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Inner Bridges: Issues in the Development of a Psychotherapeutic Model for Transpersonal Growth

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INNER BRIDGES:

Issues in the Development of a
Psychotherapeutic Model for
Transpersonal Growth

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Master of Arts Degree in
Counseling Psychology

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I dedicate this paper with deepest gratitude to Barbara Manalis, Marie Post Asay and William Franklin Asay whose intellectual, emotional and financial support have made possible the transformation in my life which is culminated in this paper.

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Introduction to Culminating Project:

The beginning is the hardest part.

The first word seems like the key to the door that holds my ideas and experiences and images, and I can't quite remember where I put that key.

In this writing process I have continually met in myself a rigidity, an unwillingness to work, to write, to concretize either my process or my thoughts. I have had difficulty conveying what I have learned in any but the vaguest terminology and reluctance to consult advisors to help me in my process.

The struggle in these final weeks has been almost unbearable. At one point I decided to turn to the I Ching in hopes of gaining some insight into my difficulty. The result has been so profound that I would like to share that experience as a way of introducing this paper and as a way of viewing my process which has culminated in this paper.

The question I put to the I Ching was as follows.

> Concerning the writing of my thesis, I am continually impeded by my own fears and laziness. How shall I over come this and proceed?

As I began to throw the coins I felt uneasiness with the question and so added:

> I feel that "simply do it" is the answer, yet I am drawn to consult the I Ching. I want to feel the nourishment of its wisdom and so consult it now with this in mind. My feelings seem to tie into the above question--power, action, fear and self-denial.

The coins produced the mexagram "ku".

Ku: Work on what has been spoiled (Decay).

> A bowl in whose contents worms are breeding.

	⚶	Ken	Keeping Still, Mountain
9 6	⚴	Sun	The Gentle, Wind

> It has come about because the gentle indifference of the lower trigram has come together with the rigid intertia of the upper, and the result is stagnation.

> The conditions embody a demand for removal of the cause ... the abuse of human freedom.

Abuse of the time and space given to me through this program has led to the stagnation in which I find myself now. The ideas, experiences and feelings which I wish to present are so crowded within me that they begin to spoil from want of expression.

Success depends on proper deliberation.

By balancing my emotional state between the exhiliration and excitement that comes from expression and the depression that comes from fear of failure, I am able to allow a steady flow of energy with which to work creatively.

Decisiveness and energy must take the place of the inertia and indifference that have led to decay, in order that the ending may be followed by a new beginning.

The new beginning which is emerging from the process of writing this paper and the study it has entailed is the consistent experience of clarity of my being at the contact boundary, where I experience separateness, two-ness. The decisiveness and energy which I am developing in this work are breaking through the fear which has held me fast to indifference and inertia. This time of deliberation is creating the energy to move to completion.

The changing lines (6,9) are of special significance. Being so charged with positive or negative (yang or yin) energy they easily

change into their opposites;

the potential for change into the opposite is great.

Therefore it is necessary to read the interpretation of that line which follows the commentary on the hexagram as a whole (quoted above), and to read the commentary on the hexagrams created if the lines become their opposites.

(6) Rigid adherence to tradition has resulted in decay ... only if one is conscious of the danger connected with every reform will every thing go well in the end.

(9) In order not to wound, one should not attempt to proceed too drastically.

By holding myself back in traditional learning expectations I have created a condition of anxiety within myself which part of me has decided is necessary for success to occur. The belief is that in order to complete this project I must become anxious, that the anxiety carries the energy to succeed. My desire to express my ideas and my love of the writing process when it coincides with the content also carry the energy to succeed. The anxiety is the energy turned inward, my desire and love are the energy turned outward, toward expansion. My choice is to learn and grow from the desire and love rather than from the anxiety; in fact, I believe that this is the only way I really will learn. Learning has become synonomous with self-expansion. The

risk is that by giving up the old system of anxiety produced learning I will cease to learn or to act effectively. Moving slowly toward the new expansive way will avoid wounding from breaking these old patterns too quickly.

Ken: Keeping Still, Mountain

> The heart thinks constantly. This cannot be changed, but the movements of the heart--that is, a man's thoughts --should restrict themselves to the immediate situation. All thinking that goes beyond this only makes the heart sore.

At first I did not understand this, though it seems very beautiful. As I watched the way my anxiety would build as I wrote I realized the meaning of this passage to me. After writing a thought each time I would begin to project into the future, when would I finish, what would I write tomorrow, or three hours from now. And soon my anxiety had returned, and I was unable to continue. I have gone through this identical process continually from the first. I began to understand that as an idea emerged and I wrote it down, I was then without the next idea. Instead of thinking of anything else or projecting into the future, I began to sit still and rest. Soon another idea emerged. And no anxiety.

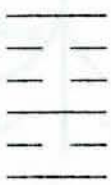
Ta Ch'u: The Taming Power of the Great

Perseverence furthers. It furthers one to cross the great water. The creative is tamed by keeping still. This produces great power.

... the superior man acquaints himself with many sayings of the past, in order to strengthen his character thereby.

The I Ching congratulates me for consulting its ancient wisdom, and finally

Pi: Grace



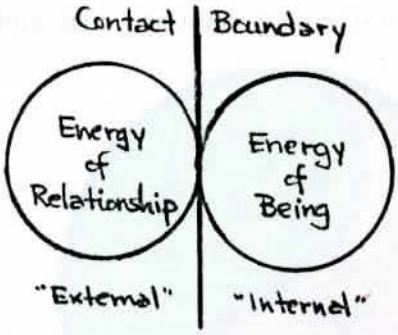
Fire

This hexagram shows a fire that breaks out of the secret depths of the earth and, blazing up, illuminates and beautifies the mountain, the heavenly heights. Grace--beautiy of form--is necessary in any union if it is to be well ordered and pleasing rather than disordered and chaotic. Grace brings success. However, it is not the essential or fundamental thing; it is only the ornament and must therefore be used sparingly and only in little things. In the lower trigram of fire a yielding line

comes between two strong lines and makes them beautiful, but the strong lines are the essential content and the weak line is the beautifying content.

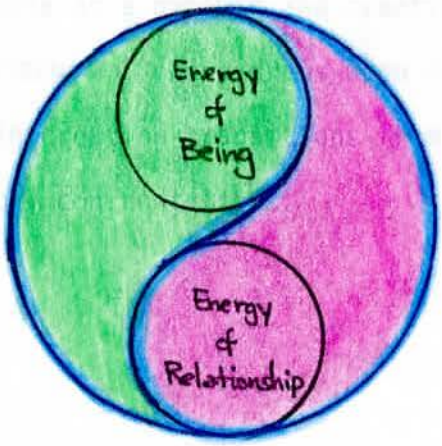
My preoccupation with form, imagery and symbolism must not lead me away from the essential content, the theoretical considerations of my work, else it will not beautify or clarify but only weaken.

When I began this year of study and writing I had no idea what form this paper would take. As the ideas began to emerge I envisioned the diagram below as the form in which they would fall.



This diagram reminds me of the lower trigram in the last hexagram, <u>grace</u>: ☶ . The exterior solid lines of the trigram correspond to the circles of the diagram and represent the essential content of the paper. Yet it is the interior broken line, the line between the tangent to the circles in the diagram, which holds the essence of the discussing by bringing the two together. We know ourselves by contact with what is other than ourselves, thus we exist in the contact boundary for it is there that the external and the internal meet.

When I first conceived the symbol the contact boundary was little known to me. I moved from intense one-to-one contact to intense solitude. When I discovered myself at the boundary of me and other-than-me, I experienced fear and rigidity. In the process of writing this paper through the year I have learned much about myself; my creative thinking and learning process has developed so that insights of others enhance my own without overshadowing them and point to new directions without narrowing the possibilities of the flow of my thoughts. Self-expansive learning is the essence of awareness in the contact boundary. It is here that I open and close to what is other than myself, I drop old ways and discover new ones, I flow between what is inside and what is outside of me. I am the flow. The symbol for the paper thus has changed to indicate this flowing contact:



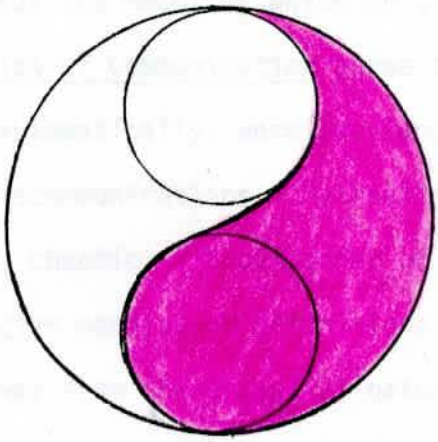
and thus I give birth within me to an ancient symbol of universal energy.

So it has been in the writing of this paper. The ideas are not new,

but the discovery and integration of them has been a process of self-discovery to me which has not only brought me into contact with my inner being and my environment, but has connected me to the ancient wisdoms of the East and modern Western science.

In my study of psychology I have come face-to-face with the major questions of philosophy: What is mind? What is the relationship of existence and knowing? What is the relationship between that which is always changing and that which never changes? I have in no way set out to answer such questions or even to pose them. Rather I have tried to show that in a search to know oneself one ultimately must confront one's personal relationship to the universe. In this confrontation one may contact one's life as a dynamic and creative process. The psychotherapeutic model discussed here draws upon Jungian, Gestalt and Reichian theories in creating transitions from psychological dilemmas to these metaphysical confrontations.

THE ENERGY OF RELATIONSHIPS



Only relationships and patterns of relationships can be perceived and these are the essence of experience.

Man's awareness of himself is essentially an awareness of function, of relationships in which he is involved.

The vehicle of the manifestations of relationship is communication (140).

We experience ourselves by noticing that we are in relationship--with one another, with the environment, with ourselves. By attending to the communications which describe those relationships we give meaning to our experience of who we are.

Communication is thus the means by which we signify our being. The authors of Pragmatics of Communication agree that were it possible to communicate more systematically, were our language adequately logical, we would have no miscommunications. My feeling is that the essential nature of things is chaotic, without order or meaning, and any attempt to communicate to give meaning or definitions to the experience of this chaos is to move away from the essential nature of things. The inherent paradox is of course that it is impossible for us not to communicate. All behavior is communication. The schizophrenic's dilemma is his attempt to not communicate. To unclear, contradictory messages there is only one logical response, no response at all. Since he cannot move away from the confusing message, cannot not behave or not communicate, the confused perceiver moves away from himself.

Our behavior (verbal and nonverbal communications) consists of a content aspect (being in relationship) and a relationship aspect (awareness of being in relationship) which points to the process or pattern of relationship, thus classifying the content (meta communication). In every moment of our being we communicate who we are--we behave as ourselves

and as how we experience ourselves. By recognizing the communication of another we confirm his experience of himself. This is the intention of the therapeutic relationship.

These two aspects of communication are continually occurring within the system of the relationship. The system must be defined at any given moment in order to comprehend the meaning of a given set of communications. The system includes the cultural network, the family background (SEC, race, religious beliefs, etc.), the family unit (parents, siblings), as well as the surrounding events of the particular moment being examined.

Satir worked with families by including the largest number of system members possible and points to the way in which movement by any member effects all of the other members of the system (113).

In working with couples I have found that by pointing to the process (the metacommunications) the two become aware of how they effect one another and how they are effected by the larger system within which they live. They then can begin to make changes appropriate to their goals, testing the effect of new behaviors until adequate solutions are discovered. I find working with couples, families and groups very challenging. To attend continually to process communications requires intense concentration, lighthearted flexibility and continual self-examination.

