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Communion: The Exchange of Conscious Human Energy

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COMMUNION:

THE EXCHANGE OF CONSCIOUS HUMAN ENERGY

BY

MARY HILKEN

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

LINDENWOOD IV COLLEGE OF INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION

June 1978



Thesis
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FORWARD

The selection of this topic resulted from a guided fantasy led by my advisor. He asked me to visualize what was most important to me, what I most wanted to explore. Immediately, I imagined myself holding a small child who was greatly disturbed. I was not saying anything to this child, but I was giving this child a tremendous amount of love. This love was experienced as a strong current of loving energy coming out of my heart and flowing into the child's heart. The energy was communicating my acceptance, support, and belief in the person of the child. My energy seemed to say, "I hear you. Know that you are not alone. I feel your pain and I love and believe in you." The child was returning the love as well as communicating a deep sense of aloneness and sorrow. There were no words; the communication and healing seemed to come from the exchange of energy.

Following this experience I thought a lot about the state of being between people in which love and the consciousness of each person is communicated without the use of words. I have come to call this state communion. I have experienced in real life situations similar to the one I experienced in the fantasy, and have an intuitive knowledge of it. I wanted to explore this in order to understand how it worked.

What conditions are necessary? Why do some people establish communion while others do not? What is happening in the muscles, in the physical armoring* when communion develops? Can the energy which travels in the body carry our feelings, sentiments, thoughts? Do we communicate

* See pages 12-13; 46-50.

our consciousness through our energy? These were some of the questions which immediately struck me.

I wanted to answer these questions, because I believe that communion is a tremendously healing phenomenon.

I once visited my niece when she was about six years old. She was terribly upset — whining, complaining, demanding without knowing specifically what she wanted. Sensing her pain, I picked her up and told her I was going to baby her. As I carried her upstairs for her bath she melted in my arms, and soaked up the love I offered. I remember feeling sympathetic to her unhappiness and nonjudgmental about her unpleasant way of expressing it. I believed she sensed my love and respect for her and used that to restore her own equilibrium. In that moment when communion ignited she returned my love tenfold.

I believe that communion is an essential element in all positive relationships. Friendships are often dramatically deepened by sharing a few moments of intense communion. Following the experience of communion with my niece, we developed a friendship far deeper and more loving than we had had before.

Communion is also important in the relationship between counselor and client. Establishing communion with my first counselor had a dramatic effect on my own therapy. As I talked to her during one session, I dropped my customary guard and exposed my inner vulnerability. She responded with complete love and acceptance of part of me which I detested. I felt a tremendous healing and a growth of self-love. Following that, I was much more able to expose myself to her and could work with her on problems that formerly had seemed too overwhelming to examine.

I am hoping that by exploring the nature of communion, I and others will be better able to encourage it. We cannot make communion happen; we can only open the window. Perhaps the breeze will come in.

I would like to acknowledge a few of the people who have helped me to complete this thesis. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my advisor, Ron Aarons, for the superb guidance he has given me. He directed me towards my own inner truth and gave me much of himself. He believed in me, encouraged me, and demanded that I do my best. I thank Mark for reading this manuscript so many times, and for helping me improve the quality of my work. I also thank the other members of the committee — Sharon, Nancy and Craig — for their thoughts and suggestions. I deeply appreciate the love and encouragement I have constantly been receiving from Pam and Jim. I would also like to thank my parents for their endless love.

* * *

I. INTRODUCTION

This paper is a study of the experience of communion, examining exactly what it is, what conditions foster openness between people, and what the rewards of it are. Communion is the revealing of truth, exposing the inner being or Self, which is usually protected. There is considerable literature about revealing the inner Self in psychology, and philosophy, but more can now be said about the experience of communion. Communion is not something which happens between two people's minds; rather, it is an experience which involves the whole being of both people. This aspect has largely been ignored in the traditional literature. Verbal revealingness is an adjunct to a more fundamental rapport which develops by a very subtle communication between the bodyminds* of two people. Gestures, postures and facial expressions are important communicators, but the foundations of communion are even more subtle.

Eastern modes of healing have long held that there is a conscious energy which flows within the human body and affects the well-being of the person by the strength and balance of this flow. Recent Western investigations support the existence of such a phenomenon.¹ There have also been indications that this energy flowing within one person's body will affect the energy flow in another person, that their energies will intermingle. It is my hypothesis that the foundation of communion is the intermingling of two people's conscious energy. When two people like each other, they relax and allow their energy to flow more freely

* The term "bodymind" means "whole person," signifying that the mind and body function in conjunction with each other, and one cannot be understood without considering the other.

and arch across to each other. As a common energy field develops, a feeling of safety and comfort emerges which is vital for growing openness. The consciousness of each person travels with this energy and the feelings, thoughts, something from the essence of each person, is thus exchanged.

I will develop this hypothesis first by discussing the nature of communion. I will begin with an exploration of people's need for deep intimacy, what elements seem crucial in order for it to emerge, and what psychologists and philosophers and other writers have said about it. An exploration of the characteristics of conscious human energy will follow, including how it has been used in healing and how one person's energy will affect another person. From this foundation I will present a theory that energy communication is a vital foundation of communion, that it occurs in the whole person — body, mind and soul. I will show that the state of a person's body, and his* energy field, determines the depth of communion he can have with other people. This paper has not been designed primarily as a research paper, but as a presentation of my theory of communion, supported with the research in the fields of psychology and alternative modes of healing. I will organize the research in areas important to communion and relate their importance to each other.

* There is considerable disagreement as to the best way to handle the singular pronoun when it refers to either gender. As I feel that continual use of the masculine pronoun has a subtly detrimental influence on both men and women, I have chosen to alternate chapter-by-chapter between the masculine and feminine pronouns.

II. THE NATURE OF COMMUNION

The first question to be considered is what is communion? Random House defines communion as an "act of sharing or holding in common . . . (an) interchange or sharing of thoughts or emotions."¹ In this paper, the word is used to indicate a relationship based on the sharing of realness; a relationship which develops when two people are willing to expose to each other parts of their being which they normally hide and protect. Communion is not something which magically happens to a person, but is a by-product of, and stimulant to, the process of finding one's Self. A person's Self is her internal guide, and possesses an intuitive awareness of the qualities and potentials which are intrinsic to her, but which frequently are subverted by her desire to please others. To be truly intimate, each person must know her Self, be in touch with her feelings and energy throughout her bodymind, and be willing to see and share the essence of another person.

