning is the embodiment of the soul in our concrete life. It is primarily the latter that I will explain in this article.

My first encounter with psychosynthesis – a psychology with a soul - almost 27 years ago – was the start of a transformative adventure. Over the next several years I experienced a process of enlightenment that helped me to understand the meaning of my existence. Until then, I had worked as a medical scientist on the parameters of disease symptoms. I had no idea that they were the result of what happened at the deeper level of the soul.

Through my teachers John Cullen and Vivian King I have learned to manage myself as a person; and through hard work, I subsequently reached a spiritual level of being, that has been incarnated in my body in this lifetime.

At the time, when I was sick from a childhood illness and undergoing the usual symptoms-based treatment, I realized that the lack of efficacy of this approach was due to the fact that medicine operates only at the level of biology and physicality, and does not take into account the spiritual dimension. My treatment was a total failure. This taught me to “dig deeper” – down to the soul level.

I was a late learner, partly due to the traumatic experiences I suffered before and immediately after my birth (my mother's trauma), and the fact that my first encounter with psychosynthesis was not until I was close to 50 years old. Meanwhile, I had had several adult experiences of illness, which were very severe, and these were repeated many times so that they became a source of deep understanding. This eventually provided release from the traumas that caused them.

Having worked as an immunologist in my first profession, I was now learning about the immunity provided by the soul. I also formulated a model of "education for the future" that aspired to reduce the need for therapy among children, adults and the Earth. In reaching this broad vision, I was helped by attending the "Soul in education" conferences and workshops run by the Findhorn Foundation.

My vision of "education for health / sustainable development" developed around two pillars: working with psychosynthesis and the vision of the Findhorn Foundation.

Over subsequent years, I dug deeper and understood that my childhood traumas related to not only my mother and father, but also to my spiritual faith. The latter happened when I was 10 years old. When I confessed to the priest in religious lessons that I was of a different faith, he exclaimed in front of the entire class that I would be stuck in Hell, and he made an example of me in front of all those attending. After that, I gave up my faith for many years. It was another taboo subject. The earlier taboo related to my father, who became a political prisoner when I was two years old, and his behavior towards me after his release from prison.

These experiences with my father and then the priest recurred three times in my life before, finally, I was able to release their destructive energy.

My research on chronic diseases from childhood led me to address their root cause. I have talked about this at scientific conferences for many years, as well as having written articles in the scientific press and publishing dozens of books on the subject. Thanks to this, I have also eliminated many of my own health problems.

Techniques that I have found helpful in understanding the causes of disease include writing a Travel Journal, and also the use of exercises of the will, and transformation techniques such as the rose bloom and the transformation of a caterpillar into a butterfly. Thanks to these techniques I discovered much that was hidden "underneath", but I also became aware of the "call of the soul". Slowly but systematically I woke up from my little self to the personal self, and finally I reached the level of the Higher Self - the synthesis of personality and soul, and hence the goal of the soul.

This period was very fruitful as life brought me many opportunities to participate in conferences (such as Soul in Education), but also to realize my Higher Self through transforming my model for "education for the future" so that it had wider meaning for humanity as a whole.

This is also how I came to understand the message of Roberto Assagioli - the Supreme Synthesis – through integrating my vision with the vision of humanity as a whole.

The conference "The Planet Within" in Poggio del Fuocco was extremely helpful for me, as well as a subsequent event "Towards The Planetary Renaissance", and most recently the course that I am now finishing with "The Great Turning", organized by the Findhorn Foundation. Thanks to them, since December last year, I have started asking myself a daily question: what is my contribution to the New Paradigm / Divine Plan?

Yes, I am myself. This is what I have to offer the world. I live it: my authenticity, harmony, meaning, becoming. These are also elements of my Logo at the Institute of Psychosynthesis. I empower spirituality in matter. I am body and soul together. I know where I come from, who I am and where I am going: my life is one straight line. I have transformed the extraordinary sensitivity from my childhood into the power of the soul.

I can summarize my reflections as follows:

1. Purification/clearing is the first and most important development process. There is no room for new development without it. This applies to both physical health problems and to getting rid of harmful beliefs, stereotypes, and habits.
2. Change - replacing the old with the new. This involves waiting, not overburdening, and giving more freedom and flexibility (like the caterpillar and the butterfly)
3. Allowing oneself to 'be' rather than acting - this triggers the ability to observe what is coming and to prepare to respond to life and to participate in life.
4. Instead of stable structures or methods of operation, the need for flexibility adjusted to the situation and only then action.
5. The need for listening to intuition and inner signals - what to do.
6. "Being in the moment" and "becoming" according to the message of the soul.

My transformation is not just my own personal affair, but also a collective one - a path to change, taking others on my transformation journey.

My intention is both to hear my voice, and its echo in other people. It is part of the 'education model for the future' that allows children, especially children, to express themselves. This is the purpose of my soul, embedded in the purpose of humanity, expressed in me and through me. I am "the voice of evolution". I exist to observe the truth and to tell the truth.

By healing my wounds, including those inflicted by separation, lack of love and acceptance, I have become part of the healing of the Planet. Thanks to studying a psychology with a soul, I learned to forgive and to be grateful for my experiences, including the most difficult. Thanks to my many years of experience, I have realized that I have the right to live, be, and to express myself and I have intrinsic value as myself. By doing this, I give others the right to express themselves and the right to live without destroying them or depreciating their own values. If someone restricts another's right to life, setting their own "limits" on another, this also puts limits on nature (the Earth).

I have realized that this is against nature, universal laws, and the rights of community, relationships and unconditional love. Therefore I oppose it – the restriction of human freedom, and imposing "my rule" on others!

I regained my voice - I gave myself the right to express myself!

Currently, I am at a different stage in my life - the incarnation of the soul and living with soul. My relationship with the past has ended. I learned a lesson from it, understanding that not everyone follows, they have their own time that is not the same as mine. New relationships appear, more significant from the level of meaning and their meaning to the world. My voice is heard and appreciated, inspiring others to change the world for the better. I am grateful and forgive all those who hurt me, both in childhood and in adulthood, because I have transformed the wounds into my strength - the strength of my soul. I believe they also follow because life is about the way of the soul and understanding relationships - what they came for in our lives, what they were supposed to teach us. I understood when I moved to the next stage - sharing the gifts of my lessons with the world.

My main lessons relate to three Main Universal Values: Faith, Hope, and Love.

Self-identification based on these three values gives me a sense of myself, my truth, which I bring to others and the world.

I am now overwhelmed by a sense of peace, and certainty that I have achieved what I have been aiming for. I don't have to run anywhere, go anywhere or rush anywhere. I can just BE, deeper, NOW, and express my truth. "The truth will set you free" - it will free my voice ... and henceforth it will resonate to others, raising the vibrations of individual people and, as a result, influencing the Soul of the World.



Ewa Danuta Bialek Ph.D - .scientist in the field of medicine (doctoral dissertation in immunology, specialization in clinical diagnosis). She completed postgraduate studies in psychology (Summit University, USA) and a number of courses in Psychosynthesis (J. W. Cullen, V. King, J. Truch, M. Petersen, R. Kea, Psychosynthesis Coach Training and Coaching for Personal Well-Being - D. Firman). In 1997 she founded Association "Education for the Future" and in 2004 – the Institute of Psychosynthesis in Warsaw, Poland. She is an authoress of 43 books and 80 scientific articles, concerning application of psychosynthesis.

Becoming Indigenous: my Journey Into an Embodied Life

A Photo-Essay by Dori Smith

*I am becoming indigenous. Having been -- not by choice, that I remember – born into the white ruling class, my life has been a journey deeper into experiential awareness that members of every land-based culture on earth lives:
I am Earth, Water, Fire and Air, virus and bacteria ...
embedded in the life of the earth and the cosmos.
We now know we are seeded from stars and comets.*



At Cuyamungue Institute, Cuyamungue, New Mexico

In the beginning ...

Growing up in Colorado gave me a good head start. My folks taught me gardening, for beauty and for practical flavorful eating. The family loved the mountains, heading up for roadside picnics on Sunday afternoons. We hurried to get going before the afternoon thunderstorms started. I enjoyed those darkening skies maybe even more than Mom's fried chicken. On the canyon edge under fragrant ponderosas, I would be on my knees peering into the tiny world of ants and wasps, busily managing their communal lives, carrying tiny twigs and bits with vigor.



Zion National Park, Utah

When I chose a graduate school, it was in the green nature academy that is western Oregon. I felt safe camping by a river, getting up early to see the mist rise and cows come steadily over a ridge. My camera got the shot, because I was quietly ready. Photography brought me closer with my nature subjects. I taught myself knowledge of wild edible plants and plant identification. I'd take my reference books into the meadow or forest, squat down by a new green friend and learn the plant by morphology, smell, and just by the general gaiety or wonder it expressed. "What insects or animals does it support?" I pondered.



From my garden in Santa Fe



From Scottsdale, Arizona

Yoga is not all about transcendence...

My post-grad studies were the yogic teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda, who often beguiled the student through nature prayers and songs. I migrated to the gold hills of the California Sierra Nevada to join Ananda, a community of his followers – living within nature, learning natural ways of living and healing. I had found my tribe. As the chef at the retreat’s kitchen, I loved preparing delicious meals out of products from our organic farm. I worked deep into the evening in the kitchen’s parabolic dome, then wound my way to my cabin through dark woods. My feet learned the paths and enjoyed the delicious dust between my toes. I adopted a sweet wild gray cat to warm my feet at night.

Yoga asana practice IS about deep embodiment. Stretch into a pose, feel your tissues lengthen and release – then you can go deeper into your mindself. You may open to moments partaking of the ecstasy of universal life force.

Special memories include satsang on a tawny grass hillside under oaks in the late gold afternoon. Harmoniums and bells led our voices into chants carrying millennia of devotion deeply felt. Being indigenous requires the experience of being tribal – sharing gratitude for the great abundance of living beings we are embedded in. Generosity of nature and human nature is a force palpably felt in such moments. At day’s end, we plunged into the delicious cold water of the Yuba River, then hauled out onto granite slabs to warm and rest, filled with physical and spiritual joy.

Years of yoga and meditation practice, however, with its constant yearning to transcend this earthly plane, also took its toll. The messages about ridding yourself of distraction from the senses started not to make “sense” to me. My greatest experiences of spirituality were sensual: vision, hearing, touch, smell – delicate inner sensations as well as physical; amethyst and gold lights, rivers of peace.

My increasing detachment and emotional neglect helped lead to illness. I left the community to get body/mind/spirit healing; in any case, I was longing to get free of the perfectionism of our practices and explore life on the outside. Some inner voice directed me to become more fully integrated into my imperfect culture so I could be an agent of change. My “what’s emerging?” questioning led me to Psychosynthesis which offered me a broader perspective on personal and social enrichment in a spiritual context. Eco-psychosynthesis, gratefully, now expands to consider our wholeness to all life we are part of, co-creators with.

Belonging and embodiment

This story will take a leap here, one careful step at a time, back into the belly of civilization. I slowly re-integrated myself, but taking my accrued values and practices with me.