The following chapter on relationship speaks primarily of one-to-one therapy, but the principles discussed are applicable to family, couple and group therapy as well. When I work with a group, family or couple I relate as a participant observer moving in and out of the system--reporting process and connecting it to content. The relationships evolve from the mixing of our energies in the same way as in one-to-one therapy, and though the complexity is greater, the interactional possibilities have also increased. In a group as therapist I receive less of the transference, other members sharing the projections of one another and working together to unlock the doors of their self-perceptions. The group becomes an organism itself and its process becomes a microcosmic glimpse of the realities of its members, a laboratory for experimentation in new choices of response. In family and couple work I create a relationship with the unit, and keep the members interacting with one another as much as possible. The dynamic quality of this work brings the theoretical discussion to follow into here and now reality for me. I am an observer of the dynamics of relationship as they are occurring, and my job is to pull out the threads of connection so they may be strengthened and bring to light the defenses, projections, and buried feelings so they may be seen and released. The clarity required of me in this group work excites me, accelerating my own growth.

This chapter on relationship has four aspects:

1 "soul-connection"

2 issues of psychological transference

3 the significance of energy transference to the therapeutic process

4 the therapist's need to work on himself.

Lil: You seem very cold and withdrawn today.

Jan: Well, I am. I have just come from a crisis with one of my daughters and I'm very upset about it. I feel like I'm pulling away from everyone in my concern for her ...

A moment extracted from a conversation between two women.

The situation: A counseling session, Jan is the counselor, Lil is the client.

Jan: I appreciate your asking me about it--your perception of me was accurate, and I feel more able to be with you now that I have shared this.

Lil: I'm glad I asked too. I was afraid when I saw you like that.

Lil has been labeled by psychiatrists as a paranoid schizophrenic. She fears relationship and mistrusts her own perceptions. She lives in isolation with her own fears and fantasies. This moment is a building block, indeed a foundation stone, in trusting herself and her ability to be in a relationship.

The therapeutic relationship consists of healing moments like this one. Honest moments when people meet as themselves. Moments like this pierce through time and through all the chaos of our lives like the thinnest thread of light to the core of our being; and though one moment may not even be consciously remembered, as the healthy moments continue to occur, they begin to build lighted pathways to the center. And one day, one of those moments may illuminate the whole. The self re-cognizes (again knows) the self. It may be a moment of pain or one of joy. It will never be a moment that is forgotten. From that initial recognition of self, one begins to take control of his own growth, to accept responsibility for her own life.

To me, the most striking element of this bit of conversation is the transparency of the therapist in the client's eyes. Let us not imagine even for an instant that simply labeling one person therapist and another client in any given encounter destroys the perceptive or receptive activities of the client or validates those activities of the therapist. The acceptance of these roles may cause a screening process to occur whereby the "therapist and/or "client" jointly choose not to recognize the client's perceptions of the therapist as any other than a projection of the client's situation, while at the same time choosing to recognize the "therapist's" perceptions of the client as something other than the therapist's projection of his/her condition.

As long as the "therapist" and "client" continue to persist in this

conspiracy against the client's perceptions, true relationship cannot and will not occur, no healing encounter will ever take place. It is in the authentic encounter of two individuals validating one another's perceptions of each other and sharing perceptions of themselves that the healing process takes place. What other goal can there be for therapy than to bring the individual alienated from a true experience of himself back into contact with his own being? And how else can this be done than through an authentic encounter with another?

> The goal of the analytical process can be simply stated: soul-connection, a right relationship between ego and soul (122, p. 158) ...
>
> ... the soul connection between analyst and analysand is central to the healing process--and this is not possible unless the analyst is also willing and able to reveal his own soul (122, p.5).

The transference was recognized by Freud to be the "alpha and the omega" of psychoanalysis, a here and now expression of the neurotic's sexual impulse-forces whose roots lay in early childhood. As projections onto the therapist the transference phenomenon could be analyzed as a vehicle to reach back to these roots and dig them out.

> Every time that we treat a neurotic psychoanalytically, there occurs in him the so-called phenomenon of transference, that is, he applies to the person of the physician a great amount of tender emotion, often mixed with enmity, which has no foundation in any real relation, and must be derived in every respect from the old wish-fancies of the patient which have become unconscious (p. 32).

The significance of the transference and its place in the psychotherapeutic process has been considered by all of the psychological theorists since Freud and must be considered here as we attempt to understand the nature of the therapeutic relationship, adding to it our notions of the energy transference.

In reviewing the literature on transference I was struck by Freud's statement (above)--"no foundation in any real relation"--and Rogers' statements on transference where he denies the necessity or the significance of the development of the transference attitudes. The therapist remains impersonal, the only source of information for discussion comes from the client; the therapist understands and accepts any transference attitudes just as he does whatever the client shares; the client recognizes the attitudes as coming from himself and begins to explore them as such. Freud and Rogers obviously differ

> but precisely that it is now differently worked through as a present adventure: the analyst is not the same kind of parent ... (89, p. 234)

> It is not necessary to speak of transference ... for the actuality contains both the confluence of dependency and the rebellion against it (89, p. 464).

> The transference (emotional relation to the analyst) is construed as the reliving of the childhood events, when the simple facts of the analytic situation are sufficient to account for whatever happens, without reference to the past at all. For example, the patient, angry with his analyst in the present situation, does not express his anger openly, but brings up memories of the times when his father "mistreated" him in similar ways. To assimilate such projections it is not necessary to go roundabout through the long memories when the relevant events happen under one's nose (89, p. 221).

Thus far, the striking differences lie in the significance put on the present, the theorists who are concerned with the relevance of the energy in the present situation to recreate the client's attitudes about himself also put greater significance on the therapist's role in

re-creation. The therapist sheds his role as interpreter of another's experience and partakes in a relationship in order to re-establish the client's connections to his inner and true self. For this to occur the therapist must be connected to his inner self and must share this connection with his client.

> The doctor must go to the limits of his subjective possibilities, otherwise the patient will be unable to follow suit (48, p. 199).

Jung divides the psychotherapeutic process into the stages of the transference, where projections are substituted for real relationships, and the "person-to-person relationship ... where the patient confronts the doctor upon equal terms (48, p. 137)."

> A sudden severance of the transference is always attended by extremely unpleasant and even dangerous consequences, because it maroons the patient in an impossibly unrelated situation ... (and) ... without a relationship of some kind he falls into a void (48, p. 136).

Projection lies at the heart of transference. The client projects his unconscious reality onto the therapist. (Jung states that the unconscious generally appears first to us in the form of projections.) As the projections become unravelled and recognized as aspects of

the client's own reality he loses touch with who he is, where he begins and ends, he enters a chaos of opposites in which the therapist remains as the only solid ground, the only light in a very confusing darkness. The relationship which emerges between the therapist and the client becomes the cricible for the creation of a new set of choices out of that chaotic dualism- The client emerges from the relationship individuated. The relationship has been the container for the transformation and healing process to occur, much as the mystic marriage of alchemy (53).

According to the wisdom and philosophies of the East, the world consists of the continual flux of opposites, a continual condition of paradox and change, out of which the conscious man arises. Man's process in this flow is to emerge at once individuated and still in the center of the dualism and united with the flow between the opposites. This is the ultimate paradox and the ultimate reality. What happens at birth to the individual is that a set of circumstances, the situation of his life, presents him with certain aspects of the universal dualism and his ego emerges as the result of choices made in order to make sense out of this duality, this chaos into which he was born. The individual emerges frozen by these early choices about the meaning of reality and his place in it. As these choices are unfrozen in the course of therapy, his projections are seen as aspects of reality which he has chosen to see, belief systems springing from early life events which he perpetuated and from which he has created the world in which he lives. The confrontation of this flings the

client back into that original chaos where his identity is lost in the "flurry of unleashed opposites" (53, p. 182), where the "other" continually proves to be yet another duality, where he exists only as a compound of opposites, the ego helplessly whirling back and forth between the polarities.

The relationship becomes the means by which the client may emerge from this chaos with a new individuation, a new set of choices in response to the dualistic form of the universe which he has confronted.

> The use of transference as a therapeutic instrument is bad for the soul. It promotes a continuing dependency on the analyst, working against the individuation process and tending to make the analytical ritual interminable (122, p. 157) ...

> The goal of the relationship is to move from the initial archetypical Parent-Child constellation to one of equality and personal involvement. The goal of the process and the goal of the relationship go hand in hand, so that one can not be reached without the other. Thus, when the relationship becomes truly personal and individualized, this is an indication that the therapeutic ritual is nearing its goal (122, p. 165).

In Character Analysis, Wilhelm Reich speaks of the need to uncover the negative transference before proceeding with any other aspects of the therapeutic process. "Through our analytic work we liberate psychic energy which urges toward discharge ... the liberated demands for love, clamor for gratification, and meet with strict denial in the analysis, ... we believe that we have "liberated" the love impulses, but in reality the patient has remained incapable of love ... frustrated love is transformed into hate ... (which) since it does not experience any discharge, is transformed into self-destructive intentions. Thus the need for punishment which we ascertain in our patients ... is not the cause but the product of the neurotic conflict (106, p. 320-1)." Reich's solution to this hinges on his statement "since it does not experience any discharge," and he argues for bringing forth all masochistic impulses and treating them as aggression against objects in the outer world.

Stein speaks of the negative transference issue also, and the profound effect it can have in compounding the neurotic conflict. His argument hinges on an aspect of Reich's statement which I have underlined above.

> The deepest need of the soul in any human relationship is never therapeutic; it is the desire to unite with the other. Thus, the analyst's desire to heal is never pure. Even when the analyst attempts to assume an objective scientific stance, even though he attempts to

> focus on the world,
> psychopathology, the flow of eros is set in motion and this activates his need for the human connection.
>
> When the need for union between analyst and analysand is given less value than the therapeutic need of the relationship, this need for union will function autonomously and unconsciously just as it does in the typical negative parent-child relationship. Instead of the neglected child being healed in analysis, its wound will be further deepened. Moreover, by calling the need for union "transference" and attempting to interpet it (away), therapy becomes the destructive reverse of itself. Both the child and the soul's individuation are damaged (122, p. 148-9).

Stein argues then that rather than deny the love impulse of the client, recognize that the therapist's impulses are of the same nature as the client's, that <u>each</u> is striving for union, that this striving is not a neurotic impulse, but at the core of who each of us is, and if recognized as such, the therapy will take place on another plane than transference altogether.

Rosenberg works with transference issues much as the gestalt thera-

pists do and as Rogers does, as projections for which the client is responsible. In fact projection is the key word for Rosenberg's focus in therapy. Everything that each person perceives as reality is his own creation, exists first in his own mind, is a projection of his own circumstances and conscious-unconscious beliefs and processes. Working from this point of view brings the client to full responsibility in the present for his life.

Besides the physiological limitation of our perceptive apparatus, which allows us to experience only that which falls between certain frequencies of light or sound or temperature, etc., our perception is limited or defined by our psychological circumstances. In other words, what I perceive of the world is a result of what I have been conditioned by my experience to expect to see. What becomes foreground for me is determined by my particular psychological set at any given moment (see Belief Systems). (Koehler)

In order for a client to take responsibility for himself, to this extent the atmosphere of acceptance must exist. Rogers' unconditional positive regard creates this. Through this specific transference of the energy of compassion, what is often called "fourth chakra energy", the client begins to heal.