There is considerable risk involved in communion because it is a process of stripping back defenses and exposing the vulnerable Self. To do this takes tremendous faith — faith in our own value and faith that other persons will honor and respect us. We have, from early childhood, developed tremendous protections against allowing anyone to come too close. We have all felt hurt by being grossly misunderstood, judged, condemned and disregarded. We created ways of protecting ourselves from that pain by developing ego* defenses and blocking feelings in our body.

* The traditional psychoanalytic meaning of ego is learned behaviors and thinking patterns which are geared towards evaluating the environment and assisting the person to fulfill her needs in the way most suitable to that environment. A modification of the meaning has evolved in popular use which includes one's Self-image and one's sense of importance.

The problem is that we do not know how to let down these defenses easily, so we maintain them most of the time. Our egos protect us to some degree, but they shut out much of the great beauty of life and the great depth of our being.

The excitement of communion is discovering that we are reasonably secure in letting down these defenses and exposing our inner Self to another person. The reward is rediscovering our depth and being honored by having another share her depth. The feeling of safety which precedes communion brings about greater relaxation in each person, which is pleasurable and also leads to increased energy flow within each. As the relaxation and security increase, the energy will flow more strongly and each person's energy flow will bridge across to the other as they come into greater harmony.

Clark Moustakas describes a situation of communion between two teenage boys. One boy, Richard, undergoing the confusion of adolescence, suddenly realized he did not know what was real any more, and felt a stranger to his family and friends. He retreated into a private world, isolated, withdrawn, overwhelmed. He remained in his room for some days, his body stiff, unmovable. One day his friend approached him and sat nearby. He allowed himself to sense Richard's mood, and harmonized himself with it.

Their communion was silent and wordless, yet a bond began to grow between them. Slowly, painfully, Richard began to weep, his tears flowed freely, his muscles awakened and for the first time in many days, he felt movement and life. His breathing deepened. He was connected to another human being in a way that he felt to be real. He had made contact that he knew he could trust.²

In this simple scene lies the essence of communion. Each person takes the care and respect to enter the other person's inner world. Each regards the other with openness — seeking what is underneath, allowing the other to be whatever she is — and to unfold the conflicts or pain which may lie underneath. This is tremendously exciting. In disclosing one wonders, "Can I trust this person to really see me without judgment, to really look at me rather than apply general principles to my problems? Will she love me if she knows who I am?" Something is communicated non-verbally, each senses her personal safety with another as energy begins to flow between them. As the energy connection builds, our heart senses safety in another's being, the gates melt and there is a sudden flow of feeling. When we realize that another person sees us, and recognize intuitively that at last we will be treated as real, vulnerable and absolutely individual, the defenses of our heart often burst, drawing out the pain like iron filings suddenly brought face to face with a giant magnet. As the feelings flow, tears often follow. That longing for human contact buried for so much of our lives becomes unearthed as soon as we have an inkling that maybe, just maybe, here at last we are truly safe. This desire to share truth with another is basic to human nature, yet it is defied, perverted, and hidden. I have seen people tremble with excitement and fear as they disclose themselves to one another. The excitement is about the joy of communicating their essence, and the fear is of dropping defenses and risking making themselves deeply vulnerable.

The intimacy of sharing a deep pain at a time of crisis is only one aspect of communion. It is often the first experienced, because in crisis our need for human contact is much greater and the power of our emotions often puts us on the edge of breaking down defenses. We live at those times in a battle between holding ourselves together, with defenses at a maximum, and being overwhelmed by strong feelings and not being able to hold them back. Finding someone who is kind and receptive will often take us over the brink, relax the defenses enough so that the feelings, less carefully guarded, escape and flood the person like water crashing through a broken dam.

The anecdote Moustakas describes between the two boys is an example of this. The first boy felt very tight but the kindness and receptivity of his friend melted his defenses and his feelings flooded out.

Communion is a state of unity which forms when people are being entirely real with each other. By allowing the mask we normally project to fall away, we expose the truth about ourselves. This may be intense negativity, or the incredible beauty of our inner being. Whatever is exposed is real, and gives the other person something to grasp, something which is authentic and therefore tangible. As the understanding of the other person develops, a commonality develops between the people. Each person's consciousness is shared and a sense of unified consciousness develops.

This unified consciousness is dynamic, changing as each person's consciousness changes. In communion one may sense on a preverbal level the personal awareness and knowledge one's friend has about herself and the world. This awareness of her sense of truth naturally expands the

other person's consciousness. As one person's consciousness expands, the unified consciousness is likewise effected. A movement in unified consciousness may then stimulate another personal insight which will again effect the unified consciousness. This could go on indefinitely.

In one experience of communion I had with a friend I sensed his perception of truth — his knowledge about himself and the world. This broadened my understanding of him, life, myself, everyone. My wisdom was simultaneously being communicated to him and enlarging his wisdom. As the exchange continued, we each nonverbally amplified certain insights of the other. Consequently, our awareness of everything continued to expand until one or both of us were unable to integrate any more material, and temporarily cut off the exchange.

What is the consciousness which is exchanged in communion? Beneath the mask lies a vast pool of conflicting feelings, positive and negative attitudes and impulses. These are our own authentic reactions, and make up the Self. When the negativity — the fear, pain and hate — are removed, the clear, pure, positive essence of the soul is left. This is the Core.

The belief in a positive essence of the soul can be found in many religious and philosophic traditions. Many of the modern mystical groups speak of every person having a "Christ consciousness," where the beauty and love manifesting in Jesus Christ is available to each individual.³ Eastern mystical traditions begin with the purification of the Self. They seek to reach below ego attachments and the cravings of the mind to the layer of being which seeks communion with God.⁴

"Vedanta teaches us about the Self. Once we have overcome our ignorance, which presently binds us to the conventional structure of reality, we shall become aware of a deeper Self, or Atman, below the level of the socially conditioned ego, and also of the identity of that Self with the Self underlying all phenomena, or Brahman. . . . Instead of seeing [God] as other than ourselves, as the ultimate Thou behind the lesser Thou's of earthly human relationships, we now search for Him in a much more mysterious direction, in the depths of the Self."⁵

Communion on its deepest level is the communication of one Core to another. The next chapter will explore more fully what the Core and the Self are, why people are often alienated from their center and how they can recontact it.