From being a chronic book-reader, I became a person that loved physicality, especially water dance, sacred dance. In my 30s, I finally learned to swim: discovering buoyancy, I became free of gravity at last, my body as fluid as the water I enjoyed. Next I studied dance, I found my home in Middle-Eastern sacred dance that enspirits every part of the physical body and leads to ecstatic states.

I also went on to travel to indigenous-based countries, fostering more depth of wisdom. Iran/ Persia, for example, was a plunge into a culture given to express spiritual ecstasy in its gardens, foods, and ornate arts.



A seller at a market in Iran

At about age 50 I rediscovered gardening in another green state, Massachusetts. My husband Steven and I helped envision and build a 20-acre co-housing community with strong environmental goals – such as organic, ecologically sound landscaping. For 20 years we were privileged to live closely with 24 households that shared the vision of being integral members of the vast tribe of living beings sharing, evolving, and cooperating on this earth.

I was living on the land again, tending common lands and my experimental garden, creating beauty and serenity. At age 60, this became a new career: I started a landscape business, *Gardens for Life*, with the theme of “Connecting People with Nature.” For the next 15 years, I created wildlife gardens, taught seminars, and wrote essays with this goal always in mind.



Garden I created in Santa Fe

During that period, I began studying plant intelligence and direct communication, particularly under the guidance of Stephen Harrod Buhner’s many books. I always talked to plants; now I practiced attending to their wisdom. I completed a ceremonial Lakota Vision Quest with Buhner’s partner Trishua – 4 days alone in the Gila wilderness, participating in the life of the earth, being aware of the sun and moon’s 24-hour flows. An iridescent orange dragonfly joined me for my first day, perching on the prayer stick at the center of my sacred space. Giant beetles of all shapes bumbled into me. At night I heard a distant thunder, and then sparks of light, silent as eternity, appeared in the cloudless sky. Things happened, and I was awake enough to notice.

Learning to sense into nature

These practices led to one of my life’s great teachers: Don Alberto Taxo, an eloquent Ecuadorian shaman and healer. His books *Friendship with the Elements* and *Reconnecting with Our Indigenous Heart* teach the nature-centered practices and understandings of his people, the Kichwa of the Andes. I sponsored his visits to Massachusetts and then, with a friend, journeyed with him through the Andes. We visited many sacred sites where we honored the elements of water, air, fire, and earth – lakes, volcanoes, fields of quinoa, pre-Incan remnants. This trip was an immersion in the indigenous way of constant gratitude for life: while eating, bathing, taking in healing herbs, breathing in a respectful way, as a member of the tribe of all beings.



Green friends

As Don Alberto says (from Shirley Blancke’s book about him):

“Our actions and activities should be carried out with our hearts; they should have a feeling of significance and transcendence, taking us in the direction of feeling. We should always give thanks, in every manifestation of life.”

As his students, we learn to feel the resonance between the elements that make up our body, and those same earth elements outside us. We cultivate deep tenderness for each plant or animal or person that we take time to encounter.

Siente, he suggests. Feel. Taste. Smell. Enjoy.



Lunch on the Black Sea, Bulgaria

“The Senses Open the Gateway to the Soul” – Friedrich Froebel

“Retirement...”

Steven and I have retired, drawn to the lovely sparseness of New Mexico land and gloriously evolving sky – and also to the diverse cultural milieu of Santa Fe: pueblo members and nomadic peoples, Latinos and Anglos, mingling and befriending.



Santa Fe sunset

Here we have observed sacred Pueblo dances in the villages. We appreciate the high level of artistic creativity, in natural materials of clay, wools, silver, gems, and colored sand. Now we share our home with a rich collection of handmade pottery and weavings and sand paintings, each one made from earth and carrying earth prayers.



Part of our collection



Kachina spirit dancers by Dan Namingha, Hopi

Going tribal at Cuyamungue Institute

Outside of Santa Fe, on land overlooking the valley and the Sangre de Cristo range, an anthropologist named Felicitas Goodman founded a center for exploration of trance states.

Here I found another tribe: people gathering from all over the world to go into the underground kiva and practice ceremonials with feather, fire, and chant. Then we go into trance with physical postures based on carved effigies from indigenous cultures worldwide. Deep levels of awareness are experienced and shared here. Directors Paul Robear and Laura Lee lead an extraordinary 5-day Ecstatic Trance Dance workshop. In trance, we discover our spirit animal, and together we create costumes and masks. By the event's end, we go out on the land, again in trance, and enact a drama as individuals and as a group. During two of my trance dances I have embodied my inner Antelope and Snowy Owl, representing important aspects or “subpersonalities” of myself.



Myself, dancing as my antelope spirit



Eagle dancer sculpture by Alan Houser

The adventure continues

It is difficult living in parallel worlds at once: participating in the world of consumption, in which we are all observers via our electronic devices ... and holding the sense of oneness with the natural world. I find myself, as my body ages, immersing myself in TV dramas documenting animal's lives, as well as human lives.

Now, I invent ways to maintain my inner nature connection. My morning invocation, standing facing the sun, involves every part of my body and spirit; Qi Gong moves – acknowledging mutuality, expressing gratitude. Sweep in earth, sky, mountains and beings into my core. I celebrate life.



View of Corrales and the Sandias from Rio Rancho

Afternoons, I stand on our patio and dance with the evolving patterns of the clouds. I relax into my body and the body of the earth, with self-guided reveries learned in psychosynthesis practice. I may invoke keywords that resonate through my body/mind/soul: *Release. Unity. Peace. Beauty.*

Often I imagine resting deep into dark rich earth near a stream filled with fish, trees chiming with birds.... In one experience, I experienced pure water flowing from crown chakra down through mind, body, spine, releasing into earth. My limbs stretched out -- as in yoga practice -- then split into branches of probing intelligent roots. I joined snakes and earthworms as they searched for nourishment. Gravity melded my body into part of Earth's body.

This body-based journey often leads to a meditative state, in which I connect with my spiritual teachers, and through them, to the state of oneness with the universal field of love, wisdom, and beauty. I am whole.



Rio Rancho morphing skies

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About the author

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Who Am I Really

By Shama Currim

I have a body

And I am not my body

And yet

My body can be the center of my universe because without the body, I am only soul.

I awaken in the body to recognition of true self. My thoughts distract me, my emotions evade me, and yet, I still AM. Who/what is this beautiful beast that inhabits this body, and where did it/she/he come from?

In my search for self/Self I have come across ancient patterns of being, those that have kept me alive many ions ago, and yet, they still surface in the here and now. Assagioli called them sub personalities, the voices in our heads, and sometimes in our hearts, that come forward. Sometimes they keep us from harm, and sometimes they, in reaction to past experiences, take us away from our true goal. What exactly are these voices? And why are they so silent at times, and so full of life, vigour, energy, strength at others? What is it that keeps us in this world, busy living out our destiny and purpose? What keeps us on track, even as we age and reach our wisdom self? Are these voices relevant to our current lives, or/and are they whispers from the past. We cannot destroy these voices, and we are not obliged to always follow them. We can still them and yet they reemerge at times that may make no sense to us, and can be very pertinent to them.

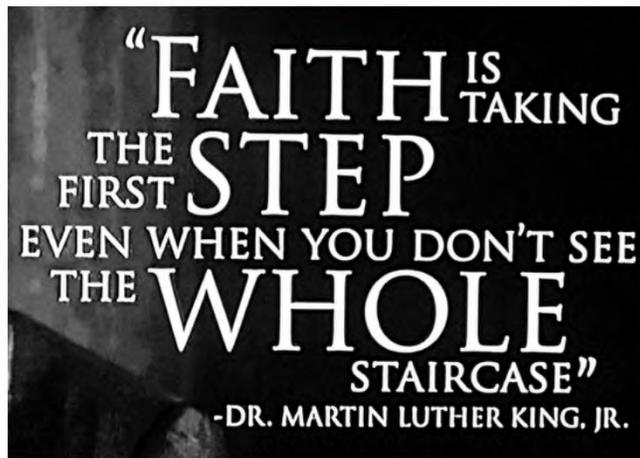
As a 'child' student of life I learnt of subjugation, degrading these voices to memories with little merit to their possibilities, and yet, these inner voices continue to present on rarer and rarer occasions, with little meaning to my present self.

Self voices

As we reach higher levels of consciousness the voice of the Higher Self, or God voice, can be heard more clearly, guiding us on this journey of life. We hear and we can choose to obey. If we can release our smaller self we can be guided by the river of life. When we're able to let go and trust, we can reach a state of total peace and tranquility. No longer will our smaller self/ego feel the need to take control. In letting go we can miraculously be at peace, knowing our destiny comes from a higher source that knows more than our small mind can understand. We let go of our needs, our wants, our must haves that create conflict and disappointment. With full trust and faith in something that is beyond, and yet within us, we can reach, not just states of nirvana, but states of people hood. For, in becoming the wisdom, we can live in it indefinitely.

self voices

So, what do we do with the inner voices from the past, the memories of bygones, the sub personalities created from our child self? What do we do with the lower mind that takes on the role of rescuer, creator, and soon to be friend? We listen, and comfort, and be in our compassionate selves, and then, we redirect. Those voices don't disappear. They have had reason for being. They are fed by our uncertainty, our misunderstanding of life, our fears and desires. We redirect them, keeping them close, while letting them go. We can show them new roles that they can play, supporting our new paradigms and working in unison. As the self strengthens, it reaches out in wisdom to encompass all as self. As a loving self, it can understand the roles played out by all of the self, both inner and outer, for we are not alone in this world. As our boundaries dissipate we come to understand that we are more than ourselves, and we understand the bigger picture we are to play out in our lives. Shakespeare's 'all the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players' (As You Like It is the Seven Ages of Man (Act 2, Scene 7) speaks to our truth of everyday life. If we can learn to 'flow' with our everyday experiences, accepting without challenge, moving from our ego self to our higher knowing, then life becomes so much less complicated and more satisfying and pleasant. When our self can reach the point of recognizing to be in the world but not of the world, then we reach a stage of consciousness that can only become our self/Self through the lived experience.



Shamai Currim PhD currently travels between Israel and Canada. She spends her life enjoying every moment and every breath. In this space of oneness she truly embraces all as her own. As a student of life, she lives Psychosynthesis daily, engaging in other disciplines, and returning to the Truth of life, as she understands it.



Embodying What We Witness in Nature

By Jodie Gale

I'd like to start by acknowledging the land I live and work on: Gayamaygal and Garigal Country, the Northern Beaches of Sydney.

Throughout the first 18 months of the pandemic, Australia lived relatively COVID free due to harsh but necessary border lockouts and lockdowns. In June 2021, I found myself catapulted into a dark night of the soul and a COVID induced existential crisis when Sydney went into one of the longest lockdowns in the world (June to September) and it dawned on me that this time, we wouldn't be opening up to 0 cases as we had done previously – we were opening up to the new normal and the 'let it rip' mentality.

Having home schooled twice the previous year, I made the decision that on this occasion, I was going to 'unschool', that is, do the bare minimum and instead, take my kids to the bush with me each day.