Chakras are centers or concentrations of energy and are associated with particular organs of the body and their relationships to nerve centers in the spinal column. In this Hindu system there are seven major chakras designated. The following charts describe them and

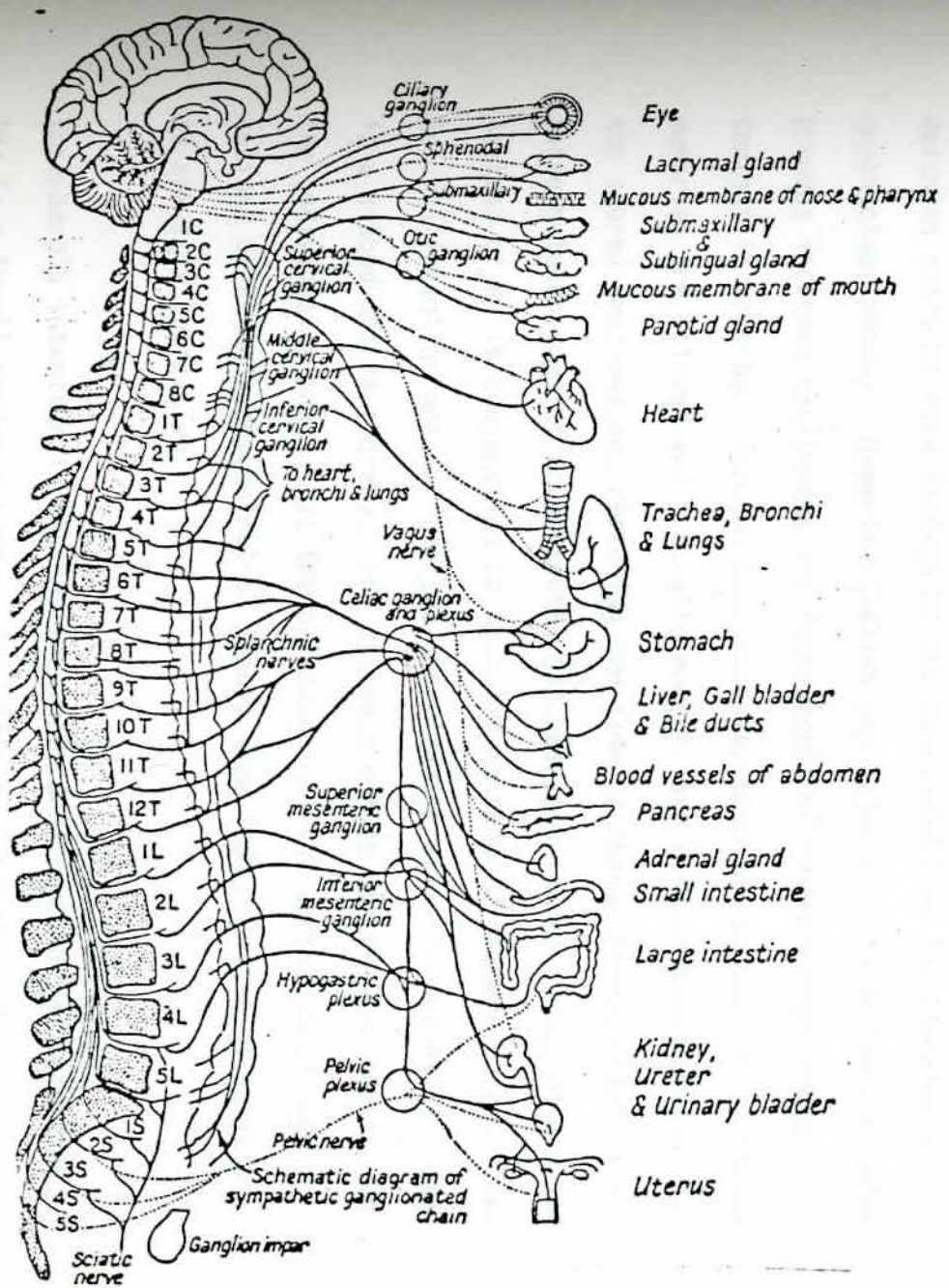
the emotional states associated with them:

CHAKRAS

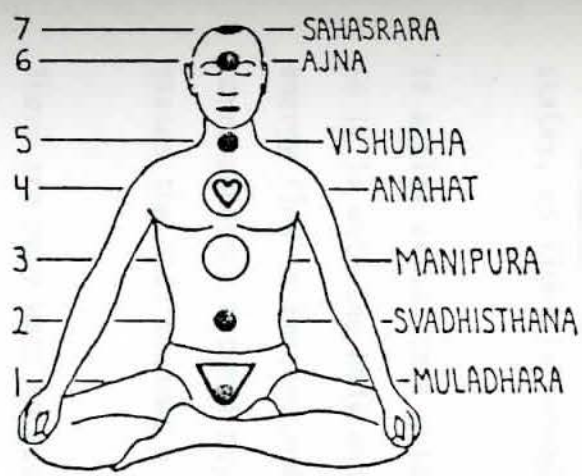
Name	Physical Correspondants	Psychological Correspondants	Focus of Psychological Theory
1 ROOT rust earth	Base of spine between genitals & anus (coccygeal Plexus(Extension to feet	Basic life energy, holding on grounding, existential, in security in the world, survival	Body therapies, behaviorism
2 SEXUAL red water	Pelvic Plexuses (genitals) (Strong connection to throat)	Creative Energies Sexuality Relationship Projections Duality Storage of deep anger & rage	Freudian Reichian
3 POWER orange fire	Solar Plexus distribution of vital energies thru the body	Ego observer Conditional love Power & control in the world Judgment, anger, fear	Gestalt Adler
3A POWER	Splenic PLexus distribution of vital energies thru body	Existential aloneness	
4 HEART green air	Cardiac Plexus Extension thru hands	Transcendant observer Unconditional love, Outside the duality, (union of opposites) Sorrow, grief, Guilt, fear, Abandonment, loss Surrender	Jung Rosenberg

Chakras, contd...

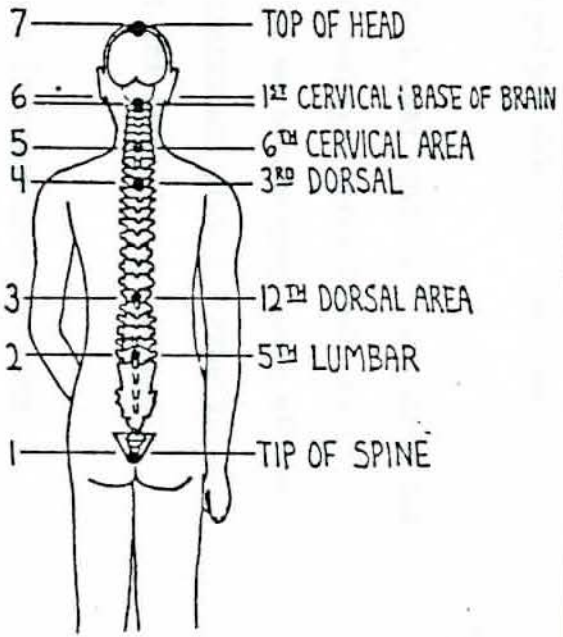
Name	Physical Correspondants	Psychological Correspondants	Focus of Psychological Theory
4A HEART	Pulmonary Plexus	Death & rebirth	
5 THROAT blue	Phalangeal Plexus (cleft of throat) (strong connection to pelvis)	Relationship established between essential being (transcendant observer) & personality (ego observer) for internal cleansing & purification & for creative expression	Transpersonal Psychologies (Psychosynthesis) Rosenberg Asay
6 THIRD EYE lavender	Pineal Gland at top of spine (forehead between eyes)	Cosmic consciousness clairvoyance abstract intuition (alogical conceptualization)	
7 CROWN "1000 Petal Lotus White	Top of head from Carotid Plexus	Knowingness-to be still & know. Place where no wind blows. Universal oneness	



Autonomic nervous system, showing innervation of various organs.



CHAKRAS



I like to visualize the body as a prism through which energy moves and is refracted through the chakras into the corresponding attitudinal states, as light is refracted through prisms into the spectrum.

If a flaw exists in a prism, the light at that point will be deflected. So it is with the body and its flow of energy. Where blocks exist, energy flow is impeded and diverted. As we become more aware of the correspondence between psychological states and physical (energy) states the body becomes a more significant focus in psychotherapy.

There are many ways to approach the body in psychotherapy. The Reichian point of view focuses on the musculature as the storehouse of unconscious memory. Hyperventilation and other changes in the breathing process increase excitement and focus areas of no excitement where contact is missing. Through deep muscular massage, contact is restored, memories are stirred and traumatic moments are reexperienced, releasing the stored emotions and restoring the flow of energy through that area. Eastern techniques of acupressure, jin shin jyutsu, etc., may be applied instead of, or in conjunction to, muscular massage to restore energy flow. Reich's intention was to free the individual's orgastic potential. This is a second chakra therapy. The ultimate nature of the work emphasizes the individual's sexuality; the philosophical and sociological implications of Reich's psychological theory stem from his view of society as sexually repressive.

Rosenberg's intention is to free the individual's spiritual potential. His is a fourth chakra therapy. The ultimate intention of the work is

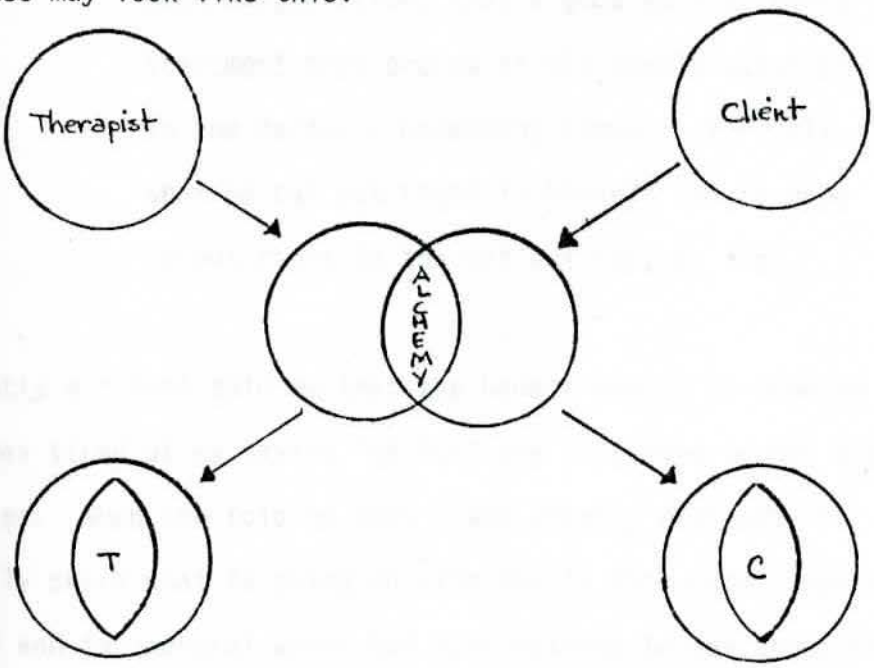
to bring the individual to a place in himself where he views his psychological dilemmas with compassion and separates from them.

As I examine my own intentions as a therapist, I am aware of mixed energies. In my own therapy I am working on my sexuality and on my relationships with friends, lovers, and colleagues. I struggle with issues of power and control, with my place in the world as an effective and dynamic person. I deal with basic feelings of insecurity and fear that hold me back from exploration and adventure. These are the energies of the first three chakras and indeed are the struggles of most of us. This is the arena of normal life and the focus of most psychology. My work with myself and with my clients is full of compassion. I provide a large space within which to explore and experiment. My intention is to establish a relationship to self which allows, indeed which creates, the process of internal purification (fifth chakra energy). The relationship is self to self. To be in right relation to self leads to the awareness of cosmic relationship and universal oneness (sixth and seventh chakras). This self-relationship brings one's every day existence into the arena of spiritual awakening.

I feel that the translation of energy through all of the chakras is going on all of the time. The energy flow may be thwarted which creates certain attitudes and conditions, or it may flow freely which creates other attitudes and conditions. Each individual is a unique translation of the energy that flows through him. Awareness of his own condition is the first and most significant aspect of therapy. Character armour

(muscular blocks to energy flow) has been developed over time and creates a set pattern of energy flow, a personality or character, with which the individual is identified. By contacting this pattern and loosening the rigidity of the character structure the individual may gain some flexibility and some choice in his responses to and his actions in the world. Through awareness, he gains responsibility for his way of being in the world.