III. THE INNER PERSON

Beneath the outer layer of the personality, which is molded to please parents and contemporaries, lives another part of the person which remains true to itself. This has been called many things by different people. I call it the Self. The gem of the Self, the inner fruit containing the intrinsic gifts and beauty, is the Core. I will discuss the works of several prominent thinkers to expand these ideas about the Self and the Core and develop a basis to understand their relation to intimacy.

The Self

Carl Jung calls the innermost nucleus of the psyche the Self. It is "an inner guiding factor that is different from the conscious personality,"¹ but includes the conscious personality. This, according to Jung, is the center of the person, the wholeness of his consciousness which is wise — which knows the right course for an individual to take. The Self incorporates the ego and the unconscious. Jungian psychology is a tradition which has shaped my ideas of the Self. In the course of Jungian analysis, the individual develops his capacity to utilize the Self as a guide. This seems to be a process which helps a person utilize his Self to establish communion. The goal of Jungian psychology is the process of individuation, or the integration of various aspects of the psyche. This is accomplished mainly through the understanding of symbols presented in dreams and fantasies. The Self presents to the dreamer these symbols in order that he can bring to fuller awareness unconscious desires or fears, projections and denials.² There is a sea of teeming life which

pulsates dynamically below one's conscious awareness. This is what Jung calls the unconscious. Some of this material is common to all mankind and emerges in similar themes in myths the world over. Other unconscious material is unique to each individual and reflects elements in his or her own soul. The process of learning about and owning this underwater world and discovering its relation to our everyday lives is the essence of individuation.³ The Self, which is this wholeness, is the guiding force in discovering its own intricate design. In order for the process to continue, the ego must give over the reins to that desire for inner growth.

Thus, the Self is the truth about the person. It contains all the parts which are authentic, whether they be joy or anger, meanness or beauty. It excludes the personality traits which are learned, adaptations to the demands of others. In the integrated person the Self is recognized as the director of the person and the ego is recognized as an aid. When the ego, the part of us concerned with our self-image, importance and personal well-being, is nourished by the Self and the Core, it can function as a liaison between the Self and the outside world. The problem with the ego comes about when a person allows the ego to become the center, the guide who directs the person, not toward his own truth, but in a direction which is thought to please others.⁴

The belief in an intuitive inner guide is found in many cultures. The Naskapi Indians in Labrador, for example, view the soul as an "inner companion" called Mista' peo or "great man." Mista' peo dwells in the heart and sends messages to the person through dreams. By paying attention to dreams a Naskapi can develop a deeper connection with the Great

Man, who will be a guiding force not only in internal matters, but also, for example, in matters involving the weather or hunting.⁵

Much of Eastern philosophy is founded on a belief that there is an inner nature, which, if developed through meditation, can flower and guide the ego in its dealings with the environment. The practice of meditation directs a person's awareness away from the external world and centers it upon the quietness inside. Within this quietness emerges an awareness of the inner essence of the Self, the Core. Enlightenment comes when a person is one with the presence of God which dwells inside his Core.

One example of this can be found in the forty-seventh chapter of Lao Tsu's Tao te Ching. It says:

Without going outside, you may know the whole world.
Without looking through the window, you may see the
ways of Heaven.
The farther you go, the less you know.

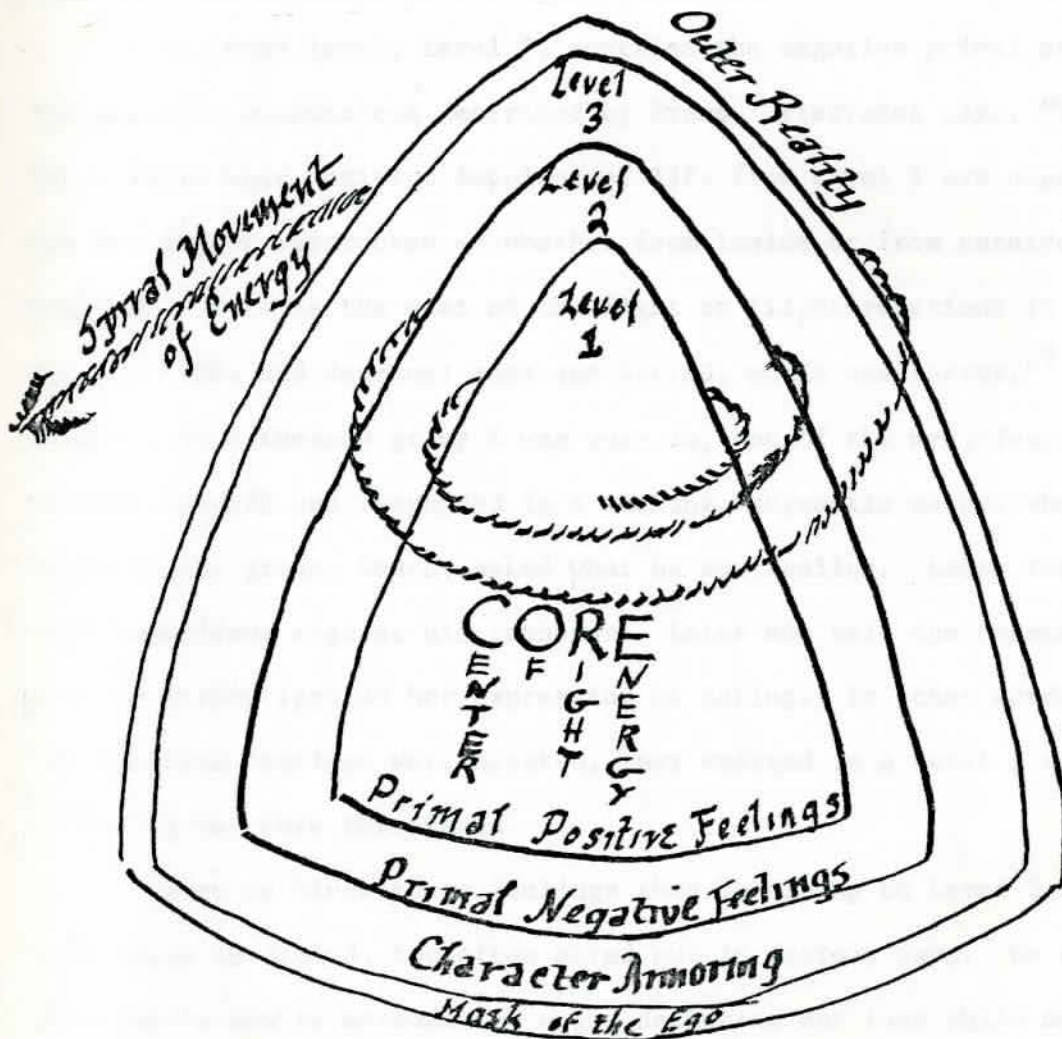
Thus the sage knows without traveling;
He sees without looking;
He works without doing.⁶