The only activity we were allowed aside from shopping for essentials was to exercise outdoors for 1 hour a day and within our local government area. Fortunately, I live 5 minutes from ancient Indigenous watering holes and bush tracks, and 10 minutes from the coast.

Walking in nature throughout the pandemic became a lifeline and it was the catalyst for me starting a year-long, online, nature therapy training with the Tariki Trust in the UK. Each day, my mentors Stephen McCabe & Caroline Brazier (Author of Ecotherapy in Practice) would post a nature-based activity and my cohort and I, wherever we lived in the world, would go outdoors, participate in the activity and come back and post a 200-word essay or photo response to the online forum.

In Psychosynthesis, we train in working with people who suffer dark nights of the soul and psychospiritual crises so I once again felt grateful for my training at the Institute of Psychosynthesis (2000-2008) because I had a sense of what was happening to me - my life pre pandemic had lost its value, meaning and purpose. Nevertheless, it didn't make it any less painful.

I remember one of the first activities where we were asked to start with grounding, build a nature circle and take a problem to the circle. An Australian Brush Turkey must have thought I was building it a nest because it came to join me in the circle and kept messing up my leaves! I asked the turkey and the circle, 'when is my existential crisis going to end? When is COVID going to end?' They replied back to me, 'Just keep coming back to nature'. I responded, 'WTF? – that's not the 'aha' answer I was looking for!' I can laugh now but it was very painful at the time.



Accompanied by my online, nature therapy cohort and my somatic/psychosynthesis psychotherapist, I was forced to slow down. I took a six-month sabbatical from clients. I did what the Brush Turkey and my nature circle advised me to do – returned daily to nature. I sat in the dark woods. I read books such as, 'Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times' by Katherine May. I collaged my way through the darkness.

Towards the end of my training, we were given another activity which was based around Buddhist creation and destruction myths and it reminded me of Assagioli's Stages of Awakening. We were instructed to use art to express our creation/destruction – I chose to collage my journey through the pandemic (you can see my collages below). Collaging is a wonderful way to bring the outside in – it is a tool we can use both personally and professionally, especially with those who may not be able to access the outdoors.



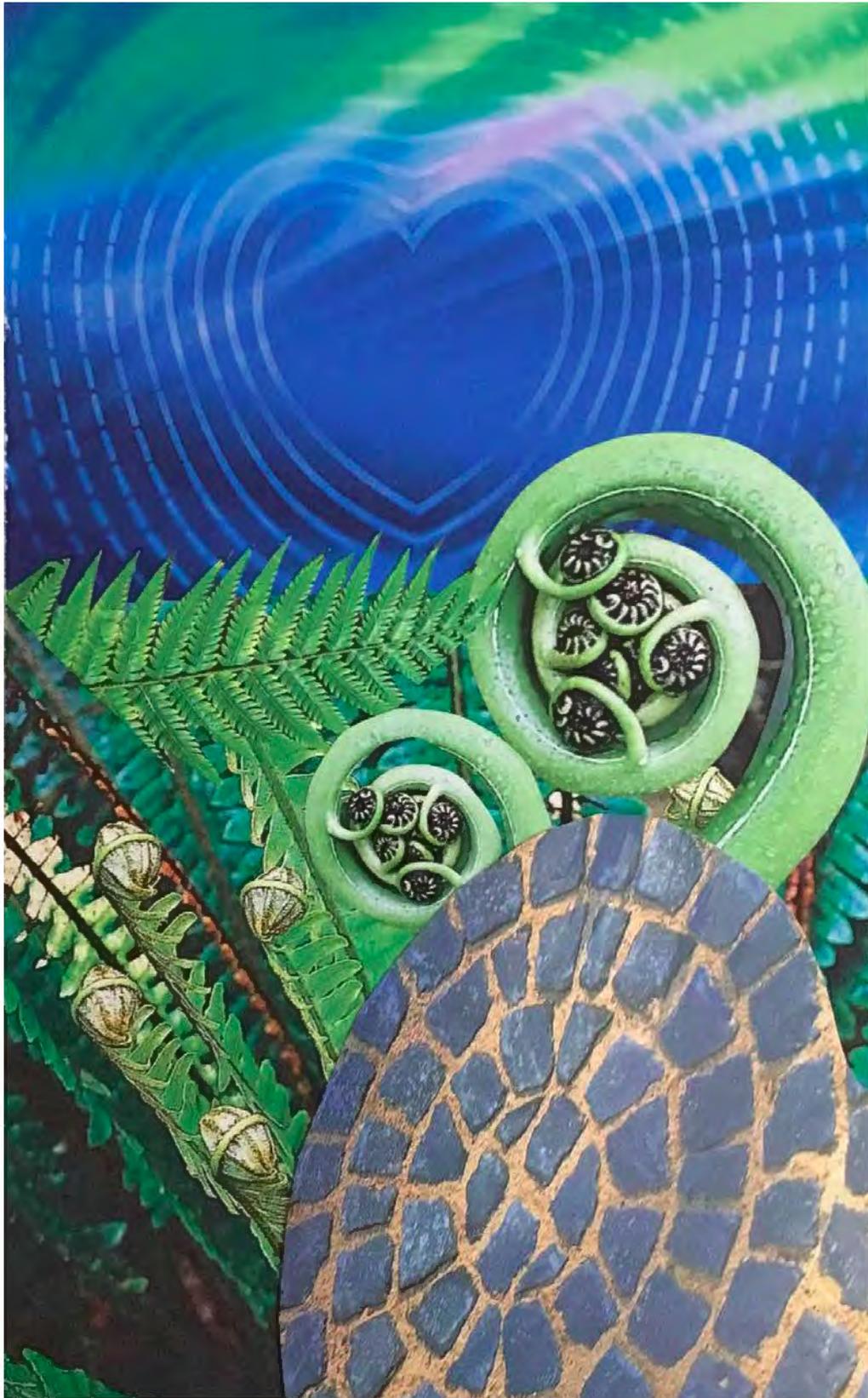
PRE PANDEMIC: EMERGENCY, USING RESOURCES UNCONSCIOUSLY, WASTING MONEY, CAUGHT IN THE OVER-CONSUMPTION OF TOO MUCH STUFF, OVERWORKED, LIVING A PRIVILEGED LIFE – SHOPPING, EATING OUT AND TRAVELLING AROUND THE WORLD WITH LITTLE CONCERN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT.



COVID: THE COVID CRISIS HIT AND TURNED THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN, LOSS OF HOLIDAY TO SEE FAMILY AND FRIENDS, FEELING TRAPPED, IS THERE ANY LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL?



UTTER CHAOS: THE DESTRUCTION OF LIFE AS I KNEW IT, LIFE LOST ALL MEANING, UNSTABLE – LIKE THE HOUSES ON THE SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN IN SHIMLA, ONE COULD FALL AND TOPPLE OVER AT ANY MINUTE AND END UP IN THE SPIKY COVID INFESTED GARDEN.



THERAPY: SOMA-PSYCHO-SPIRITUAL PSYCHOTHERAPY, A PSYCHOTHERAPY OF LOVE, GRIEF, LOSS, EMBODIMENT AND MEANING MAKING.



CLEARING THE SPACE: BABA YAGA CLEARING SPACE, TIME TO SLOW DOWN, DAILY NATURE THERAPY PRACTICE, SURRENDERING EGO TO SOUL.



KNOW YOURSELF: EMERGENCE, AWAKENING, BECOMING, ACCEPTANCE, BEING WITH WHAT IS, AT ONE WITH NATURE, WHO AM I NOW? WHAT CAN I DO FOR MY ENVIRONMENT?

At the beginning of my COVID induced crisis and nature therapy training, I was very much concerned with, ‘how could being in nature each day benefit me personally?’ I was in such deep despair, I just wanted something to relieve my pain and suffering. What I came to remember through the embodiment exercises and my somatic / psychosynthesis psychotherapy that held me throughout this period of time - we have an interdependent relationship with our world - it’s not just about what nature can do for us but what can we do for it?

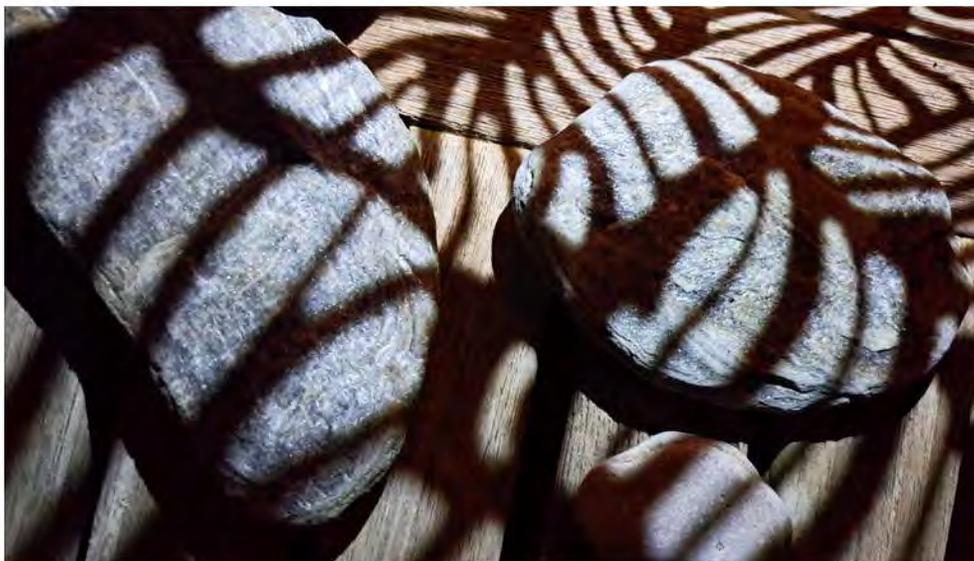
“We are interconnected with the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the land we walk upon. Our earth depends upon our ability to protect her. We awaken awareness of our relationship to the natural world by embodying what we witness in nature.” Arielle Schwartz, PhD, LCP.

Thank you to my Tariki Trust mentors and fellow travellers. The training I participated in was the 10-month Nature-Based Therapy Certificate. They also have short CPD courses on offer. <https://www.tarikitrust.org/ecotherapy-training>



Jodie Gale is an Eco-Psycho-Spiritual Psychotherapist & Coach. She has an indoor and outdoor therapy practice on Gayamagal & Garigal Country/The Northern Beaches of Sydney, Australia and online. Her new venture, Trauma Warriors™ (<https://www.traumawarriors.online/>) will be hosting online courses for women. Her first offering will be Healing the Inner Child Through Connection with Mother Earth. You can follow Jodie at Nature Therapy for the Soul on Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/nature.therapy.for.the.soul/>) where she shares 15 second nature and music therapy videos.

Photo Submission From Peter Stewart



THE STONE AND THE SHADOWS GAVE ME A STRANGE FEELING. I WAS INTERESTED BY THE WAY THE SHADOWS FROM THE LANTERN MADE THE STONE LOOK LESS SOLID, BUT ALSO PARADOXICALLY HOW THE PRESENCE OF THE STONE MADE THE SHADOWS FEEL MORE TANGIBLE AND MORE SUBSTANTIAL.