The therapist's awareness of her own pattern of energy flow and attitudinal set is essential for honest therapy to occur for his "energy condition" determines the nature of the work as much as the client's. Viewed from Jung's notion of the alchemical marriage, the therapeutic process may look like this:



In working with my clients I find that I am constantly working on myself. That really the only thing I do as a therapist is to work on

myself. As I join with another person changes occur in me, lessons emerge, blocks to certain aspects of the relationship, feelings and memories are stirred. As I am able to work on these and share my experience with my clients, they are also able to share and work on themselves. We work together giving feedback, listening and learning together.

> The analyst must go on learning endlessly, and never forget that each new case brings new problems to light and thus gives rise to unconscious assumptions that have never before been constellated. We could say, without too much exaggeration, that a good half of every treatment that probes at all deeply consists in the doctor's examining himself, for only what he can put right in himself can he hope to put right in the patient (48, p. 116).

Recently a client told me that she hadn't wanted to come in that week. She was tired of my saying "uh-huh" and listening to her endless stories. When she told me this I was greatly relieved, for though I usually share what is going on with me, in this case I had been getting bored and for several weeks had said nothing to her about this and had held back from much interaction of any kind. I was tired of being the responsible one in the relationship. I wanted her (and this was not conscious until she shared her feelings with me) to take responsibility

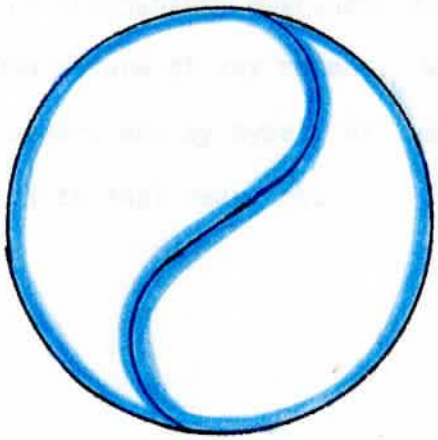
for what happened to her in therapy and in her life. We have worked on this for a long time, yet she continues to give me the power, and I continue to take it. When she said this we both sighed with relief. I told her what I had been feeling and how I saw our process working so that she ended up without power. I took responsibility for my part in this. And she saw her responsibility for her part, perhaps for the first time since we have been together a genuine recognition dawned. She asked me if she had hurt me and I said that for a moment I had felt very vulnerable but the relief of talking about it brought me much closer to her and I was glad for it. I asked her if she felt heard and she said, "Oh Diane, I think I could tell you to jump off a bridge, and you would still be there to work it out with me." Now this felt like a very positive statement, and we laughed and continued the session, yet there is in the back of my head the sensation that we will come back to this. Does she really want me to jump off the bridge?

Ah, the manifestations of relationship, the communications that we make to one another, are endlessly complex. The frustrations and fascinations compound one another and I am embroiled in the therapeutic process.

> The doctor knows--or at least he should know--
> that he did not choose his career by chance; and
> the psychotherapist in particular should clearly
> understand that psychic infections (that means
> getting involved and affected by the other

person's affect problem) however superfluous they seem to him, are in fact the predestined concomitants of his work, and thus fully in accord with the instinctive disposition of his own life (48, p. 177).

The Contact Boundary



I am neither "who I am" nor "who I am not"

but that which distinguishes the difference.

This section explores by example, by image and by personal account the constantly shifting, expanding and contracting edge between self and other, the contact boundary. The relationship of self and other was the question of the preceding section. The relationship of self to self is the question of the final section. Contact is the dynamic which allows these relationships; awareness at the contact boundary is the essence of who we are at any moment. What follows is a series of descriptions by others and by myself of awareness at the contact boundary, or journeys to that awareness.

I. Discovery of the Contact Boundary: A Clinical Example

The following describes a session of therapy with David Boadella, English psychotherapist and bioenergeticist.

I began the work as an experiment in the now, with no focus. My reason for going to the workshop was to learn first hand about bio-energetics. I had no desire to be a client; my intention was to observe and theorize. Boadella turned out to be an exceptional experience, however. He seemed to allow enough space to truly explore yourself, following all the while with his precise and rapid feedback about your process. I wanted a chance to discover myself in this atmosphere.

I approach him and sit down waiting for what will emerge. I pay attention to my waiting. He asks me if I have a focus, if I want to take some of my clothing off (traditionally accepted procedure for body work to occur). I say no to both. "You don't give me much to work with. Either because you want to see what I will do without a focus, or because you want to see what you will do without a focus?" "Both", I smiled. We laugh. I become aware of fatigue in my eyes and note this. He asks if I would like to take my glasses off. I respond affirmatively and feel relieved to have more space to feel my separateness with my glasses gone. We experiment with glasses on and glasses off, noting my body process as well as my feeling responses. I begin to discover the need for a lot of space around me in order to feel separate. Using the whole room I explore how much space I am

comfortable in. The room isn't big enough, so choosing three people to be on one side I step further back until I feel I am no longer in contact with them. My glasses are off this whole time. He invites me now to move slowly closer to them until I feel the beginning of contact.

At this point I become aware of an ache in my back. We work with this. (I remember little of this part.) I end up in a bow (arched backwards) with only my heels touching the floor and every muscle in my body tense, my eyes so tight they feel like they are disappearing into my skull, and angry sobbing from deep within me. And then we sit on the floor very close together and talk about what has happened. To my delight we become completely lost in theorizing and mental experimentation with what is occurring between us. With my glasses off I have more space to be me, to feel expansive and open. I feel less bombardment of others and their reactions to me, so that my behavior is from within me rather than in response to my perception of others. With my glasses on I discover I retreat from contact with myself in the intensity of my contact with others.

Now it is time to move toward the others and experience the contact boundary. I move very slowly (glasses off). About 8 feet away I begin to slow down even more in my approach. I begin to feel anxious, stomach quivers. At a distance of about five feet I stop, sidle to the left a bit and wait, experiencing increasing anxiety. David asks me to sit down here. And the work ends. And intense contact with myself begins.

Here at this anxiously discovered boundary I face myself separate, rubbing edges with what is other than myself.

II. Fusion and Autonomy: The Dilemma of Contact

Helmuth Kaiser in Effective Psychotherapy speaks of the central conflict of relationship as the need to fuse versus the need for autonomy. The fearful extreme of fusion is the loss of self; the fearful extreme of autonomy is the experience of being alone. In avoidance of these extremes duplicity develops, and the opposite behavior of the desire is acted out. Thus when wanting autonomy, the person will move closer or express a desire to be intimate, and vice versa. By staying in contact with the need and the fear, a balance of contact can occur which allows the swing from one extreme to the other to narrow. In Gestalt Therapy Integrated, the Polsters also discuss this:

> Contact is not just togetherness or joining. It can only happen between separate beings, always requiring independence and always risking capture in the union. At the moment of union, one's fullest sense of his person is swept along into a new creation. Unless I am experienced in knowing full contact, when I meet you full-eyed, full-bodied, and full-minded, you may become irresistible and engulfing. In contacting you, I water my independent existence, but only through the

contact function can the realization of our identities fully develop. What distinguishes contact from togetherness or joining is that contact occurs at a boundary where a sense of separateness is maintained so that union does not threaten to overwhelm the person (97).

Wherever and whenever a boundary comes into existence, it is felt both as contact and as isolation (90).

Some people are exquisitely sensitive in knowing about risks because they seem to live always at what is called the growing edge of their lives (97, p. 108).

The sense of being bereft of all that is familiar is a vacuum which threatens to suck up everything within its reach. What is hard to appreciate, when terror shapes a catastrophic gap, is that this blankness can be a fertile void. The fertile void is the existential metaphor for giving up the familiar supports of the present and trusting the momentum of life to produce new opportunities and vistas. The acrobat who swings from one

> trapeze to the next knows just when he must let go. He gauges his release exquisitely and for a moment he has nothing going for him but his own momentum. Our hearts follow his arc and we love him for risking the unsupported moment (97, p. 121).

III. Personal Thoughts on a Therapy Session:

Moving in to work closely with someone is scary and exciting. Eye contact, exploring the left and right eye, the fear, the scrutiny, being seen and seeing, allowing self to emerge, this was a good beginning.

I was nervous, and I did nothing with this, I felt that I should yet I didn't want to so I didn't, and we moved from this and that to breathing. By noticing the breath I know the person, the process is the same throughout. God how wonderful to see this. To ask someone not to change, just to look--when they can allow themselves to do this the elation is overwhelming.

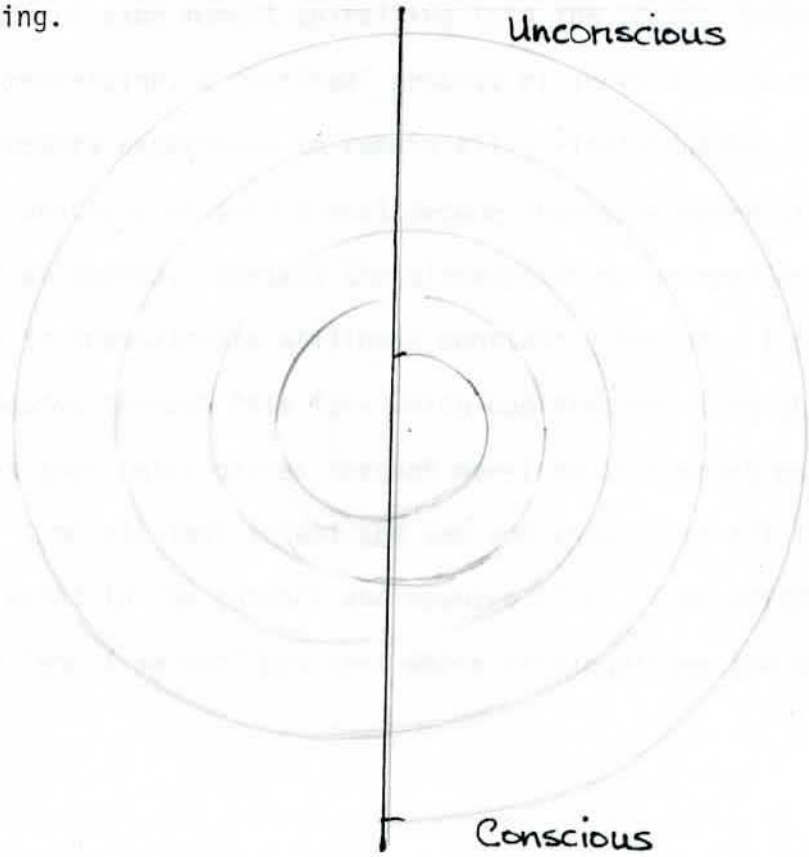
His process: holding on, building excitation level (charges quickly) and never releasing. My fantasy: sexually he either has premature ejaculation or never reaches point of release, goes beyond the discharge; in relationship has a hard time letting go, or getting out of relationships that are over; difficulty letting go or breaking contact. Yet contact with eyes becomes glazed (need to note when in cycle this occurs) as he looks. His statement: I feel on the verge of wanting to contact and be close with you, with women, with myself. "I feel on the verge of wanting to be close." God this is where I am (of course)--I want to work in close--I want the intensity of that close contact while not submerging in someone else, to be real and individuated and

so close that I can feel the edge of oneness, scratch myself with the edges of universality, hover in that delicate wonderful balance between me and you, between me and usness. God the thrill. The fear? I forget!

IV. The Relation of the Parts to the Whole:

According to the Taoist, I exist only to know the parts of who I am. According to Jung I sacrifice my unity with the "mother" for my individuation, my consciousness arises from the energy of this sacrifice. And yet another sacrifice must occur for the transformation of consciousness to continue to the next stage. Contact of consciousness with unconsciousness, with our essential oneness.

The movement of consciousness and unconsciousness is cyclical and spiralling.



Awareness of the contact boundary holds the energy for this evolution and propels us through the spiral.