The Core

The Core is the positive essence of the Self. It is the seat of the positive emotions and one's connection to a universal consciousness sometimes called God. John Pierrakos, from whose material I developed much of my idea of the Core, defines the Core as the "dwelling place of that birthright — the innermost source of the processes of life."⁷ The search for and understanding of one's Core is a life-long process. The Core is elusive because the mind cannot understand it. The Core has an awareness of all things, yet it is not the mind. It is greater than the

mind. The Core reaches beneath the mind and our power to think, stretches beyond language and our capacity for verbal expression.

To understand what is entailed in reaching the Core, it is important to see what surrounds it. Pierrakos provides just such a description in his theory of personality structure. Below is a diagram taken from The Core of Man.⁸ He describes a person as made up of levels of Inner Reality.



The level furthest from the Core is the mask of the ego, which is the face one shows to the world and which most people take as the real Self. Beneath this lies the character defenses called Level 3. These

are attitudes and beliefs which keep us only dimly aware of the outside world and out of touch with ourselves. This armoring is also a set of muscular constrictions which hold back the flow of feelings and conscious energy. This will be discussed further in Chapter IV. Different people have different ways of defending themselves, but there are common patterns. A person's character armor is his particular way of keeping unwanted feelings from penetrating his conscious awareness.

The next level, Level 2, contains the negative primal emotions, the negative unconscious described by Freud. Pierrakos says, "These emotions arise when positive impulses of life from Level 1 are negated — are impeded or obstructed — whether from inside or from outside the organism. Here is the seat of the fight or flight reactions in their various forms and degrees; rage and hatred, panic and terror."⁹ For example, in a therapy group I was once in, one of the men, Tom, was extremely cut-off and responded in a mocking, sarcastic manner when a woman in the group, Laura, asked what he was feeling. Laura responded with tremendous rage at his response. Later she said she became angry when he glibly ignored her expression of caring. In other words, when her positive feelings were negated, they emerged in a Level 2 reaction to having her Core threatened.

When we block these feelings they bubble up to Level 3 where they will again be denied, but often acted out in devious ways. We will thus give people double messages — e.g., declaring our love while making comments with an unmistakable bite to them. In the above example, if Laura had denied her rage she might have responded to Tom with subtle put downs later in the group.

These negative feelings are quite real, yet when they are given expression in a proper context they can be burned off, freeing us to experience Level 1, the Core, or center of primal positive feelings. Laura responded to Tom in a hot, clean rage, sending her anger out her eyes and out her fists which she beat against a pillow. She verbally expressed her anger, telling Tom how angry she was without attacking him or putting him down.

Pierrakos describes the Core as:

. . . intensely alive, the center of the living processes of man, and it contains the highest intelligence. Because of these powers, it can mold the energy supply, which means it can heal the mind and the body; and it can give solutions to the existential realities objectively and unify opposites, thus reaching source truths. In sum, the Core is the seat of the most creative feeling of man — love. Therefore, the Core is the heart; human wisdom throughout the ages has rightly pictured the heart as the well-spring of positive emotions — movements toward contact and unification with the outside world. In his Core, the essence of his life, every human being is unique.¹⁰

The vitality and truth which come to a person who is in touch with his Core springs originally from a source deeper than the individual. The Core of each person functions as a channel to the vast, uncomprehensible consciousness which is the creator of life and the monitor to the flow of life in the entire universe. By being in touch with the source of energy and truth, we have a direct connection to the wisdom of the universe and therefore can more easily understand the sometimes baffling events in life. By seeing the wisdom of the universe we can see a pattern to events, a purpose which makes them explicable.

Our Core is the gate to a universal conscious energy and truth. It allows limited amounts of truth to pass its threshold. The Core translates this truth into visions and inspirations which are useful to us.

The Core integrates the universal wisdom with the individuality of each soul. In the Core these are harmonized, giving a person a balanced direction for growth.

While the Core comprises the positive feelings and energies of a person, the Self envelops a person's negativity as well as his Core. All of the inclinations and feelings which are authentic — both negative and positive — are a part of the Self. In relating this to Pierakos' diagram, I would say that the Self comprises Levels 1 and 2, the primal negative emotions and the Core. Anger, hatred and fear are real, whether as a reaction to having one's Core impulses pinched, or as a reaction to an imbalance in one's environment. The Self seeks to understand the negative, picking up cues from it which give a broader understanding of the person and the world.

The Core and the Self provide inspiration and direction for growth in the whole person. Most people, however, do not make full use of this guidance because they have lost touch with their Self. This happens to most people, at least partially, during their development.¹¹ A baby appears open and true to his Self. His eyes look directly at a person, and he responds with his whole body, without coyness or censoring. Something happens to most children in the process of growing up that makes them lose this spontaneity and self-assurance. Exactly what happens to cause this will be the topic of the next section.

Alienation from the Self

To discover the reasons for the distance many people feel from their Self, we must first discuss how one discovers one's individuality. An infant does not make a distinction between himself and his environment.