Systemic Constellations - One Tool of in-Depth Embodiment Work

By Svante Björklund

In the beginning there was the word.

However, the word came late to us human beings. In our beginnings, ie being born into this world, we talk to the world through body language. And the body says:

”Hello world!” And the world responds.

There are lots of words in the response, but the most important responses come from the “other’s” body. Being seen and touched we understand and thrive. No response we wither and may even die. We know body language from instinct and learn more and more through experience as we grow up. We may also forget. That is why we need to work with it in more focused ways.

There is an inherent sensitivity that we can exploit in Systemic Constellation work. We complement that with mental understanding and verbal communication, but the body is our primary source, **sensation** in Assagioli’s STAR, for transverbal communication used both by participants and constellation leaders equally.

The use of Systemic Constellations is a simple and yet powerful way of utilizing embodiment in **the pursuit of clarity**. We understand Systemic Constellations from the work of Bert Hellinger. He laid the foundation, and many practitioners has followed him and further developed his work in many directions. Two main bodies of work are Family constellations and Organizational constellations.

In this short text I can only give you a taste of how it works. Constellations need to be experienced as they give you information through perceptions which sometimes can be expressed in words but often yield more useful information through the subtle workings in the complexity of the body including heart and brain. There is no telling where, when and how the most useful information turns up. We can use information both from inside and outside the body. As Assagioli puts it: we cannot be alone. We are always in relationship to somebody and with something. People present or not, a room full of memories, the past, the present and the future...

First, I want to give you an example from my practice. A nurse with more than 20 years of experience in the clinic where she was working had a new manager, a young doctor who took his work seriously. That resulted in him on many occasions giving the nurse very specific instructions on how she should perform her work. The nurse found this very impractical as it often led the treatment of sensitive patients down the wrong path. The doctor had clearly overstepped the boundary of his duty as a manager and the nurse found this very offensive, and a hindrance to her work as she also took her work seriously. We proceeded to lay out the boundary on the floor with a rather thick, wholly and red yarn. The nurse stood on her side of work and the other side of the boundary was the area where the doctor could manage the work. Very systemic. What can pass the boundary is e.g., information both ways but a physical person that interferes with the nurse’s work should not pass at all. She tried out the boundary and became clear in both body and mind where the boundary should be, how it should work, and what that entailed for herself. Next step was to see what would happen if she stepped over the boundary and put herself in the manager’s shoes. Now followed quite a complex process which in short resulted in the nurse seeing herself from his perspective and could make out what she needed to do to stand out clearly in her area of authority. That included sharing more of her history and her experiences at the clinic, to stand up for herself. Her attitude changed from silent irritation to pronounced peacefulness and clarity of information. In the process the transformation became evident in her changing facial expressions and her forceful stance.

During the session we are both totally present with each other and the issue at hand. The tools are dialogue, imagination, bodily awareness and the red yarn. In that presence and the bodily awareness, the room becomes a playing field where her workplace can manifest with the use of that psychological

function up to the left of the STAR that Assagioli gave us. Imagination, so useful and so underrated. The key here in my experience is that although imagination can create anything, false or true, the perceptions of the body can tell the truth. It may take some practice to get it to work but it can always be tested against reality with continuous awareness. Let me be clear that it is the practitioner who is the one with responsibility of her or his clarity. For the client it is after the session when the rubber hits the road. During a period of days, weeks and sometimes months after a session the subtleties of information gathered plays out. If the client is open to the new experiences, there is a wealth of useful information to be had. Issues are often resolved rather than solved. By that I mean that issues diminish in importance and sometimes disappear completely for the client. That is a resolution not a solution.

The example shows the use of one simple constellation technique. Constellations are used in a larger setting, often in workshops, where a client is present and a few or many people are present to possibly become representatives in the process of clarification that takes place in a room that becomes the playing field. Whatever the client's issue is we can represent the relevant elements of the issue in the room with the help of representatives.

The motto is always **Clarity - not precision.**

It is not after all the possible details. That is a trap to fall in with our curiosity going haywire. So, what is clarity? It can be felt in the body. This is part of the practice in constellation work that is so useful in both therapy and coaching. The confirmation of clarity is usually found with the client. There is a lightness and relief that clients express differently but clearly. When this matches your own feeling of clarity it is best to stop the process and let it sink in. Sometimes we use words to anchor it, and sometimes the best way is to use images, drawings or bodily expressions to keep the mind out of it, for now.

Without explaining the whole process of constellation work I will give you some examples of the perceptions we can use. The scene is set with representatives on the floor. The floor being the area of action for the issue. The meaning can be predetermined, or we can let the meaningful "geography" of the floor emerge as the process of the issue plays out.

The representatives can represent people, things, places, ideas or abstract notions. As long as they are relevant. I'm a minimalist so I always start out with as few representatives as possible.

Now to the embodiment tools of the trade. The signals that we can use are e.g.:

- Positions of the bodies on the floor and relative to each other
- The angle/direction of a body relative the room and the other representatives
- The posture: tense, bent over, locked arms, feet apart, etc
- Weakness in a leg, cold hands, sudden head aches or dizziness. Lots of information from the sensations of the body.
- Eyes are extremely important. Our largest informers. Are they looking focused/unfocused, far or near, up to the sky or down into the floor as if there is something there, towards any other specific representative, friendly or hostile, etc.

Is that only up to the constellator to assess? No, but impressions are forming and as the energy in the room directs you, the next step is asking one or several representatives what they are perceiving. A report as objective as possible remembering that everything is information. If somebody strays in some way, there may be a reason for that. Just ask. Treasures to be found here.

The perceptions as they emerge are our guide and steers the process in one direction or another. The more you're present the more clarity, and the more relevant interventions are made possible.

The great thing with constellations is that you can experiment, ie test an hypothesis. If you **check regularly with your client**, you will know if you're on the right track or getting lost. By checking I mean asking as well as looking at the reactions of the client. Maybe the client is already participating in the constellation and not merely sitting as an observer, which is the initial start up position. Then the pertinent action may be to offer the client the possibility to enter the constellation representing her/himself. That is also an experimental intervention and things may change quickly.

All interventions depend on the present situation as told by the bodies in the room and the energies flowing.

Well aware that this can be hard to grasp without having experienced it yourself I can only hope that you get inspired to start experimenting with your own body and your perceptions as your guide.

Here is a final simple tool that may help. A systemic truth is that structure controls process. I especially like a structural tool that we call the Value Triangle. It is one of many possible structures that we can use in constellation work. The Value Triangle can be used to help us take a closer look at **the tripod of body, mind and heart**.

If we have people we can use them as representatives, but we can use anything available to us in the room. I usually take blank sheets of paper and write the three words, body, mind, heart, possibly in different colors. I then place them in a like-sided triangle on the floor. I myself, and/or a client, and/or a group, can use this to find out about our preferences in life and the work, and with pertinent questions dive deeper into any interesting point or issue that comes up. If there are several people on the floor, we report our perceptions to enrich ourselves with many perspectives. This is one way of working with Systemic Constellations to enhance your embodiment skills. Indirectly you will learn just by participating in Systemic Constellations. If your body is in the room, you can't avoid being affected. It's up to you if you want to learn anything from it.

And maybe everything, every time, is a constellation as soon as you show up in this embodied life.

Happy constellating

Svante

PS. I really like Assagioli's original term Biopsychosynthesis

First encounter with psychosynthesis was in New Zealand during the 90ies. After having returned to Sweden (my native country) I started my psychosynthesis journey in December 1999, organizational consultant in 2003 and therapist in 2005. Started with teaching as an apprentice in 2004 with the new beginners. Still teaching the in-depth sessions for the therapists based on the two last(!) books by John Firman & Ann Gila. Also involved in systemic supervision with the organizational consultants.

All in Sweden's largest psychosynthesis school in Sweden. Several people in AAP have been very influential in how I understand psychosynthesis. First meetings are from my visit to the AAP conference in Minneapolis-St Paul in 2005. Molly Brown, John Firman, Ann Gila, Tom Yeomans, Mark Horowitz, Didi Firman and the late John Parks and so many more (I haven't forgotten you).

Digging in the archives with Alle Fonti in Florence is also a high point together with two international conferences in Italy. The embodiment part was securely grounded with 15 years of Aikido, 8 years of Yoga and especially with the Rosen Method including two magic meetings with Marion Rosen and all the Rosen intensives on top of that. All this has been very useful in the Systemic Constellations work since 2005 with all the best teachers in Europe. Systemic Constellations has been embodiment in practice for me and sometimes a painful experience of self-discovery. Now it is a passion to be exercised as often as possible.

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Embodiment, Matching & Biopsychosynthesis

By Will Parfitt

It is impossible to work in a deep, meaningful way with spiritual or transpersonal energies without being able to ground the work in your body, and, without such grounding, personal development can be arid and disconnected. Assagioli (1967) stressed this when talking about the development of Psychosynthesis. “The practice of Psychosynthesis very soon revealed the necessity of including the body, that is to say, of recognising and making use of the close ties that knit body and psyche, and the reciprocal actions and reactions between them.” Indeed, he was very specific when he said: “In practice it is usually more convenient to employ the word ‘Psychosynthesis’, but it must be understood at all times that it includes the body, the bios, and that it always stands for ‘BioPsychosynthesis.’”

Lip-service to the notion of including body awareness is not enough, however, especially if you then shy away from the energy of your body. For a healthy body it is better to take neither Freud’s stance of denial and avoidance nor Reich’s stance of total involvement. It is important to find ways in which you can both stand your own ground and acknowledge the position all those you interact with take regarding their bodies. Jung (1954) expressed this strongly: “When the great swing has taken an individual into the world of symbolic mysteries, nothing comes of it ... unless it has been associated with the earth, unless it has happened when that individual was in the body... And so individuation can only take place if you first return to your body, to your earth, only then does it become true.”

From your earliest experiences onwards, you have been building a unique relationship with your body, repeating patterns, sometimes consciously, sometimes not so. In your personal development it is important to investigate your relationship with your body and your physical presence in the world. In fact, some of the formative experiences in your development might only be approachable through the body. As Clyde Ford (1989) says: “Our body remembers even when our conscious mind forgets.... It stores our past, present and our potential.”

Having an awareness of your own body story in terms of your past and present day experience, you know how your attitudes to your body change as you grow and develop and reflects your personality, historically as well as in the present. Awareness best takes the form of body observation and appropriate body-related interventions. Always, however body awareness is approached, it is important to know your boundaries and respect yourself, and always work to create containment (as distinct from suppression.) Containment in this sense means to understand your body as the primary container for your process. To contain what emerges requires you to be able to feel it deeply, bear the discomfort, and find ways to express it (at least symbolically.) True containment holds the tension of the opposites and allows development to occur.