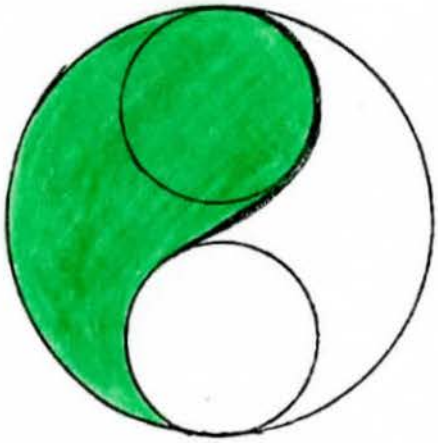
V. A Personal Insight:

It is that time of day when, if I pay attention, I will not lose myself. The cat sits still on the window sill.

From the stereo bells ring through the silence punctuating the decreasing light as the sun descends. A breeze lifts the leaves only slightly. Mind stirs, only slightly.

Loneliness can creep in here. Or the energy of self may emerge on the winds of each moment spiralling into the coming darkness . Letting go and regrasping, a continual process of survival--the moment becomes the necessary experience to remain alive--individuated --separate. To remain conscious of self I must become intensely aware of that with which I am joined, contact the elements of my perception. What remains is inexplicable stillness constantly moving. I sense the energy as it passes through this form which contains me--I am the form which contains that which passes through me--I am that which passes--pulses--flows. I am all that I feel and see and know--I am all that this is not--I exist in the contact and nowhere else. I am neither "Who I am" nor "who I am not" but that which distinguishes the difference.

ENERGY OF BEING



In this final section I discuss the major theoretical questions of an eclectic psychotherapy which attempts to build inner bridges between the psychological and the spiritual essences of man. Change, Belief Systems, and Process are the divisions I have chosen for this theoretical exploration.

CHANGE

Therapy brings me to the experience of sliding down through the layers of myself to a dark chasm where I glimpse myself naked and scream. At the bottom of self we discover a mirror. We do not change who we are, we only see who we have always been.

(A client's discovery)

Change:

I can think of no more basic concept to the study of psychotherapy than that of "change", for the questions that arise in discussions of the possibilities of change are what shape the myriad of psychotherapeutic theories and techniques prevalent today. Clients come to therapy wanting help to change themselves, courage to change their situations, support in changing the significant others in their lives. Book after book has been written on "how to" change our lives in one way or another, whether by making money, making love, saying no, saying yes, eating no meat, eating all protein, standing on our heads, saying mantras, sleeping less or more, controlling our dreams, leaving a husband, finding a husband, buying a dishwasher and freeing yourself from the kitchen, buying a farm and getting back to the soil. Whoever you are and whatever you do there is a book to tell you how to change to be happier or better or live longer, and there is probably a form of psychotherapy to help you do it. And when we read about man's alienation to himself we are all confounded for are we not trying desperately to change?!

Perhaps in response to this chaotic and desperate flee from who we are much of the humanistic movement in psychology has erupted. Self realization is the way to change your life, to achieve happiness, to be content. The influence of the East in the form of yoga, zen, gurus and meditations of innumerable form has fallen too into the desperate struggle for change that is overtaking the Western consciousness.

Certainly modern psychology, theories of self-realization and Eastern philosophies have much of significance to say to the self-alienated who search to fill the void in themselves, but until we understand what is meant by change we cannot hope to use these ideas for our own growth. Indeed they will only serve to alienate us further from ourselves. We need to ask, What is meant by "change"? How does it occur? Can we produce it, or does it only happen spontaneously?

To change does not mean to eliminate one's existing condition. This is a most important point to understand. We do not cease being the way we are, we merely begin to look at the way we are, at our existing condition, from a different point of view. This move from one point of view to another in regard to our own situation is what I mean by change, a change of context rather than of content. It is from this understanding of change that the mergence of Eastern philosophies and current psychotherapies seems possible, for the paradoxical demand that we realize ourselves, that we stay who we are and yet become who we didn't know we could be yet have always been, begins to make some sense. There was a time when many of my friends would talk about how much they had changed after experiencing a gestalt workshop, or EST program, or zen retreat, and I would look at them and their lives and wonder what they were talking about. I could see no evidence of change; they seemed to be carrying on the same existence as ever. Yet I was aware of an increasing acceptance in them for their lives and themselves. Perhaps this was what they meant by feeling like "a different person."

In these last few explorative years since those early questions about the nature of change, I too have shifted vantage points. It is this shifting or leaping from one vantage point to another as I explore myself that has been an experience of profound growth, change, and self expansion. Expansion is that experience of discovering a new foothold within my being from which to view myself and my world, a place which I did not know existed, yet which has always been within me, and which I could not know was within me until I arrived there, thus, self realization, thus, eventually enlightenment.

In their book Change: Principles of Problem Formation and Problem Resolution (141), the co-authors from the Mental Research Institute in Palo Alto systematically analyze the process of change, moving from mathematical theories of groups and logical types to the development of a theory of change applicable to human behavior. The authors explain that there are two types of change. One occurs within a given system which itself remains unchanged. The other is a second order change for it is a change of the system itself. In order to understand whether a given change is of the first or second order, we must define the system we are talking about. Now in the foregoing discussion I spoke of change as being a movement from one vantage point to another, but not an elimination of the existing condition or system. This change is of the second order if we define the system as the existing condition, but if we define the system as the larger self within which this condition exists, then the change is of the first order for we have moved to a different position within the self from

which to view the existing condition. Therefore, a second order change for this "self" might be death (if we define "self" as the physical body), but if we define "self" as an energy system (the physical body being a denser form of this energy) then death becomes a first order change within this larger energy system. This process of definition of self can continue to grow to include the universe, and thus we meet the idea that we are one with the universe.

> All things are seen as interdependent and inseparable parts of this cosmic whole; as different manifestations of the same ultimate reality (22, p. 130)

Fritjov Capra (22) shows that modern physics and Eastern mysticism are both paths which lead to this understanding of the unity of all things. Now, with theis theory of change, we can see that psychotherapy can become a path which leads to this understanding, and which can also <u>teach</u> the process by which we may <u>experience</u> it!

Let us go back now and explore this process of change with an example. The theory of groups and the theory of logical types are the mathematical basis for Watzlawick's ideas on change. Very briefly and as simply as possible, the chief principle from the theory of groups which concerns us is the idea of the identity member. In a given group, let us say of numbers to be added or subtracted, there will exist a

member which when in combination with any other member will maintain the identity of that other member. Thus, 0 will be the identity member in our group, for 0 plus or minus any other number will yield the other number. From this conclusion is developed the interdependence of persistence and change. The more change that occurs within the system the more the system remains the same. The second theory which concerns us in relation to the identity member is that any member of the given group in combination with its opposite gives the identity member. Thus, plus 5 minus 5 equals 0. From this conclusion is developed the interdependence of opposites.

> ... the world of our experience is made up of pairs of opposites and ... any aspect of reality derives its substance or concreteness from the existence of its opposite ... (these) pairs are merely the two complementary aspects of one and the same reality or frame of reference, their seemingly incompatible and mutually exclusive nature notwithstanding (141, p. 18).

Thus a client who sees herself as incapable or inadequate wishes to move to a position of capability, a sense of self-sufficiency. This moment however will only tend to <u>focus</u> the meaning of her inadequacy, for opposites depend on one another for their definition. In gestalt therapy, the interdependence of opposites is used to facilitate

the movement of energy and the expression of affect. If a client is stuck or resisting the process in some way, the therapist may ask him to make a motion in the opposite direction, or express the opposite feeling or to put his body in a position that would be opposite to the present one. This generally results in the expression of the original feeling. The double, or empty chair method (top dog-under dog) is another gestalt technique based on this essential duality. The client speaks from both sides of his conflict, moving to an identification with the opposing positions, and to an understanding of their mutual dependence. The dynamic unity of polar opposites is at the center of Eastern mysticism, in particular Zen Buddhism.

> Since all opposites are interdependent, their conflict can never result in the total victory of one side, but will always be a manifestation of the interplay between the two sides. In the East, a virtuous person is therefore not one who undertakes the impossible task of striving for the good and eliminating the bad, but rather one who is able to maintain a dynamic balance between good and bad (22, p. 146).

D. T. Suzuki, in The Essence of Buddhism, speaks of this:

> The fundamental idea of Buddhism is to pass beyond the world or opposites, ... and to realize the

> spiritual world of non-distinction, which involves achieving an absolute point of view (126, p. 18).

This brings us then to Watzlawick's idea of second order change, derived from the mathematical theory of Logical Types:

> Going from one level to the next higher (from member to class) entails a shift, a jump, a discontinuity or transformation --in a word, a change--of the greatest theoretical and practical importance, for it provides a way <u>out of</u> the system (141. p. 9, 10).

Second order change:

applied to first order "solutions", not to first order problem. First order change = "common sense", more of the same second order change is paradoxical from the first order viewpoint . Here and now techniques deal with effects not causes, ask what, not why. Creates a new frame of reference--a move out of the self-reflexiveness of attempted solutions (p. 82-3).

Steps:

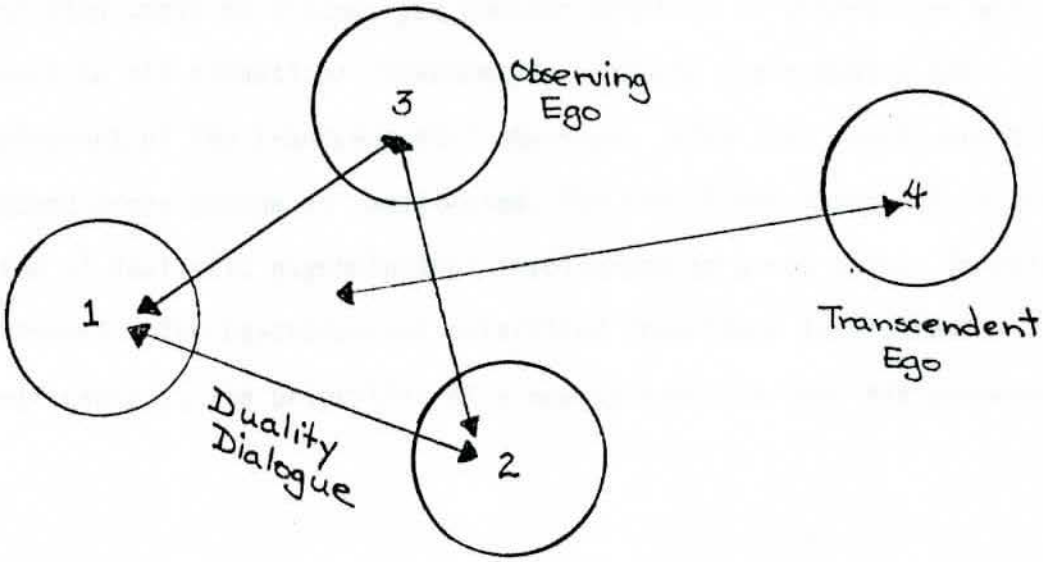
Clear definition of problem in concrete terms. Investigations of solutions attemped so far. Clear definition of concrete change to be achieved. Formulation and implementation of plan to produce change (p. 110).

Strategies:

Target of change is attempted solution. Tactic chosen translated in own language--utilize way of conceptualizing "reality". Paradox--prescribe the symptom (p. 114).

Watzlawick, et al, use the pardoxical method of prescribing the symptom as the means to facilitate this second order change. While within a given system, the means out of that system make no sense, are paradoxical. Thus the solution for an insomniac is to try not to sleep. The authors of Change list many examples of paradoxical solutions to achieving second order change, often resembling the Zen Buddhist tradition of prescribing koans. The koan is a paradoxical story, a puzzle, which the zen student must sit with until understanding comes. When the koan is understood the student will have made a second order change, for to know the koan one must have made a leap to a new system, a new vantage point from within which the koan makes perfect sense, seems logical, no longer a paradox as it had been in the old system of vision or understanding.