David Russell postulates that a child's first reactions to himself are probably perceptions of his body.¹² He may watch his fingers and toes move and learn to recognize them as parts of himself, elements which he controls. He may also hear his cry and recognize his voice. Gradually he learns to recognize himself. Russell says that by the age of about two years the child has a grasp of himself as a unity.¹³

It is at about this age that the child realizes that he is separate from his mother. He may become extremely demanding at two years old, perhaps to prove that he has control over his environment.¹⁴ He may repeatedly drop a spoon in order to have someone pick it up for him, or make a lot of noise in order to receive the recognition of his ability to affect his environment. He may regard his mother as an extension of himself, demanding that she perform services for him without realizing that he has received outside help.

As a child learns that he exists individually he will begin to learn who he is. Jersid defines this self-concept as "a composite of thoughts and feelings which constitute a person's awareness of his individual existence."¹⁵ Russell says that the child's idea of himself will help determine the sort of person he becomes, and cause him to identify with one or both parents.

According to Don Dinkmeyer, a child's idea of himself develops as a reflection of other people's attitudes toward him. "The child's perception of the reflected attitudes and judgments of those who comprise his world serves as the foundation for the formulation of Self. The Self-concept really is the individual's anticipation of his general

acceptance or rejection in a given situation. As the Self-concept is formulated, it tends to shape new experiences to conform to established patterns."¹⁶

This is similar to R. D. Laing's ideas. In The Politics of the Family, he discusses some of the ways adults imprint their expectations on the child. Laing says that each generation projects onto the next, often unknowingly. "As images of ghostly relations under the operation of projection, we induce others, and are ourselves induced, to embody them: to enact, unbeknown to ourselves, a shadow play, as images of images . . . of the dead, who have in their turn embodied and enacted such dramas projected upon them, and induced in them, by those before them."¹⁷ Laing likens the power of suggestion under hypnosis to the suggestive power often present in the family. He says that in a hypnotic context one is not told what to be, but rather what one is. Similarly, some of the most powerful suggestions in family life are not direct suggestions but intimations that one is a certain way. Laing gives several examples of ways parents create this conditioning:

" 'I'm always trying to get him to make more friends, but he is so self-conscious. Isn't that right, dear?

'He is so naughty. He never does what I tell him. Do you?'

'I keep telling him to be more careful, but he's so careless, aren't you?' "

Laing says that this conditioning is often very subtle, often reinforced only by a glance, a touch or a cough. The essentially non-verbal nature of the command to "become what I take you to be"¹⁹ makes it even more powerful and difficult to identify.

The resulting phenomenon is that the child is often not seen for who he is, but other images are projected onto him, and in a very subtle way he is taught to become what other people project. Thus he is not directed towards Self-discovery, but perhaps towards acting out a scenario begun several generations ago.

At this point I would like to clarify some terminology. The Self-concept as discussed above is the ego's interpretation of the messages received from the environment and its own Self-evaluation. This is very different from the Self we have been discussing, what Jung calls the "inner guiding factor;" the uncensored truth about a person. The Self-concept is the ego's self-image, whereas the Self is a reservoir of personal truth, partially tapped potentials, predispositions and intuitive knowledge, i.e., the real person. In a fully integrated person they would be the same. However, largely due to experiences the child encounters while growing up, for most of us our Self-concept does not reach nearly the depth of our Self.

Kent and Nicholls in I Amness²⁰ present an interesting theory of the distance the child develops from his Self. They say that while an infant is open and in touch with his Self, he has not integrated his Self with his ego because he has not yet developed an ego. The development of the ego is healthy and necessary; the problem arises when a person identifies with the ego instead of with the Self. The ego develops as the child learns that he is a separate individual capable of demanding and receiving wants. The child is also learning to understand language and the nonverbal messages that form the bulk of communication. The child senses people's attitudes and develops a Self-concept in accordance with the attitudes of those around him.²¹

The Self-concept and Self would still be integrated if significant people in the child's life valued his intrinsic worth more than his performance, and were capable of seeing him as he is rather than projecting on to him qualities which exist either in themselves or in important relatives.

R. D. Laing has developed this idea in many of his books. He points out the effect on the child when he is consistently reminded that he is "just like his father." Not being thought of as himself he will not develop his awareness of himself, but will develop to a certain extent, qualities similar to his father.

Many parents do not encourage the unfolding of an awareness of Self, perhaps because they are unaware of its existence and value. Instead, they encourage the child to develop certain characteristics or abilities to perform tasks or rituals which they or society deem important. For example, a male child may be taught not to cry, to be tough, or even that he does not feel sorrow or pain. Another child may be taught that he will be thought well of if he performs well at school or in sports. He may thus develop a positive ego-image if he is able to do well at school or in sports, but he will not be developing a greater awareness of his Self.

The child, by attempting to become who he thinks he "should be," loses the sense of who he is and develops an ego-image which is more compatible with what his parents encourage. Kent and Nicholls describe this process:

The ego forms an image of itself by reflection in the mirrors of other minds. The child hears his characteristics constantly being referred to and commented upon by his parents and others, sometimes accurately, but more often not

at all accurately, for the mirror is a distorted one. So the child becomes convinced that he is . . . like his mother or father, that he is nervous or aggressive, artistic or logical or even ugly or stupid.²²

Kent and Nicholls go on to say that "the false ego-identity was acquired at a time when the child was very vulnerable. Just because he lacked any stable awareness of his own identity, he grasped too eagerly at the identity offered him by his parents and others around him."²³

The greatest problem is that the parents do not see the child clearly as who he is. Sometimes they identify the child with someone else, perhaps themselves, or as they would like him to be, or with someone from their own past. The parents' unresolved conflicts from childhood cause them to act out on their child the hostility, longing or pity that belonged to the person with whom they now identify the child.²⁴ This, obviously, is greatly confusing to the child. He does not know who he is yet, but is attempting to discover himself with the help of his family. The child certainly is not learning about his true Self, but is learning to identify more and more with an image of himself that parents and siblings present and which he modifies according to what he learns about himself.

There is evidence that valuing the performance of the child has a detrimental effect. Ausubel, et al.²⁵ did a study of "extrinsic valuation," or excessive parental concern about the child's school accomplishments. They asked a series of eighty questions to forty 10 year olds. They questioned the children on their ability to perform tasks, asking whether their success ranged from probable to highly improbable. They asked both about accomplishments as a child and what they anticipated as

an adult. In addition to this they determined from questioning the children whether the children felt their parents had "extrinsic valuation."