A primary polarity, particularly in modern Western culture, is that between mind and body. Ford (1989) comments that “Classically a synthesis represents the unification of two opposing positions.... Body and mind are two such opposite elements.” Assagioli (1967) said that you can see two different attitudes regarding the body itself. He considered that the majority of people identify themselves so completely with their body and give the pleasures and sufferings of the body such an exaggerated importance that they become enslaved by it. “Their materialistic conception results in a tendency to attribute physical causes to all their disturbances, without recognition of the psychogenesis, partial or total, of many of them.”

The other attitude is found in individuals in whom the contrary occurs, and includes what Assagioli (1967) terms “many studious and cultured people – the ‘intellectuals’” whose lack of interest in the body may lead to neglect, especially when they regard it as a limitation or burden. This lack of bodily attention and indifference to physical activity leads, in Assagioli’s view “to debility of the body and the emergence of functional disturbances of various kinds.” He suggested that the most effective exercises for acquiring body-consciousness and its gradual control are relaxation techniques, stillness (whether lying, sitting or standing) both from a conscious viewpoint (finding and allowing position), and from the unconscious (outworn holding patterns). Movement then brings what is unconscious into awareness. Then someone who has previously been unaware of their body sense learns it is okay to touch themselves. The arising

effects – images, feelings, emotions, sensations, memories – that emerge through such deep body awareness are always ripe and ready for inclusion and transformation, though often it takes great courage to face such effects.

People sometimes neglect and deny their bodies a proper place as ‘the temple of incarnation.’ It is only through becoming a body that we can be here in the world, being and doing whatever it is we choose to be and do. But this neglect is a symptom of modern life generally. The general trend in our Western societies is to eat convenience foods and unbalanced diets rather than listen to real body needs. There is often more concern about the outer appearance of bodies and current fashions rather than the real health of the body. Exercise, if taken, becomes a fashionable fad rather than an essential part of healthy living.

We not only neglect the body; we often have distorted awareness about it. We become conditioned in childhood to associate shame and guilt with our bodies and various of our bodily functions. How often are children labelled ‘dirty’ for simply discovering an interest in their natural bodily instincts and functions? How often are children given conscious or unconscious messages of denial when they discover their natural sexuality? How often are we all denied access to the pleasures of the world of sensation? Yet it is so patently true that if you reject your body or have distorted beliefs about your bodily sensations and functions, you will not be able to either fully disidentify from or identify with your body.

When you were a child, you depended upon your parents for your basic physical survival. Most people get it that their parents tried to do their best to love and protect them, but this does not deny the truth that they also hurt us physically and emotionally. We found ways to protect ourselves from this hurt. One of the chief ways we discovered for doing this was through building for ourselves a physical ‘body armour’. This could not only protect us from physical hurt but also emotional and mental pain too, inflicted not only by our parents but by other people as well. We needed this armour to protect us but unfortunately, like everyone else, we still wear it as adults. We may be so encased and entrapped within our armour we can only lift it off a bit at a time, and then with great effort.

Yet you do not have to be attached to these defense mechanisms, this armour, for you are no longer a child. As a conscious adult, you can choose to sense, feel and think without fear of denial or disapproval. Or if you get these reactions from other people, you can accept their position without letting it overcome you and make you feel vulnerable. If you want to have a certain feeling, whether it makes you happy or sad, then you can have it without fear or guilt. So long as you do not harm anyone else with your actions, then you are truly free from these restrictions.

You are an incarnation of the Self. Your energy is embodied and made individual in that you are here in your body. You cannot deny the body without denying your very existence as ‘a little spark of the spiritual Self’. You can only do this by including not denying the physical body with all its sensations.

Matching

Elizabeth Benkhe, an American phenomenologist, created an approach termed ‘matching’ (quoted in Johnson, 1995). She explored the activities of many different schools of physical healing and movement to look for the common themes or practices and discovered that the Work happens most effectively through the practitioner ‘matching’ the energy of the patient which helps them tune back into their own innate healing abilities.

To fully understand the idea of ‘matching’ as described by Behnke, you have to really understand the difference between soma and body. If I ask you to put your hand on your knee you will (almost inevitably) sense you are touching your knee with your hand, but what about the fact that you are also touching your hand with your knee? Try it, and see how difficult it is to touch your hand with your knee.

In whatever way you experience it, you are both the toucher and the touched, in this example the touching hand and the touched part. Touch your hand now with your foot so your foot, not your hand, is doing the touching!

Matching makes you take responsibility for your own somatic experience, and is a way of re-interpreting what is happening to you or inside you as if it is something you yourself are doing. This can include all tensions and so on, and even involuntary things that are apparently out of conscious control. There are three steps involved in the use of matching as a way of healing (making whole) your somatic experience:

- 1 – awareness of something in your own body;
- 2 – an inner act of matching or aligning yourself with this awareness;
- 3 – allowing something to change (or not).

*

Allow the feeling of your own body to move more fully into awareness, don't try to relax or correct your posture or anything, just be conscious of what you feel with an attitude of interest rather than a critical attitude, you are on a fact-finding exploration.

Be aware of shape, posture, feeling, pain, movement, tension, whatever comes to awareness, maybe feeling a tightening or uncomfortableness or something you can easily change (for instance, your shoulders are raised, you are holding your breath, whatever) and if this is so then let it happen, just don't force anything to happen or not.

Now notice if there is anything you are experiencing in your body that is just there, that persists... Don't do massage or stretching or relaxation or anything, simply match what you experience, from inside... don't try to change anything, just match it ... for example, you may enter the shape of the tightness from within, feeling it from within as clearly as you can ... and begin to appropriate it as something you yourself are doing (say to yourself: 'I myself am doing this' whatever 'this' is) – the practice is not about trying to change anything, remember, just matching it.

Even if you cannot voluntarily change a shape or a feeling at this moment, you can become aware that you are maintaining it as if on purpose, just as it is. Don't imagine what it looks like from outside, don't get the feeling from outside it, don't be a spectator or observer, get in touch with the feeling and inhabit this feeling, be the 'do-er' of whatever it is.

Match it, but don't try to control it. Join with it, not as a static fact but as something ongoing.

Sometimes nothing happens, sometimes there is spontaneous shifting, releasing, re-organising, sometimes something happens in a specific area, sometimes the whole body responds in some way. Trust what happens ...

Whatever is or isn't happening, be aware that whatever you are experiencing, this is something you are doing.

Don't try for some specific outcome, don't try to fix anything, don't direct the process in any particular way

Assagioli, Roberto (1967) *Psychosomatic Medicine and Bio-Synthesis*, the International Psychosomatic Week, Rome.
Ford, Clyde (1989) *Where Healing Waters Meet*, Station Hill Press
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Jung, C.G. (1954). *Development of the Personality*, Princetown University Press

Note: This article is an edited extract from Will's book *The Magic of Psychosynthesis*.



I have explored personal and spiritual development for more than 50 years, trained in Psychosynthesis and am a Kabbalah teacher. I live in Glastonbury in England with my life partner Patti. We have the good fortune of having a wonderful view of the Tor and the Somerset levels from the back of our home.

**"Man is rich in proportion to the amount of things he can leave alone."
H.D.Thoreau**

My Art

* Some examples of my current art creations can be found on [Instagram](#).

A link to the complete [Parfait Amour Tarot](#). The major arcana of this tarot set were published as a limited edition collector's set in Italy in 2009 - some copies are still available - [inquire if interested](#).

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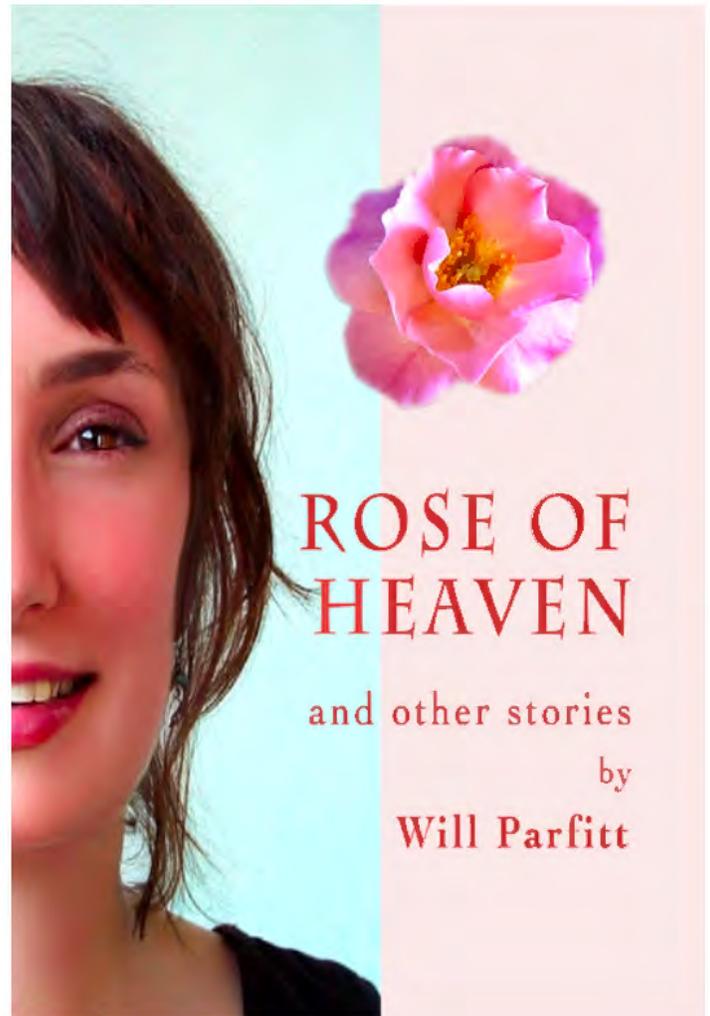
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Jan Kuniholm has done a great job of synthesizing Roberto Assagioli's insights into *The Psychosynthesis of the Couple* offering a wealth of new ideas when it comes to the inner life of the couple. This book offers so many wise perspectives on the process of harmonization between two different bio-psycho-spiritual energies and one understands why the committed relationship of a couple has so much personal and spiritual development to offer. Very often we need someone dear to our hearts to motivate us to sacrifice our most stubborn and selfish attitudes for the sake of the other and this book surely provides all the incentives to commit us wholeheartedly to our love relationships, not just for the pleasure of love, but essentially as a service to the world.