Rosenberg has developed a method for teaching the leap from one system of understanding to another by expanding the empty chair method of gestalt therapy.



The client begins in a chair facing the therapist. He exists with all of his questions, problems, confusions, resistances, clarity, thoughts, feelings, physical reactions and experiences. As a focus emerges from this ground of his experience, a polarity may develop. As mentioned earlier, the gestalt therapy (Perls') method of using two chairs, each standing for one side of the duality, from which the client moves back and forth dialoguing between the sides, is a way to bring the dualistic nature of the probleminto the present. At a point when the sides are clearly represented, the client is asked to move to a third chair, the position of the ego observer or impartial judge. This third position is an important move for the client. The therapist's traditional role of impartial feedback now becomes the client's role. He begins to integrate the sides of his personality from this position. The realm of psychological work consists generally in these three positions, The development of the ego observer being paramount in a client's gaining understanding of himself. However, he does not move out of his system of psychological polarities until he assumes yet another position of observation with respect to his situation: movement to a fourth chair begins the development of the transcendental observer. With this fourth position a second order change is facilitated, for the client moves out of his system of dualistic psychological involvement to a new stance in relation to himself. The psychological polarities lose their tumultuous significance as the priorities of a new system take over his awareness.

In the Commentary to The Secret of the Golden Flower, C. G. Jung speaks of this change.

> This "outgrowing", as I formerly called it, on further experience was seen to consist in a new level of consciousness. Some higher or wider interest arose on the person's horizon, and through this widening of his view the insoluble problem lost its urgency. It was not solved logically in its own terms, but faded out when confronted with a new and stronger life-tendency. It was not repressed and made unconscious, but merely appeared in a different light, and so did indeed become different. What, on a lower level, had led to the wildest conflicts and to panicky outbursts of emotion, viewed from the higher level of the personality, now seemed like a storm in the valley seen from a high mountain-top. This does not mean that the thunderstorm is robbed of its reality, but instead of being in it, one is now above it. However, since we are both valley and mountain with respect to the psyche, it might seem a vain illusion to feel oneself beyond what is human. One certainly does feel

> the affect and is shaken and tormented by it, yet at the same time one is aware of a higher consciousness, which prevents one from becoming identical with the affect, a consciousness which takes the affect objectively, and can say, "I know that I suffer," (146, p. 91).

This change in awareness, this outgrowing, exactly describes the process that occurs using this four chair method. The client moves to a new place of experiencing himself. The problem is not solved; the energy shifts to a new consciousness. This also describes the process of opening the chakras. The energy of each chakra expresses an attitude of consciousness. When a client moves to the fourth chair the awareness which comes from that vantage point corresponds to the energy of the fourth chakra, acceptance of the dualism, the struggle between polarities, which is at the core of human experience from a point of view outside of the struggle. We see the struggle, indeed we struggle, yet we are no longer defined by the struggle.

> The problems of life are all in a certain sense insoluble. They must be so because they express the necessary polarity inherent in every self-regulating system. They can never be solved, but only outgrown. I therefore asked myself whether this possibility

of outgrowing, that is, further psychic development, was not the normal thing, and therefore remaining stuck in a conflict was what was pathological. Everyone must possess that higher level, at least in embryonic form, and in favorable circumstances must be able to develop this possibility (146, p. 92).

BELIEF SYSTEMS

"Man is made by his beliefs. As
he believes, so he is.

Bhagavad-Gita

Belief Systems:

In discussing the development of the ego I suggested that we choose particular moments, particular points on the continuum of opposites, with which to identify. We build our identity, based on belief systems established in the growing process. These belief systems are formed as we contact the environment in our natural drive for adaptation, growth, and the completion of gestalten (wholes). Belief systems are formed from a universe whose essential nature is constant change. In order to identify the contact ourselves we create systems of belief which hold true in the face of this change. In order for them to appear to be true we make contact with only those moments of our experience which confirm them. Thus our beliefs shape our experience. Our reality becomes a product of our beliefs about reality.

In therapy we begin to break down those systems which are no longer applicable to our adult lives, continuing the growth process. As we do this we begin to experience the loss of solidity; we begin to experience the everhcnanging quality of who we are; we begin to see that who we are is a process!

Several methods of discovering and changing belief systems may be used. A person's character armour corresponds on a body level to his belief system on the mental level. Thus to re-experience the buried affect is to re-experience the moments of the development of the belief system.

The client's suggestibility, which is already high in the normal psychotherapeutic setting, increases when working with the breath and the body. The client enters altered states of consciousness, hypnotic states, which can be used to retrace patterns of belief systems created in the past and to recapture the power to make new choies in the present.

Reversal: This is a process of going backward in time from the present to discover moments which correspond to the feeling or conditions being experienced in the present situation. This is a beginning method to bring the client's awareness to his responsibility in creating the patterns of behavior in which he discovers himself.

Regression: At a moment of experiencing a deep physical blockage or armoring, the client can easily be led back to the childhood origin of the block. Often this experience will include the discovery of a moment, a particular experience, in which he decided he was not okay.

Tracking Belief Systems: from that discovery the essential belief systems can be discovered by tracing their development chronologically At each point of reinforcement the unfinished business can be finished and a new choice made. The client develops a new belief system based on the self-esteem he has rediscovered through the process.

The following session will describe some of the process of this therapy.

I was therapist with Jack Rosenberg supervising. The particular technique used was regression, but they all work in a similar way.

1. Instruction before beginning: Keep her (the client) out of her head, develop a deep charge and then verbalize. Keep in contact with deep place of okay, the central or core vibrational level should be the focus.

2. Breathing: She tightens in throat, holding on exhale: Create a pattern of holding to exhaust and release tension, then natural easy breathing ensues.

3. Body Tension:

   a. (as I perceive it) groin, solar plexus, shoulders/chest, neck/throat.

   b. (as she perceived it) legs--pain, need grounding, dislike sensation in hands.

4. Pressure points: to open channels for energy in legs and hands--

   a. from legs into pelvis, knees, ankles, toe/ball of foot

   b. from hands/arms into shoulders and chest, hoku (between thumb and first finger) and elbow, hold both at once, and alternate sending energy from each hand into points.

The client is aware of a build up of energy, not of blockage areas, and experiences this as pain, pressure, etc. Energy into the pressure

point begins release of block and flow of energy into blocked areas. Charge begins to increase and a deep vibration develops as opposed to the more external charge experienced thus far.

5. Deep abdominal block emerges:

   a. her image--a safe which can't be opened or broken into, impervious.

   b. become the image and give it a voice--"I am strong," I am rigid", I want to work on emotional problems until I am finished, I won't let go of them!"

   c. regression--go back in time and remember when you first felt this rigidity, one picture will emerge from the images, describe this. "I wore them down until I got what I wanted"; this is your process with yourself, you wear down the knot in your stomach, you wear down the emotions, you wear down yourself.

6. Right hand on abdomen, left under back, sending with the right and receiving with left, cycle energy from crown through hands (don't use own energy). Client experienced release of energy through abdomen into heart. I experienced deep contact with client through my hands, a rush of energy through heart, head. Both of us engulfed in compassion, the abdominal block softened and disappeared.

PROCESS

Holography is the fascinating laser beam art form which creates three dimensional photographs consisting of parts, each of which is identical to the whole.

As a psychotherapist who works with the whole person toward an integration of the body mind emotions and spirit I recognize that process is the unifying ingredient of the individual. The process of any part is equal to that of any other part and is the process of the whole out of which the parts emerge. Each of us is thus a holograph whose creative laser beam is our breath.

By studying the process of breathing, the process of the individual as a whole and in all of her aspects unfolds to awareness.

David Boadella slows down the process with his clients. That our primary existence lies in the process between the polarities in which we get stuck is his main premise. By continually speaking to that process the client becomes aware of the link between her process and the content of the moment; she begins to pay attention to the movement between the moments where her power to choose lies.

In the example of my work with David Boadella the polarities which we explored were being alone and being in intense contact with one person, all of this in relation to my vision. What I discovered was that in the movement between those opposities was a space which I fear and avoid by always choosing one of the two poles in which to experience

myself. This avoided space is the contact boundary, where I touch you, where I experience separateness. In both polar cases I experience a sense of unity--only in the space between do I experience my individuation. Sitting down in that space was a moment of shyness, fear, fascination and awe. I have much to learn in this space.

People contain within their bodies the problem and the solution. By following the body, encouraging its natural impulse, by speaking to the process, the self emerges.

Reclaiming your feelings, not necessarily expressing your emotions (where it is possible to lose yourself again in the extremes), you may discover yourself. At that point you choose whether to express the feelings or move to a new place.

Contacting yourself and contacting your environment are the same thing. The contact cannot be forced, it must emerge from the center. By giving the client the space and the acceptance to be herself, and by continually attending to her process,the therapist encourages the contactful self to emerge. The therapist constantly feeds the client with alternatives, noting body movements and changes in breath, encouraging her to join her breath with her process.

Another example will focus these thoughts.

Julie began her work lying down on the mat and breathing. She quickly became aware of struggling between tension and relaxation. David allowed her to experience her tension fully (feet together, body tensed, he lifted her off the ground at the shoulders to a 45 degree angle with the floor). She enjoyed it. She never gives herself permission to be tense. Yet a part of her watches in fear all of the time. She is never fully tense nor fully relaxed. She is frozen between the extremes of victim and victimizer, between conforming and killing. Her fear is that is she expresses her anger she will be injured. Her position as she said this was bent over, arms around her knees, jaw locked. David began to work with her breath moving from this position up and out and back in again. He tells her, "You cut off all of your movement in your fear of the extremes. Build contact with the steps of the process between the extremes, from softness to strength. Your watchfulness freezes the extremes within you. Even when your eyes are not attentively fixed your body is aware and "watches" for you. You can reclaim your feelings without necessarily expressing them."

Julie's uncontacted anger is not coming up to the muscles because she relaxes superficially, thus exploding will not work. She is shown how to stay in that place between the feared extremes without being frozen, how to move and breath and contact her feelings that exist between killing and conformity which include her strength and her softness.

David's work with the body springs from an embryological view. The endoderm is the source of the gut and breathing system; the mesoderm gives rise to the musculature and bone structure; the developed ectoderm is the brain and nervous system. Conflicts arise between the three systems creating neurotic states. Bringing these into unity is one of the intentions of this process work. Experiencing the incongruities is the method. Thus, with Julie, the mesoderm was relaxed (muscles) while endoderm and ectoderm were tensed (breathing and watching were frozen in attempt to control relaxed musculature). When given permission and method to tense musculature she experienced moments of complete congruity of the systems. After this she began to explore other alternatives to the ones she had chosen.

The most striking element of Boadella's work is the acceptance and trust that exists between therapist and client. Julie is never told even implicitly that she should stop watching. She learns how to do this in a way that allows her more freedom of movement and choice and which brings her into contact with her feelings, which she avoids for fear of falling into the extremes of victim and victimizer. As she begins to move within this space other continuums present themselves: softness and strength, which are more positive, and which she is able to choose more freely, with more movement and breath. Her experience of herself does not change so much as it expands. Boadella says, "I am not interested in crashing through resistances. I am interested in participating with someone in what is going on and playing with the possibilities."