They found that "children who saw their parents as valuing them extrinsically were . . . more persistent (probably to an unrealistic degree) in believing they could do well 'the next time' on a test at which they were consistently failing."²⁶ The children were also rated by an arts-crafts teacher and by a classroom teacher for emotional maturity. Those who saw their parents as valuing them extrinsically "emerged with less favorable ratings."²⁷

It appears then that these children, involved in performing for their parents, were both less able to accept their limitations and less emotionally mature. I would suppose that they were also less in touch with their Self.

This is in keeping with Abraham Maslow's psychology of health. He lists several assumptions or theories which are the foundation of his psychology of health. They are:

1. We have, each of us, an essential inner nature, which is to some degree "natural," intrinsic, given, and, in a certain sense, unchangeable, or, at least, unchanging.

2. Each person's inner nature is in part unique to himself and in part species-wide.

3. It is possible to study this inner nature scientifically and to discover what it is like — (not invent — discover).²⁸

4. This inner nature, as much as we know of it so far, seems not to be intrinsically evil, but rather either neutral or positively "good." What we call evil appears most often to be a secondary reaction to frustration of this intrinsic nature.

5. Since this inner nature is good rather than bad, it is best to bring it out and to encourage it rather than to suppress it. If it is permitted to guide our life, we grow healthy, fruitful, and happy.

6. If this essential core of the person is denied or suppressed, he gets sick sometimes in obvious ways, sometimes in subtle ways, sometimes immediately, sometimes later.

7. This inner nature is not strong and overpowering and unmistakable like the instincts of animals. It is weak and delicate and subtle and easily overcome by habit, cultural pressure, and wrong attitudes toward it.

8. Even though weak, it never disappears in the normal person — perhaps not even in the sick person. Even though denied, it persists underground forever pressing for actualization.

9. Somehow, these conclusions must all be articulated with the necessity of discipline, deprivation, frustration, pain, and tragedy. To the extent that these experiences reveal and foster and fulfill our inner nature, to that extent they are desirable experiences.

He has also written that there are several preconditions to an exploration of this inner nature (what I call the Self). He says that neurosis is a deficiency disease; it is born out of being deprived of certain satisfactions which he considers as important as food and water. He says "most neurosis involve, along with other complex determinants, ungratified wishes for safety, for belongingness and identification, for close love relationships and for respect and prestige."²⁹ He goes on to say that people who have the above needs satisfied are motivated for the sake of growth to explore and develop their inner nature (Self) described on page 6.

Returning to the study of children and extrinsic valuation, it is possible that the children who felt their parents valued them for their performance did not have adequate feelings of safety, belongingness,

identification, close loving relationship, respect or prestige. I would suppose that parents who valued the child's intrinsic worth would by nature tend to provide an atmosphere which offered these essential qualities.

In summary, it seems that the alienation of a person from his Self occurs at an early age. When he is forming his Self-concept from the attitudes of his parents. At this time the child is vulnerable to the approval and opinions of the parents and takes cues from them. He will be strongly influenced by their opinion that he is stupid, tough, bright, pretty or like his father. If their love is conditioned on his performance he will be strongly motivated to develop his ability to perform, even at the expense of developing his Self. As Maslow says, love and security are prerequisites to explorations of one's inner nature or Self.

Fears of Contacting the Self

All people have a variety of reasons to avoid reaching their Core or Self. Perhaps the most volatile reason is fear. I will describe some of these fears because they have an important effect on one's willingness to enter into revealing relationships.

One of the most powerful reasons for avoiding the Self is the fear of the unknown. J. Krishnemurti, a prominent Indian philosopher, says:

"I lead a certain kind of life; I think in a certain pattern; I have certain beliefs and dogmas and I don't want those patterns of existence to be disturbed because I have my roots in them. I don't want them to be disturbed because the disturbance produces a state of unknowing and I dislike that. If I am torn away from everything I know and believe, I want to be reasonably certain of the state of things to which I am

going. So the brain cells have created a pattern and those brain cells refuse to create another pattern which may be uncertain. The movement from certainty to uncertainty is what I call fear.³⁰

This uncertainty of the unknown is one reason we hold back from exploring our Self. The Self is mostly unexplored territory, vast and unchartered. The discovery of the Self unfolds entirely spontaneously. Exploring one's deepest consciousness, especially at first, is like exploring a huge cave without a light. We may not even know which way to turn to explore the boundaries. We may feel empty space for hundreds of feet and be walking beside a wall without knowing it. We do not know what we will encounter; this is the essence of exploring the unconscious. This makes it very frightening. We cannot prepare ourselves to deal with the unknown. What is needed from us will be unpredictable and constantly changing. We can only reassure ourselves that what is unknown becomes known, and what we face is less frightening than that from which we run.

To explore the unconscious one must be patient, and listen. As I have already indicated, Jung found that the unconscious would expose itself mostly in the form of symbols in dreams and images. It is by paying attention to these and interpreting them when possible that a person explores his unconscious.³¹ It is also possible to explore the unconscious by examining reactions which seem stronger than events warrant. It is by examining our actions and feelings that we open ourselves to greater insights into our unconscious mind.

A second reason many people are afraid to explore their Self is that they are afraid of the negativity which lies within them. People whose positive Core impulses were pinched a lot as children will have a

lot of negativity, but if this is explored and released nondestructively, they will enter the positive essence of the Core.

People can examine this negativity by openly viewing how they relate to other people, admitting if they are feeling greedy, nasty, spiteful. By exploring their role in disagreeable interactions, they can discover much of their negativity.

Most of us are afraid to see this negativity and recognize it as part of us. But the violence and anguish which we were taught to conceal still live within us. This negativity may include a hunger for power, urges to destroy people and things, tremendous hate or repressed fears. On a deep level many people believe these feelings are "bad," unacceptable parts of themselves which must be kept hidden lest the world discover what horrible people they are. In actuality, our hates lose their power and evilness when they are not bottled up but released in nondestructive ways. These include beating mattresses, shouting at pillows and confronting others in an expressive but nonattacking manner as described in the group interaction between Laura and Tom.