—Kenneth Sørensen, Psychosynthesis Teacher, Trainer and author of *The Soul of Psychosynthesis*

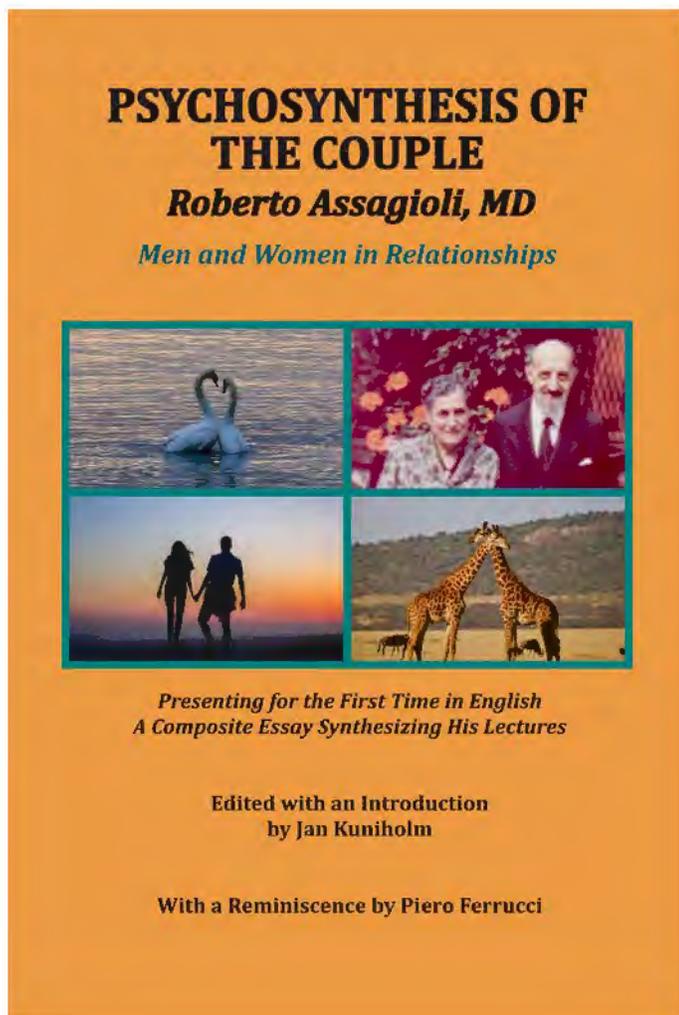
In this book, Jan Kuniholm has pulled together material on a single topic of interest

to Roberto Assagioli: that of the most intimate of relationships — between a man and a woman. Much of this material has been translated from the Italian, and made available to the English-speaking world for the first time. Kuniholm has drawn from a variety of sources including Assagioli's published and unpublished essays and hand-written notes; transcripts of his lectures and talks; diagrams and photos. What an impressive accomplishment this is! The author has created a composite essay that brings to life Assagioli's thinking, and the reader is encouraged to view this as the work of a man who combined in himself the sensibility of both a poet and a scientist as he shared his insights into the nature of healthy human lives and relationships. "I think it is outstanding."

—Douglas Russell, retired trainer, therapist and writer; Founder and Editor of *Psychosynthesis Digest*

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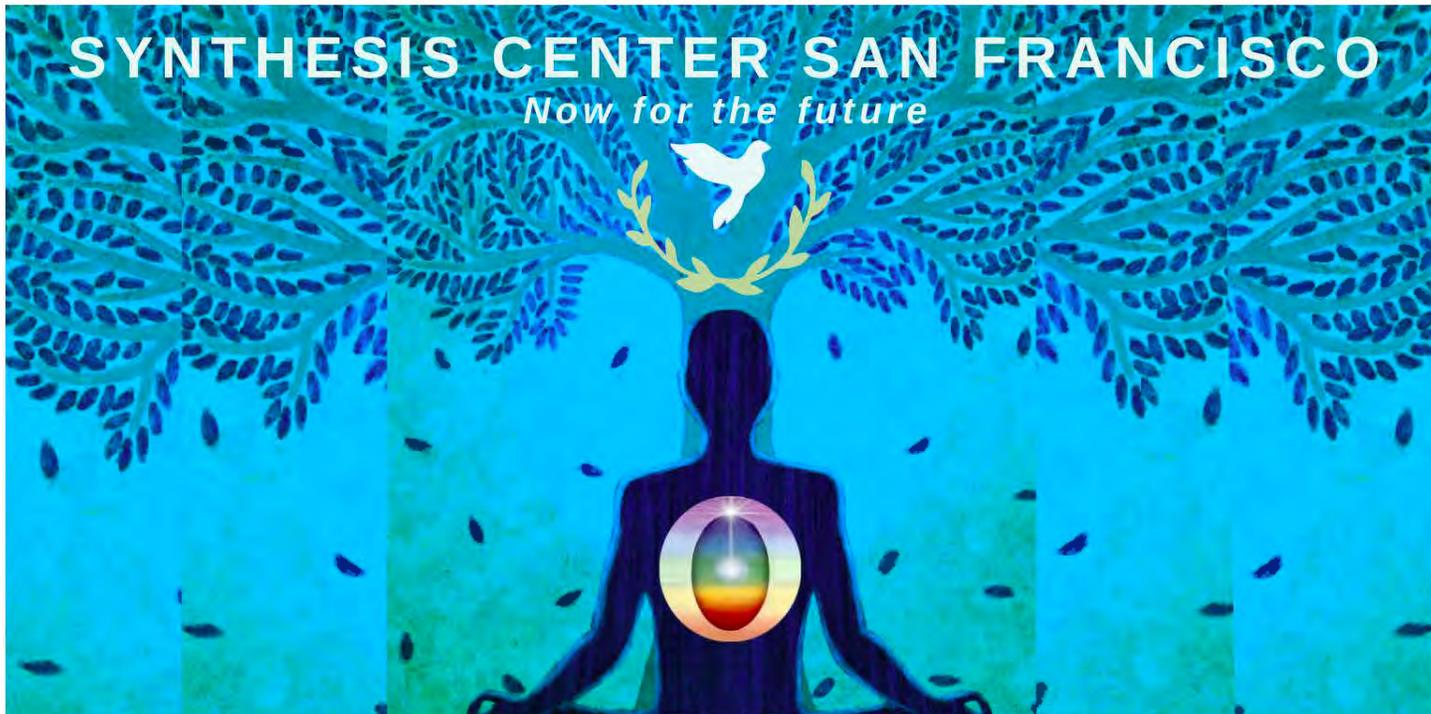
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~ Roberto Assagioli - handwritten note Archivio Assagioli

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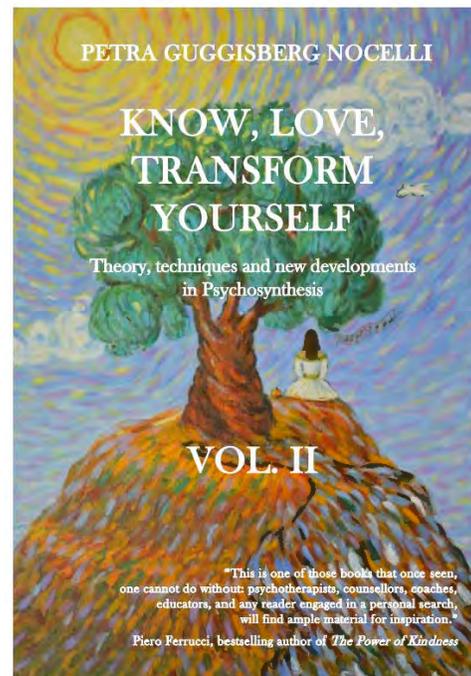
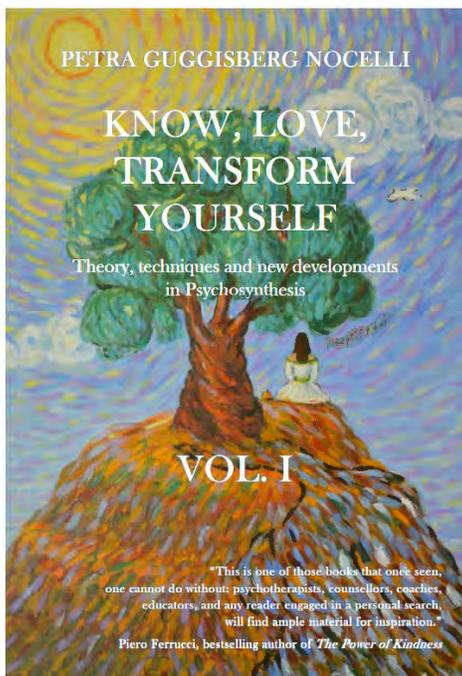
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Petra Guggisberg Nocelli is a member of the Swiss Association of Psychotherapists (ASP), of the Italian Society for Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy (SIPT) and trainer at the Institute of Psychosynthesis founded by R. Assagioli. She is the author of *The way of psychosynthesis - A complete guide to the origins, concepts and the fundamental experiences, with a biography of Roberto Assagioli* (available in English, Italian and French) and of the two volumes entitled *Know, love, transform yourself - Theory, techniques and new development in psychosynthesis* (available in English and Italian). She works as a psychotherapist in a private practice in Lugano (Switzerland) and hold courses and seminars collaborating with various training agencies. Website: <https://www.psicosintesi.ch/en/home/>

Contribute to the December 2022 Quarterly: Stepping Into the Empty Space

with Guest Editor Claude Convers

For as long as we live, we all encounter changes, small, big, easy or difficult ones. And while we all know that change is the one thing we can count on, we practically never know what it will bring. In Psychosynthesis, the process of change becomes a journey of exploration leading to a moment when the decision is made, a moment that I might call surrender.

While reflecting on this subject it became evident that stepping into the empty space is, in many different ways, a constant presence in one's life... As an artist or a writer it might be the practice of facing the white page or the canvas, confronting the creative process and its capacity for success, failure, surprise, love and anything in between. Or, in our daily life, it might be the creation of a new meal or instead to redo the same one with its known and predictable taste only to realize that, on that specific evening, one ingredient is missing and all the stores are closed. Or it might be taking a decision that will change your lives, like getting married, or divorced, or moving to another country. Or it might be a small change, one that might also change our life, like learning a new language, starting to take dance lessons, or simply stepping on a dance floor while unsure of how we feel. The list is endless.

But, no matter where and when, there is always a moment when we stop thinking, when we start to move into the process of doing, and when the rational and irrational find rest, leaving space for something new to emerge. This is in this process of creation and change that I invite you to step into and share with us... What it means to you, what is your own process of unfolding and discovery, its challenges and rewards, what sub-personalities you might encounter along the process and what it means to finally surrender to what Assagioli would name, an Act of Will.

I am delighted and eager to discover your stories, essays, poems and artworks. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to stretch my wings with this project, and confront my own empty space in doing something I've never done before... and for what I'll discover along the way.

Wishing you a delight time et à bientôt, Claude

Claude Convers is a coach and teacher specializing in increasing joy, curiosity, and creativity through the French language. Originally from the French part of Switzerland, she lives in Oakland, CA, and in Europe for a few months out of the year. Prior to teaching she had a long international career in graphic design, which lead her to learn German and English.

She has had a personal yoga and meditation practice for over 25 years. She also studied reiki, tantra, shamanism, holistic health and the tarot. As an artist, poet, and dancer she continues to create, express, and explore.

She began to study Psychosynthesis with Richard Schaub and Bonney Gulino Schaub in the mid-90s and graduated from their CMI program in 2001. She is currently studying at the Synthesis Center San Francisco with Didi Firman and Susan Jewkes Allen to become a certified Psychosynthesis Life Coach. You can find her at www.claudeconvers.com and www.creativelyfrench.com



SUBMITTING TO THE QUARTERLY

We welcome articles from all who study, teach, coach, counsel, and play with psychosynthesis. The Psychosynthesis Quarterly accepts announcements, ideas, reviews of books and events, articles, poetry, art, exercises, photos, and letters, **with a request that non-members who wish to submit advertising make a donation to AAP. To donate, [click here](#).** We hope that a suggestion of 1500 words may serve as a guideline that helps your writing. We prefer that you use the APA (American Psychological Association) style guide when possible, for things like punctuation and references.