We get stuck in the realities that we create, not realizing that who we are is a process. We define ourselves in terms of polarities, of the extremes of our experience, and establish beliefs about ourselves and reality by continually choosing to see and experience only those extremes by which we have defined ourselves. We are smart or dumb, succcessful or failures, weak or strong, masculine or feminine, etc. When in fact all of these are a part of our experience of ourselves. Jung speaks of the compensation of the unconscious in our dreamlife where the characteristics of our dream personalities express the opposite side of our waking persona. Thus a man may be passive in the world and in his dreams express his aggression. Julie, in her fear of the opposites by which she defined herself, victim and victimizer, remained stuck in between them. She is an effective person in the world, yet one aspect of her was frozen, in fear of the consequences of her anger. By mobilizing the energy locked into that space she began to experience her process, the movement between those extremes where a more complete experience of herself existed. Since my work with Boadella I have been slowing down my process of contact with people so that I experience the contact boundary for greater lengths, allowing the experience of my separateness rather than rushing to merge or isolate. That aspect of myself was only about twelve years old, fearful, shy, self-abrogating. In the last few weeks this child has grown immeasurably. I begin to feel more complete, integrated with an essential part of myself.

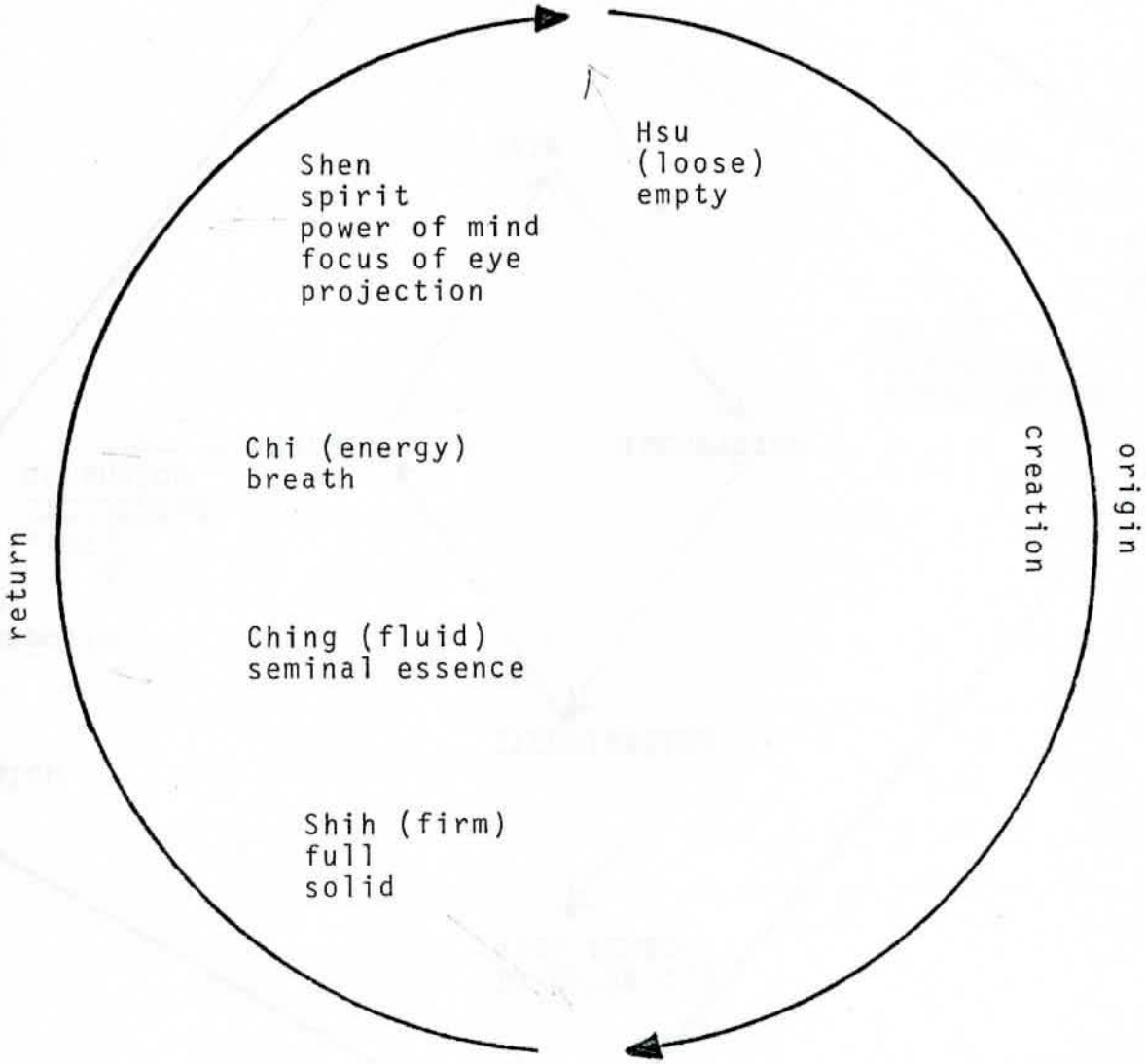
To understand that who we are is a process, really to glimpse that

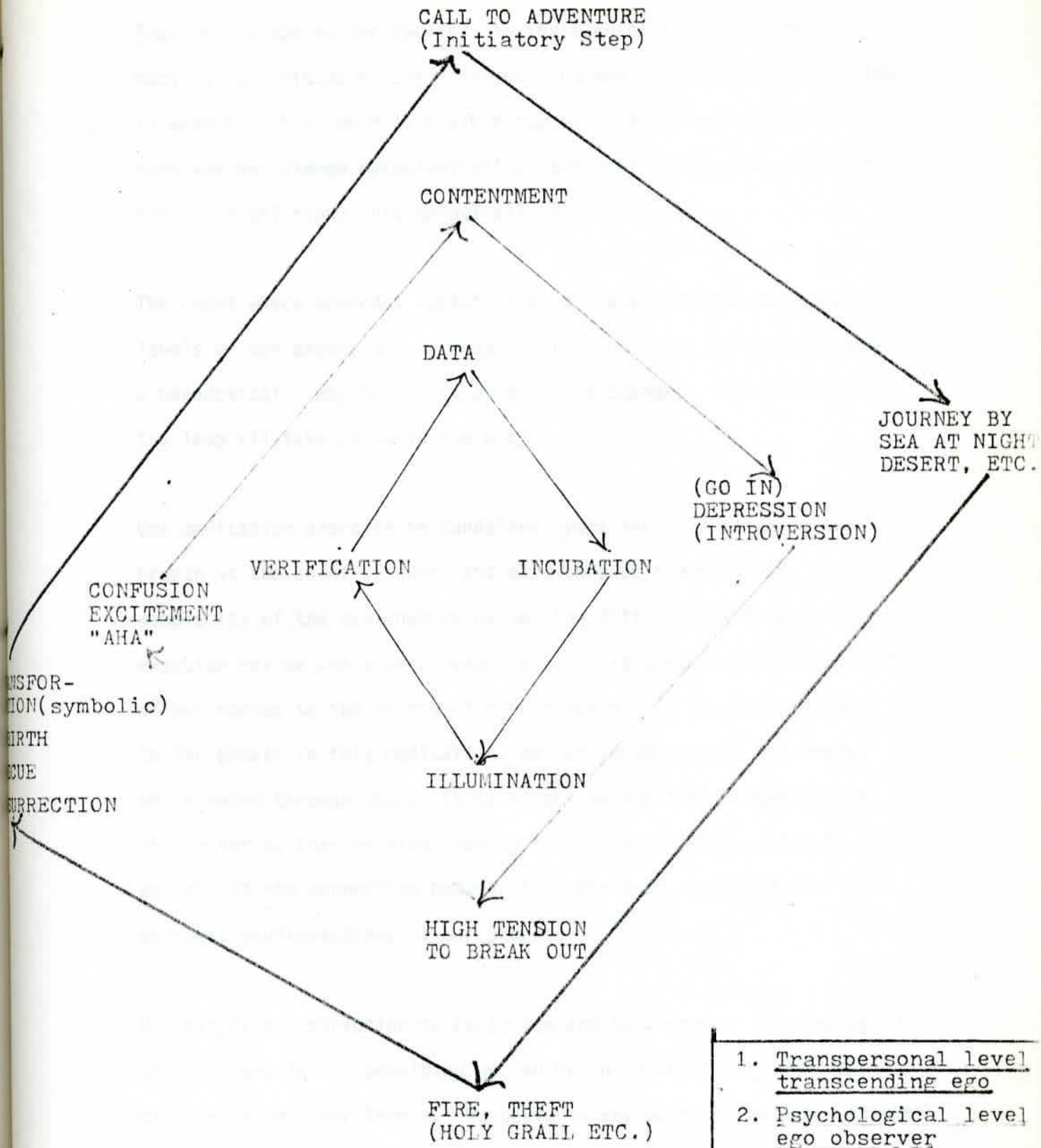
process can be a frightening experience, because who we are is very fragile, constantly changing, like roller-coasters eternally. Who we are is moving so fast that we pull back and get stuck in the illusion of being solid and still. We hold our breath, at the top of the inhale or the bottom of the exhale perhaps. We find some ground, that's what the holding is all about, with our breath, in our bodies.

Often in reaction to the body work clients get sick as a way to hold themselves still. Thus it becomes important to slow aspects of the process down so that it can be experienced with more awareness. Certain aspects (e.g. tension, relaxation) may be experienced fully and let go of, and the power to choose the direction of the process may be contacted. You may watch yourself move into the next moment.

In Zen meditation, counting the breath slows down the process so that the moments are equal in time to the "space between the moments". A balance is created so that we experience with awareness the full circle of breath, the full circle of our process, of our being.

A continual cycle of contraction and expansion is the movement of the universe, of our breath, of our musculature, our birth and death, our laughing and crying, our winter and spring. The Taoists reveal this continual cycle in the following diagram.


Hsu
(loose)
empty
Shen
spirit
power of mind
focus of eye
projection
Chi (energy)
breath
Ching (fluid)
seminal essence
Shih (firm)
full
solid
origin
creation
return



1. Transpersonal level transcending ego
2. Psychological level ego observer
3. Physical level Scientific method

Rosenberg compares the cycling to the path of the mythic hero, much as Jung discusses the archtypal journey which each of us follows in search of his own Holy Grail or cup of life. The process is the same whether viewed mythologically, spiritually (in connection with the universal flow), psychologically or physically.

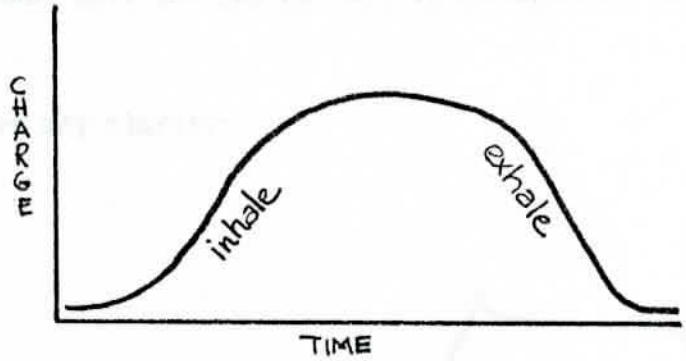
The chart which precedes depicts this circular process on the various levels of our experience. Movement from one level to the next requires a paradoxical leap in consciousness (see Change). The process and the leap all take place in the body.

One meditation exercise in Kundalini yoga involves watching the breath at the point of entry and exit through the nostrils. The simplicity of the explanation belies the difficulty with which this exercise may be practiced. Metaphorically it depicts the relationship of our bodies to the energy of the universe. As the nostril point is to the breath in this meditation, so our bodies are to the energy which moves through them. It is in our bodies that we experience the universe, that we give meaning to that experience. This is the essence of the connection between the spiritual, psychological and physical manifestations of our process.