A third reason some people are afraid to explore the Self and the Core is that what they discover will upset their equilibrium by presenting another view of the world. When we drop into deeper levels of consciousness, our whole awareness of the world increases. As we approach our Core we become more intuitive, more receptive to new ideas, less attracted to any particular way of viewing the world. Consequently, we discover a lot of new things. In fact, basic truths about the universe manifest.

Pierrakos says the Core contains the highest intelligence: "It can give solutions to the extrinsic problems of life. For the Core can perceive existential realities objectively and unify opposites, thus reaching source truths."³² This, of course, is something we seek, and yet it also can be overwhelming. It is frightening to experience truth about the universe. One cannot integrate too much truth at once. Most people have developed ways of viewing the universe that support the ego's domination. When a person contacts his Core, new realities open up. He may become aware of a divine design in the universe, where events occur in his life in accordance with what he needs to learn, instead of according to chance. He may see a pattern to events in life, both personal and global, thereby knocking a hole in assumptions about life, the world, and how he lives. This is quite overwhelming; people can lose a sense of stability and coherence in their life when truths become apparent to them faster than they can update their world-view and correspondingly, their life-style. At such times they may feel overwhelmed, not knowing what to believe. They may not trust anyone's perception of the world, even their own. What one has believed to be true no longer seems to be; and what now seems true is untested, far-fetched, perhaps only an illusion. This can be frightening — not to know what to trust. To avoid this people naturally only open up as fast as they can integrate truth. Truth is what comes to a person when he steps down into his Core. If a person is afraid of the truth of his Core, he will be hesitant to relax his defenses and allow the energy and consciousness from his Core to permeate his whole being.

I have found the best way for me to deal with my fear is to accept it. I allow myself to feel the fear, express it, rest for awhile and integrate the new material I have exposed. By doing I am not pushing the part of me which is scared. This scared part usually responds by relaxing and I am then less self-protective and more willing to change.

Levels of Revealingness

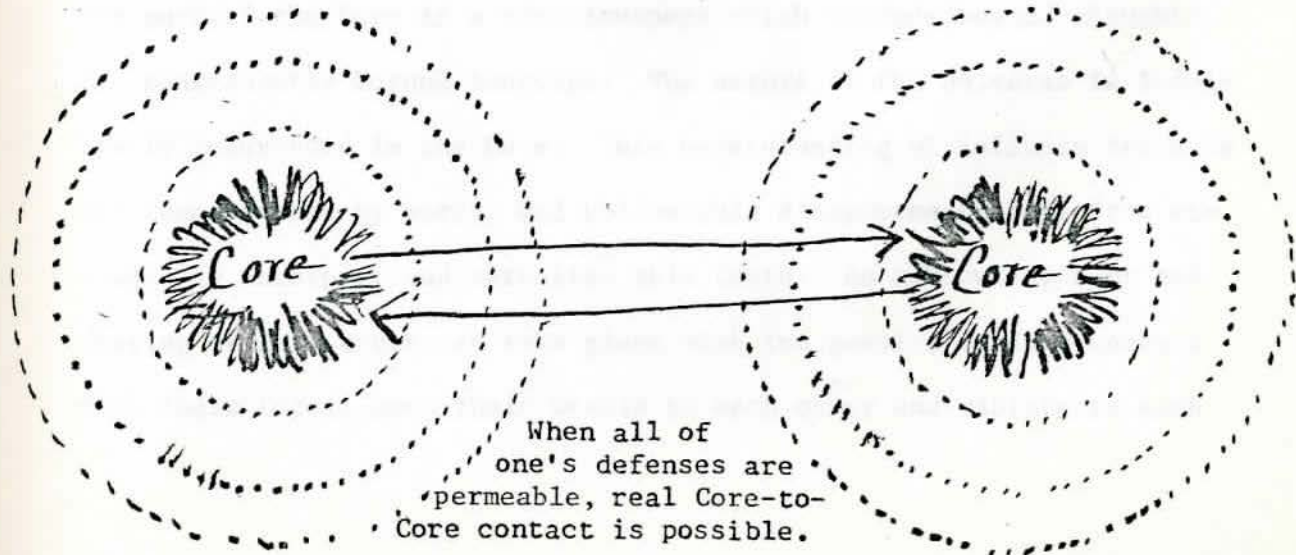
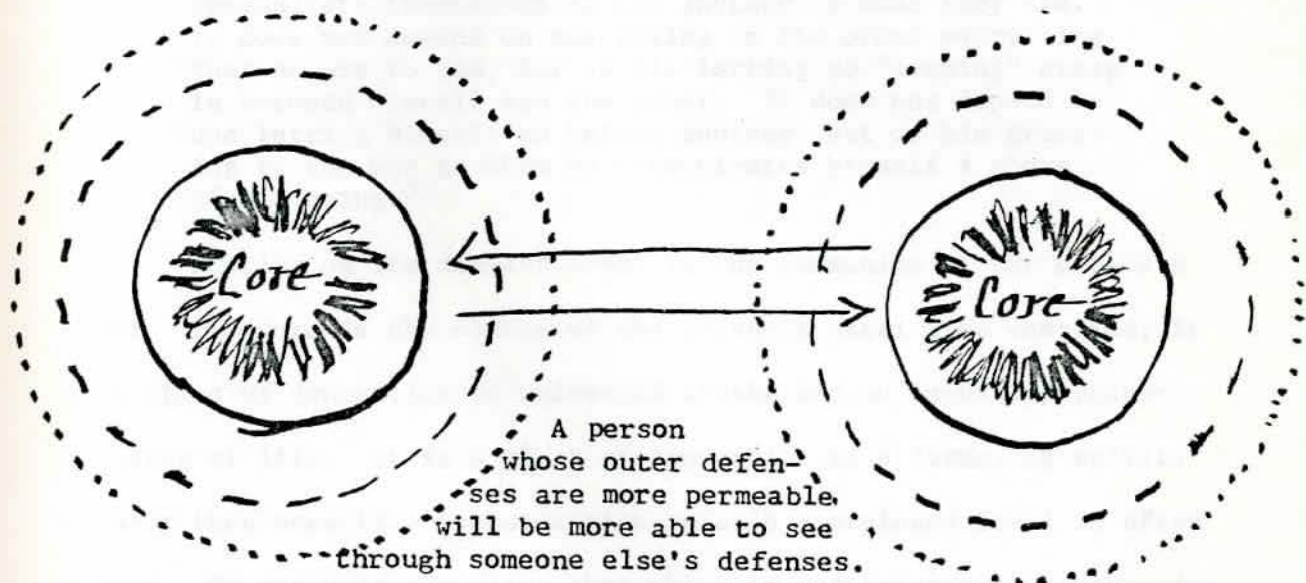
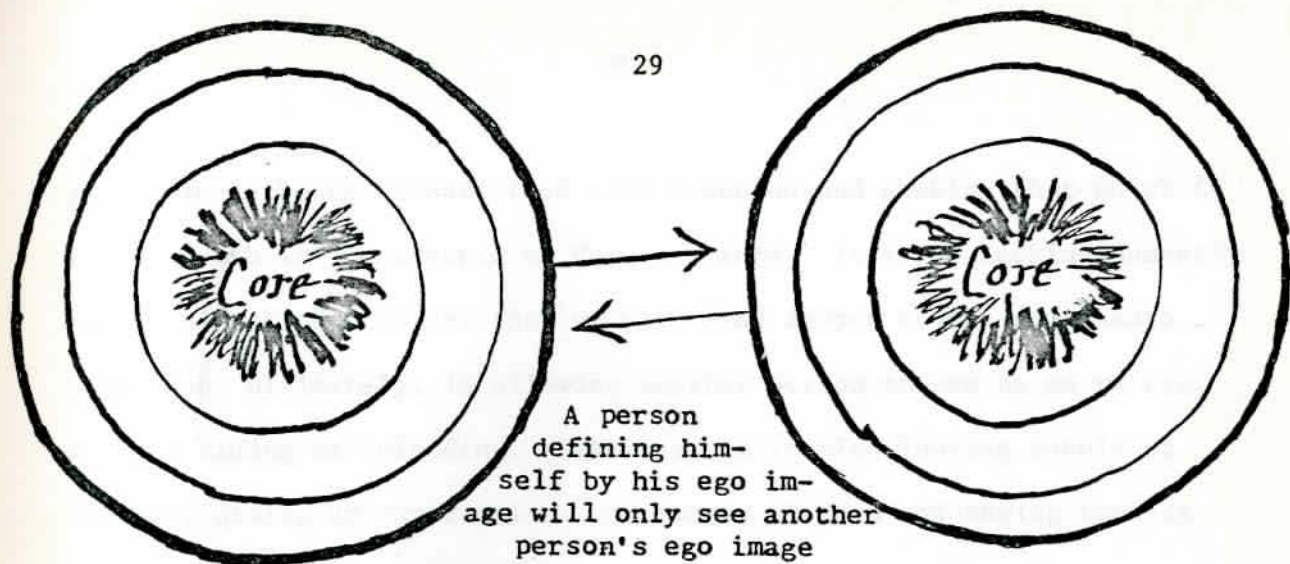
I have gone into detail in my exploration of what the Self is and our need to be connected to it, because I believe the depth of communication one has with another person is directly proportional to the depth of connection one has to one's own Self. In the example of intimacy I gave in the beginning of this paper, the boy Richard shared as much of himself as he was in touch with. The sharing began, to use Pierrakos' terms, in the level of primary negative emotions — the pain of his loneliness — and evolved to a deeper level of sharing — his Core. It is expanding the frontier of one's openness which is exciting, wherever that frontier is.