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Articles should be submitted in word.doc format
with all images sent as jpegs or pngs attachments.
Please also send a brief bio in a word doc format
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Please send submissions as soon as they are ready so we can get started reading and editing before the deadline. If you need any further guidance on the topic or submission guidelines do please get in touch. Thank you so much! **Send your contributions to: newsletter@aap-psychosynthesis.org**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Please check the **Calendar** to stay up-to-date and register for all our events.

Welcome to the AAP Members Book Club hosted by Catherine Ann Lombard. **Memories, Dreams, Reflections** by C.G. Jung, edited by Aniela Jaffé. For most meetings we will read 2 chapters (about 50 pages) and finish the book by January 2023



Meetings are always on Sunday, noon-1pm EST.

Sept 18 Chapters V and VI

Oct. 16 Chapters VII and VIII

Nov. 13 Chapters IX

Dec. 11 Chapters X and XI

Jan 15 Chapters XII and Retrospect

Saturday, September 17, 2022
12-1:30 pm EST (4-5:30 pm UTC)

ASSAGIOLI'S ARCHIVES FOR DUMMIES PRESENTED BY CATHERINE ANN LOMBARD

In accordance with World Psychosynthesis Day on September 20th, Catherine Ann Lombard, M.A., renowned author, psychosynthesis psychologist, practitioner and researcher will introduce you to the archives and provide you with some practical tips for using its search engine.



Webinar: Embodiment as the Path to Transformation and Awakening

Presented by Abigail DeSoto

Saturday, September 25, 2022 12-1:30 pm EST (4-5:30 pm UTC)

What are the crucial ingredients to fulfilled living? Imagine an instruction manual to cultivate presence and awakening! All spiritual traditions speak of waking up, being present, living in the now. Yet waking up seems quite elusive... Maybe not so with willingness and decision to look and pay attention...really pay attention.

Join us and explore in this introductory 1 & 1/2 hour AAP webinar Sept 25th noon EST Target Audience: Explorers and seekers of connection with life in all its forms. Individuals interested in great wisdom traditions' teachings as guides to awakening, and to being fully human. Individuals intuitively aware mankind is part of a greater whole, desiring experiential 'knowing', synthesis and alchemical transformation.

- Explore 'embodiment' using a three centered awareness model: intellectual center or head, heart, and body/ moving center.
- Develop awareness of default reliance on one center as dominant, cutting off from vital wisdom to live fully.
- Reconnect with body or moving center wisdom.
- Understand the importance and limitations of thinking mind.
- Explore heart as a dual purpose organ both physical and spiritual Experience heart-felt intelligence and heart spirituality through experiential practices.
- Practice bringing all three centers 'online' together to create a strong tripod or foundation for living consciously in the here and now.

This webinar is free to members, \$25 for non-members

Registration closes Friday, September 23rd.

The Zoom link will be sent to you on September 24th

please be sure to check your email on the 24th.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

Abigail DeSoto: American, educated in the USA, I have lived more than half my life in France. I started my career teaching cross-cultural communication, international management, leadership education, coaching and training in global organizations throughout Europe and the USA. My passion for personal growth and bodywork led me to train as a certified yoga instructor in 2001. I subsequently incorporated yoga and stress management to my career portfolio, and opened a life coaching practice in SW France in 2004. Life's journey and unexpected changes led me to Dr. Roberto Assagioli's healing practice of psychosynthesis; feeling I had "come home" I plunged into psychosynthesis study for 2 years with a student of Dr. Assagioli's, Molly Y. Brown, and also at a center he had started in the UK, the Psychosynthesis and Education Trust in London.

In 2010 I published a book on my own healing journey. The thread and life-changing teachings of A Course in Miracles (my 'bible') have inspired and guided me since my years in New York in the late 80's, as has my work with psychosynthesis since 2007.

Music and dance have always resonated within me and I love American tap, Argentinian tango, lindy hop and jazz. Argentinian tango inspired me explore tango therapy and its life-giving social and emotional benefits. Dance in general brought me deep somatic experiences of Self and an experience of 'flow' with life, inciting me to develop a mind-body 'dance' form, I call YinDance-Your Inner Dance (TM).

I look forward to meeting you and exploring together how to chart your path Home, aligned with your highest purpose for a life of fulfillment, peace and joy. Many Blessings! Abigail

Abigail DeSoto
www.abigailsdesoto.com
S.E.L.F. _SystemforEmbodiedLivingandFreedom
<https://youtu.be/6eCCiDjQmRM>



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A Tool Amongst Many Others, to Enhance Embodiment of Who We Are in Truth

by Isabelle Clotilde Küng



INTRODUCTORY QUOTE

“Since the outcome of successful willing is the satisfaction of one's needs, we can see that the act of will is essentially joyous. And the realization of the self, or more' exactly of being a self (whose most intrinsic function, as we have seen, is that of willing), gives a sense of freedom, of power, of mastery which is profoundly joyous. This is true at the level of the personal self; but the realization of the Transpersonal Will, the expression of the Transpersonal Self, is so intensely joyous that it can be called blissful. Here we have the joy of the harmonious union between the personal and the Transpersonal Will; the joy of the harmony between one's Transpersonal Will and those of others; and, highest and foremost, the bliss of the identification with the Universal Will. (...) This consummation is vividly expressed in the Sanskrit saying SatChitAnanda: "The blissful awareness of Reality."

And finally in the triumphant affirmation:

Aham-evam-param-Brahman: "I indeed am the Supreme Brahman."
Assagioli, Act of Will, The Joyous Will / p.201

Note (I.K): every action embodies this Reality, in proportion to our awareness of it.”

When I read Abigail DeSoto's admirable formulation of the Theme for AAP's September 2022 issue: **"Embodiment as the Path to Transformation and Awakening"** Marc Rohrbach's (1903-1993) daily affirmation to this effect instantly popped up on the screen of my attention.

What should I disclose first?

1. Marc Rohrbach's credentials and connection to Assagioli?

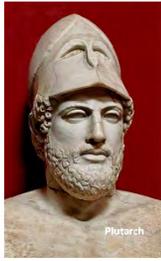
Or

2. Marc Rohrbach's Affirmation... Which is not found in the books he published on the creating (not creative he would specify) power of thought in his main works: The Living Thought, on Peace amid the Storm and Spiritual Awakening...?

I hesitate because he did disclose this most comprehensive Affirmation in a course of studies he tailored into three stages addressing the three “bodies” Abigail DeSoto mentions (in her invitation to share our views on this matter): the first was about the art of living in a new manner, the second focused on living as a truly humane being, and the third unveiled the subtleties of living in an inclusive, non-attached yet empathic manner, which would evolve into cooperating unselfishly for the greatest good of all, with due regard to one's own happiness. He considered this course, embodying the method he had articulated and conceived in the context of early last century, as non-disclosable, yet not secret. It could only be handed over through his “accompanying team” and himself to registered students, who could however discontinue any time they wanted. In the context of last century this was, for many reasons a trustworthy approach, especially as he advocated reformulating within the context of the student's own life circumstances the subject being learned or as Abigail DeSoto mentioned “walk the talk” and confirm it by “putting pen to paper.” Rohrbach considered this would foster it being embodied, for that was the aim of this course of studies named “Etudes J.E.A.N.”

Today however (2022) the situation is so tremendously urgent that what was advisable in the XXth century may in the XXIth Century prove to be a contra-indication!!! Yes, we must adapt, or rather, circumstances teach us to adapt to need (that is incidentally one of the basic principles of Psychosynthesis enunciated by Assagioli in May 1974.) I therefore feel quite confident that disclosing this Affirmation can be of true help to inspire Mr-and-Mrs-Everyone to cooperate in bringing more harmony into the, their, world.

So let us op for the second point first, after a relevant quote from Plutarch (AD 46 – AD 119) and Niels Bohr (1885-1962) which amply justify and excuse my taking this risk of translating Marc Rohrbach's Affirmation from the French into English and making it public...



Plutarch's, who also said that "to fail to do good is as bad as doing harm," quote:
"AN IDEA IS A BEING INCORPOREAL, WHICH HAS NO SUBSISTENCE BY ITSELF, BUT GIVES FIGURE AND FORM UNTO SHAPELESS MATTER, AND BECOMES THE CAUSE OF THE MANIFESTATION."

To this I add the recommendation to read Assagioli's "Act of Will" (1973): there you find straightforward explanations (stages of the willed action, psychological laws, developing from selfish to transpersonal and universal will) as how to shape thoughts and carry them out in a responsible manner.

And for the purely scientific touch I find it indispensable to quote the statement of the famous physicist Niels Bohr: **"IF QUANTUM MECHANICS HASN'T PROFOUNDLY SHOCKED YOU, YOU HAVEN'T UNDERSTOOD IT YET. EVERYTHING WE CALL REAL IS MADE OF THINGS THAT CANNOT BE REGARDED AS REAL."** – Niels Bohr

And now a few remarks to this Affirmation of Marc Rohrbach. It addresses our whole person, our moral (spiritual) character, and it also pays tribute to our highest intuited Reality (so often negated by our embodiment of it...). Rohrbach advised to speak it out softly at eight am and pm, but my experience is, in the light of Assagioli's more flexible approach, that any time we feel like it is fine; but I found that Marc's advice to say it the open or at least in front of an open window, makes sense and is rewarding: you also will feel that nature co-responds to our heartfelt intents. This is logical for our own inner nature also promptly echoes to every harmonious and dissonant thoughts, desires, imaginings we cherish and cultivate with the attention we pay to them. Any affirmation (we have all noticed this have we not?) works like a ferment, like a directing agent assembling by affinities and polarities elements that eventually grow into a complex inner thought or desire-form, some call it sub-personalities, which exercises an influence inwardly on the mood and health, and outwardly expresses as behaviour.



Thus an affirmation gets changes to occur in our psychic life for as Assagioli's systematic reformulated description of the psychic processes that rule action ably describes in the chapter of the skilful will of his "Act of Will, first published 1973: an image which represents (that is embodies, but in an embryonic form) a thought, desire, feeling, to which we pay attention to, activates (provided the emotional charge is strong enough) the psychic processes leading to expressing it through action or somatisation (that is my summing up of it). Furthermore, as regards the practise of affirmations, please do not impose them to others, but instead rest assured that if you find that it echoes with your mind sets and feelings, it will unavoidably transpire affecting your behaviour, even your simple presence, setting an example. And as regards **children** who readily respond to affirmations, maybe just letting them watch you when you enunciate it will make them, perhaps, ask you about it or in any case embed in their memory something like "mom, or dad, likes to affirm their universal, moral, and personal potential... they say that somehow the Universe sooner or later responds to whatever is heartfelt.