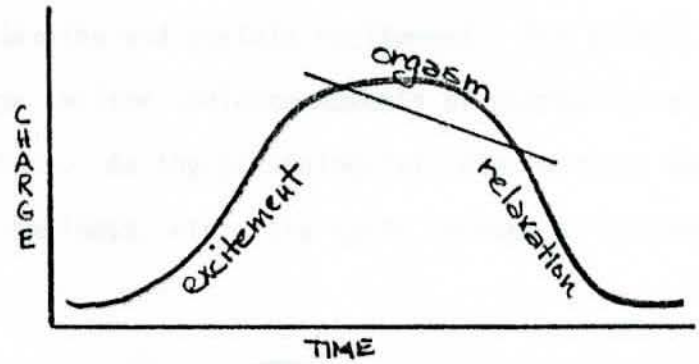
We move from contraction to expansion and back again. By viewing this process in our breathing we can begin to understand what our process is on other levels. We begin to see where we hold or contract

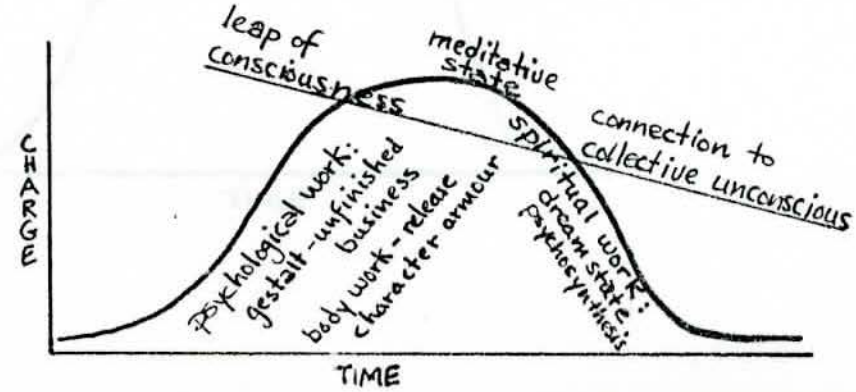
and in relation to what content, where and how we expand and in relation to what content.

The breath process can be viewed more understandably by means of graphs.



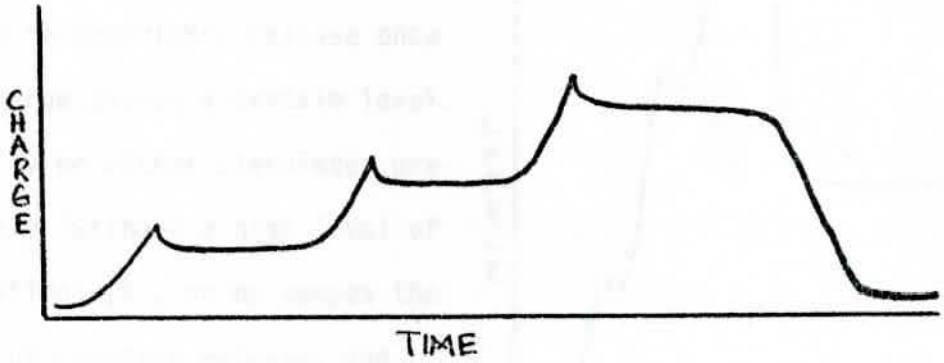
The bell shaped curve describes the Platonic form of the breath cycle. This corresponds to the orgastic cycle which Wilhelm Reich describes.



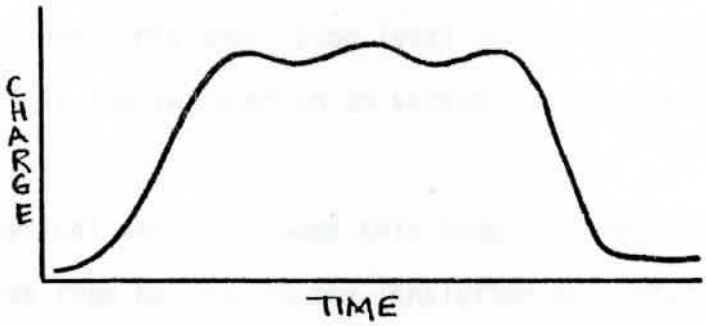


Rosenberg's method as shown in the graph above depicts the process of this transformational therapy. The establishment of contact throughout the process is essential for the client to complete the work. The stage after the release, orgasm, leap of consciousness, is a hypnogogic state corresponding to hypnotic or meditative states in which the inner self and the collective unconscious may be contacted.

Some examples may clarify:

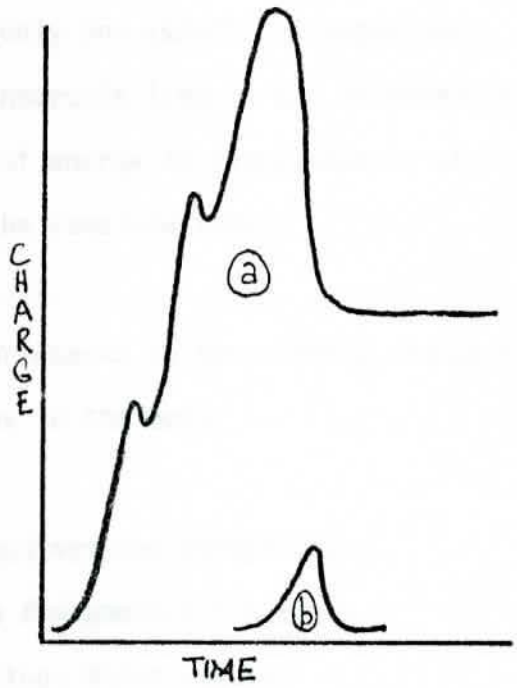


The breath (charge) cycle of this individual depicts a fairly rapid ability to develop and sustain excitement. The points of interruption in the charge incline indicate moments of psychological impasse and loss of contact. As the psychological interruptions were worked out, unifinished business, etc., the cycle changed as follows.



On a sexual level the individual reported an increased ability to maintain contact while experiencing sexual excitement and to reach orgasm more easily, with less tension. On a spiritual level she reported a deep sense of "connectedness" which was accompanied by an inner calm, loss of fear and insecurity which had been a part of her experience since childhood.

This individual is able to develop high levels of excitation, yet is unable to experience release once the charge passes a certain level. Sexually he either ejaculates prematurely (without a high level of excitation) (b); or he passes the point of complete release, and though eventual orgasm may occur, it does not completely satisfy him (a).



In his relationships he either makes and breaks contact quickly without following through, or he holds on to contacts that no longer satisfy him. His excitation level is high but his contact with himself is low in relation to satisfying his own needs and desires.

His physical armoring shows this same pattern--tension in shoulders and neck from holding on the inhalation and pelvic tension from lack

of release on the exhalation. His spiritual connectedness remains ungrounded in his life, separate from his daily routine and sense of self.

Reich's statement that "the energy source of the neurosis lies in the differential between accumulation and discharge of sexual energy" (p. 88 FO) is correct as far as it goes. By labeling the energy sexual he limits the definition to only one aspect of experience. I prefer--the energy source of the neurosis lies in the differential between accumulation and discharge of energy in every aspects of its manifestation. This then reveals the complete story.

The contraction/expansion cycles correspond to sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system processes in the body.

> ... all biological impulses and sensations can be reduced to the fundamental functions of <u>expansion</u> (elongation, dilation) and <u>contraction</u> (constriction). ... one finds the <u>parasympathetic</u> operative wherever there is <u>expansion</u>, <u>elongation</u>, <u>hyperemia</u>, <u>turgor</u> and <u>pleasure</u>. Conversely the <u>sympathetic</u> is found functioning wherever the organism <u>contracts</u>, withdraws blood from the periphery, where it shows pallor, <u>anxiety</u> or <u>pain</u>. If

> we go one step further, we see that the parasympathetic represents the direction of expansion, "out of the self"--toward the world," pleasure and joy; the sympathetic, on the other hand, represents the direction of contraction, "away from the world--back into self," sorrow and pain. The life process takes place in a constant alternation of expansion and contraction (107).

Reich speaks of vegetative centers, the plexes of the autonomic nervous center, from which the bioelectric energy originates and to which it returns. He identifies three, solar plexus, the hypogastric plexus and the lumbosacral or pelvic plexus. These correspond to the first three chakra centers of the Hindu system. He images the organism as a bladder from whose center energy moves to expansion at the periphery, and the sympathetic reaction of fear of bursting turns the energy back toward the center and contraction where the cycle begins again.

> On the highest, i.e. psychic level, biological expansion is experienced as pleasure, contraction as unpleasure. On the instinctual level, expansion and contraction function as sexual excitation and

> anxiety, respectively. On a deeper psychological level, expansion and contraction correspond to the function of the parasympathetic and sympathetic, respectively. According to the discoveries of Kraus and Zondek, the parasympathetic function can be replaced by the potassium ion group, the sympathetic function by the calcium group. Thus we get a convincing picture of a unitary functioning in the organism, from the highest psychic sensations down to the deepest biological reactions (107).

And now we can add, on the spiritual level contraction is experienced as fear of the unknown and of aloneness, and expansion is experienced as universal oneness.

In normal respiration O_2 diffuses through the alveolar-capillary walls into the blood stream for transport to the cells. CO_2 diffuses into the lungs for expiration. With exercise CO_2 is created from burning glucose and inhalation increases to maintain an acid/base (pH) balance. When inhalation is increased without exercise (as is done in Reichian therapy) a hyperbasic condition of the blood (alkilosis) is created, through the suspension of calcium which triggers sympathetic firing and contraction (tetanae, chills, tingling). Increasing the breathing

at this point brings the organism to stress polarity to which it responds by activating the parasympathetic system (increased potassium) and moving the energy blocked at the center out toward the periphery. The increased O_2 in the system heightens the client's awareness (see studies on epilepsy by Pennfield) and in those moments the client begins to see his process as it occurs in this intensified or exaggerated state.

At any time in this process character armor, blockages of energy flow, may and do appear. Focus on these brings emotional and physiological release. If during the parasympathetic firing the focus is on the fourth chakra or heart plexus then the experience will be one of extending outward into universal oneness. If the focus is on the pelvic plexus then the experience will be in the direction of orgastic release. The focus must be determined by the client's situation and awareness if the release is to be effective!

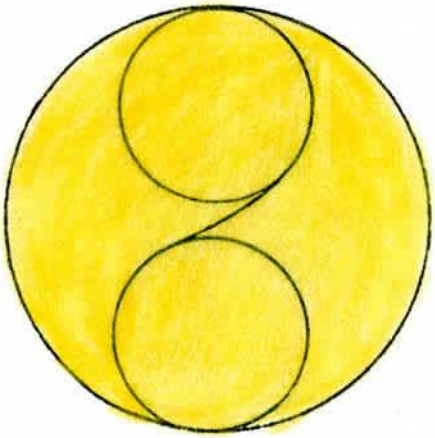
By working with the breath and its focus in the body we may achieve physiological balance in the autonomic nervous system's flow, emotional balance (which involves the understanding of the natural flow of our lives from contraction to expansion to contraction) and spiritual awareness, which allows us to extend our arms around this continually moving duality and to remain still within the center of the cycling.

Conclusion:

Inner Bridges culminates several years study and exploration. It is an attempt to clarify major theoretical issues in the development of a psychotherapy which moves the individual out of the emotional dualism into an ever-expanding and compassionate relationship with self. This form of psychotherapy relies upon the functional unity of the body, the emotions, the mind and the spirit, and upon the significance of the breath process as a key to the process of the individual on all levels. The assumption of a spiritual nature integral to each of us underlies this work. The paradoxical nature of change lies at the center of the work. Identifying ourselves as process rather than as the polarities of process moves us out of the paradox into a new understanding of our essential nature. It is this to which Inner Bridges points, a psychotherapy which creates pathways from our emotional existence to our spiritual existence. Bridges may be crossed from both sides, which is the essence of this psychotherapy. Once awareness occurs on a spiritual level, work on the psychological level becomes the means for further expansion on the spiritual level. The process of self-purification becomes a dynamic and creative process to wholeness.

As I look ahead I am excited by the opportunities for learning and expansion which appear on the horizon. The goals which I set for myself at the beginning of this program have been met many times over. I start out from this point a confident therapist and a person

with still much to learn who has gained the understanding of my unique way of learning which allows me to contact the world openly and with excitement.



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