And last but not least remark on Marc Rohrbach's Affirmation: its effects are in the here and now most probably because instead of addressing some ideal out there, no matter how high and admirable or how low and lamentable, it addresses the supreme reality as being ourselves in ourselves, affirming also the means to bring this reality through into the world of daily circumstances, that is embody it, via the psychic qualities of or willing reality: our psychological functions!

So, how does it feel like to say this Affirmation? (the present formulation in English is weird, but it corresponds exactly to the French version embodying the intent of its author... try and let it echo in your heart). I name it

" Marc Rohrbach's Affirmation confirming one's own life intent "
(preferably spoken softly and "alone with oneself")

"In my state of mind of being Universal Beingness I AM being:

love, wisdom, power.

**In my state of mind of being Spiritual Beingness I AM willing to:
*want for each one the light of truth and that which they need.***

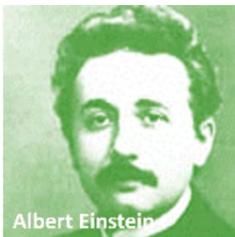
**In my state of mind of being Personalized Beingness I AM able to:
*receive all the teachings I need,
solve all the problems of my existence,
accomplish useful work
in harmony with myself, humanity and the Universal Real.***

**Yes, I want for each one in abundance the light of truth
and everything each one needs.”**

M. A. Rohrbach (translated from the French by I.C. Küng/August 2022).



And to conclude it may be appropriate to remember that Albert Einstein (1879-1955) in the frightening perspective of the abyss separating technological advances and the selfish use humanity still makes of its most precious tools, namely those of his mind, indicated:
“HUMANITY IS GOING TO NEED A SUBSTANTIALLY NEW WAY OF THINKING IF IT IS TO SURVIVE!”



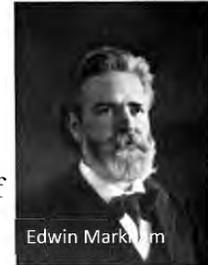
This quote Assagioli often mentioned to encourage us to learn the laws of the art of thinking, which is willing, and Marc Rohrbach also. And they are not the only ones to “shout in the desert!”

Aha! Maybe, as a bonus, you might like to hear about how I met Marc Rohrbach?

In the late sixties my mother had heard about Marc Rohrbach through a violinist who happened to be an ardent admirer of Francesco Racanelli (1904-1977), the healer that was also a close friend of Assagioli. So, seeing that I was head over heels involved in teaching Psychosynthesis to the pupils of her international boarding school for girls, as she and Assagioli had planned in fact I should do, she decided, as to her, to take Marc Rohrbach’s course and would often challenge me by saying that his approach was most matter of fact and of immediate effect. So, she tricked me into meeting him by giving me a book to bring to him when per coincidence he was conducting a seminar in our town. Little did we then know that Rohrbach had published a special brochure exclusively dedicated to Psychosynthesis and that Assagioli and Rohrbach were acquainted. Their approaches were different. Marc who had been a most successful entrepreneur had, because of the war, reoriented his quest and in so doing developed a rather mystical point of view from which to follow his vocation, he wanted to find out what makes prayers work and whether praying for healing could be considered as reasonable. As to Assagioli he had chosen the strictly scientific, but not materialistic so-called scientific dogmatic approach, and his call was to



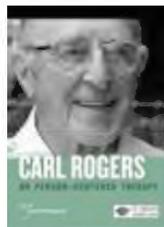
formulate a method of harmonious development and morally sustainable direct, neutral realization of our immortal nature for he knew that without at least a beginning of this recognition, harmonization of the, personal psychic tempests lack incentive, direction and energy to fuel that arduous process, which is probably the very reason of being of the huge **Drive to Embodiment** which the life waves work out through all forms on this planet since time immemorial! And he had also recognized that this is a process where solidarity and cooperation have always been the practice (not exclusion and aggression as one-track-minded thinkers assert) and to draw my attention to this, he had given me Edwin Markham's (1842-1940) poem *A Creed*: "**THERE IS A DESTINY THAT MAKES US BROTHERS, NONE GOES HIS WAY ALONE, ALL THAT WE SEND INTO THE LIFE OF OTHERS COMES BACK INTO OUR OWN.**" . Both Rohrbach and Assagioli aimed at formulating a method everyone could put in practice safely in all fields of activity: education (of oneself to begin with of course!), economy, science, helping professions. Be what may, my mother followed her course, and I mine. I was however quite surprised when one day Assagioli told me not to hesitate to also take Marc Rohrbach's course as soon as I could because it would be an excellent means of helping me to discipline my thoughts, adding that he had Marc Rohrbach in high esteem. So did Marc equally appreciate Assagioli, as I noted later when we became good friends. My husband and I even hosted some of his seminars in our school. Yes, the same place: Institut Bleu-Léman (then run by its founder Dorette A. Faillettaz, my mother) where Assagioli had animated three International Psychosynthesis Weeks (1960, 1961, 1965).



Yes, and this will be the effective conclusion, to embody the sublime truths we all are aware of, to make the idea of PEACE a reality but which most of us are quite helpless to carry out, or do so "a contrario", what is needed and can really help is that the silent majority learn, on its own accord for if imposed the contrary effect is sure to eventuate, the dynamics of the Art of Thinking.

What we think always materializes warned the Buddha, reason why Assagioli extensively wrote about the laws of thought, that is will, for whichever action we do, it is the material expression of an intention... a thought, a desire, a feeling, a directing-image (think of advertisers... they don't spend millions without the certainty that their investment rests on verifiable laws of cause... "the ad", and effect... "the customer's behavior"). Also, with the aim of offering anyone interested reasons to learn to think in a sound manner, did Marc Rohrbach author the book "The Living Thought."

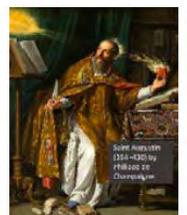
Yes, thought is a living reality. The energy of synthesis constitutes its essential nature, hence all thoughts, down to the lowest, have the power to 'organize;' yes, build organs... and in this light we will have to acknowledge Lamarck's principle that "function creates organ" i.e., light calls forth the organs of vision! – for what is life if not an ORGANIC SYNTHESIS, hence an embodiment. Assagioli points at this in Evarts G. Loomis's 1973 interview. We, humans, are tailored to embody that Reality in perfect harmony. So, let us begin by simply Affirming our potential, i.e., as spelled out above, or through another affirmation that you find fit as per your life experience. Remember that the value of affirmations is in the fact, so well enunciated by Carl Rogers and so well-known and so little understood that "**WE ONLY LEARN WHAT WE ALREADY KNOW.**"



Affirming prepares the ground, sows the seeds.... The garden is ours to cultivate, and with our psychological functions and consciousness we have all the tools needed to embody who we should be and participate constructively in the process of Life which works at its best when the personal will is well developed and thus finds its matching Model: the Universal Will... We are all together in this great adventure, and I rejoice in having been allowed to herewith share my experience of it.

POST SCRIPTUM OR ADDENDA

In the context of the concept of embodiment, you might find Saint Augustin's (354 – 430) view worth pondering upon. He sees an analogy between the relation of soul and body and the relation of Man and Wife. In other words, the husband is the will, the inspiration, while the wife is the means to embody this will and inspiration. Of course, this is symbolical and from that point of view confirms that Augustin considers the male-female complementarity as representing the soul-personality relationship which at the right time of time (and psychosynthesis) gives birth to the "new Being," namely the Soul infused personality. In other words, this is the: "**Embodiment as the Path to Transformation and Awakening**"



References

AAP link for articles, i.e., on the care to give when our potential breaks through to our attention (in its longing to be embodied!) as is happening worldwide now.
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Roberto **Assagioli** The Act of Will (1973) chapter on the Skillful will
 Also, special introductory quote on The Joyous Will)

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Edwin **Markham**, poem A Creed:
<https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/a-creed-3/>

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http://www.lo-spirito.com/1/dr_francesco_racanelli_pensieri_e_considerazioni_10315584.html

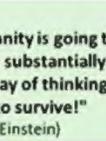
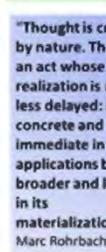
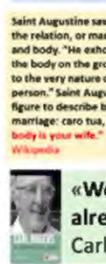
Carl R. **Rogers**, "On Becoming a Person," 1961 Houghton Mifflin, Boston (Ms)

Where to find information on Marc **Rohrbach** (French)
<https://www.associationjean.org/ouvrages/la-pensee-vivante/>

Saint Augustine quote (scroll down to Theology)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustine_of_Hippo



- Bio Isabelle Clotilde Küng.
 Isabelle is Swiss, born 1944, mother of two grownups and was:
1. Headmistress of a private boarding school for girls aged 15-20
 2. Trained by Dr R. Assagioli for over 10 years (1963 – 1974)
 3. Instructed self-educational Psychosynthesis as of 1964

 <p>"There is a destiny which makes us brothers; none goes his way alone. All that we send into the lives of others comes back into our own." Edwin Markham</p>	 <p>"Everything we call real is made up of things that cannot be regarded as real. If quantum mechanics hasn't profoundly shocked you, you haven't understood it yet." Niels Bohr</p>	 <p>"An idea is a being incorporeal, which has no substance by itself, but gives figure and form unto Shaghabra's matter, and becomes the cause of the manifestation." (Plutarch)</p>	 <p>"Humanity is going to need a substantially new way of thinking if it is to survive!" (Albert Einstein)</p>	 <p>"Thought is creative by nature. Thought is an act whose realization is more or less delayed: it can be concrete and immediate in its applications but also broader and long-term in its materializations." Marc Rohrbach</p>	
 <p>Roberto Assagioli, 1960 at Institut Bleu Léman Photo Isabelle Küng</p>	<p>Since the outcome of successful willing is the satisfaction of one's needs, we can see that the act of will is essentially joyous. And the realization of the self, or more' exactly of being a self (whose most intrinsic function, as we have seen, is that of willing), gives a sense of freedom, of power, of mastery which is profoundly joyous. This is true at the level of the personal self; but the realization of the Transpersonal Will, the expression of the Transpersonal Self, is so intensely joyous that it can be called blissful. Here we have the joy of the harmonious union between the personal and the Transpersonal Will; the joy of the harmony between one's Transpersonal Will and those of others; and, highest and foremost, the bliss of the identification with the Universal Will. (...) This consummation is vividly expressed in the Sanskrit saying SatChitAnanda: "The blissful awareness of Reality." And finally in the triumphant affirmation: Aham evam param Brahman: "I indeed am the Supreme Brahman." Note (I.K.): through every action this Reality is being embodied correspondingly to awareness thereof. Act of Will, Assagioli, The Joyous Will / 201</p>			 <p>Saint Augustine saw "embodiment" as the relation, or marriage between soul and body. "He exhorted respect for the body on the grounds it belonged to the very nature of the human person." Saint Augustine's "favorite figure to describe body-soul unity is marriage: caro tua, coniunx tua - your body is your wife." Wikipedia</p>	 <p>"We only learn what we already know." Carl R. Rogers</p>