If the depth of communication with another is proportional with the depth of perception of oneself, a person who fiercely maintains his ego mask will have only limited communication with another person; whereas a person who is introspective and willing to examine his feelings will be able to share a lot more deeply with another person. Although an introspective person may not always choose to share with others, anyone with Self-knowledge will have more substance to share than someone who is relatively unaware.

On page 29 is a diagram I made depicting the level of contact between people. Each set of concentric circles represents an individual. The smallest circle is the Core of each person, and the second and third circles represent layers of defenses and negative feelings. The outer circle represents the ego mask which attempts to keep all of these powerful feelings from erupting spontaneously. This is very similar to Pierakos' diagram. Of significance here is how these personalities react to each other. One can see that people who defend their ego mask will not look beneath the mask of another person, therefore relating to the image the other person projects rather than seeing the conflicting feelings underneath.

In the second group are people who have gained more Self-awareness and are in touch with some of the feelings which they usually block under their ego mask. These may be anger towards people, an urge to have others impressed by oneself, or a sadness underneath a brave front. Sometimes the negativity is incredibly strong, including hate, destructiveness, selfishness or desperation. These feelings are often terrifying at first, and consequently 'carefully guarded. Once people begin to become aware of the multitude of conflicting feelings which churn beneath their own mask, they are more aware of these feelings in others. Consequently, they can relate to a deeper, more real part of the other person, thus attaining a level of communion.

Becoming more in touch with oneself and consequently being able to reach another on a deeper level is much like peeling back the layers of an onion. It is continually looking more deeply into the truth; it is



increasingly being dissatisfied with illusion and seeking that which is real. Truth is the essence of Core meetings. It is by looking honestly and openly at what we see that we will find deeper truths underneath. Communion, ultimately, is allowing another person to see us as we are, without hiding or defending. Likewise, it is also looking openly at another, giving up expectations and images of them and seeing them as they appear now. In the words of Martin Buber:

Whatever the meaning of the word "truth" may be in other realms, in the interhuman realm it means that men communicate themselves to one another as what they are. It does not depend on one saying to the other everything that occurs to him, but on his letting no "seeming" creep in between himself and the other. It does not depend on one letting himself go before another, but on his granting to the man to whom he communicates himself a share of his being.³³

Meeting on its deepest level is the communion of two people's Cores. The Core is the source of the person's vital life energies; it is a place of connection to universal truths and an intuitive understanding of life. It is a place of connection to a force, or spirit, greater than oneself. Communication on such a profound level is often silent. We can only verbalize that which is understandable by the mind, and much of the Core is a consciousness which extends beyond thoughts and consequently beyond language. The nature of the universe is intuitively understood in the Core. This understanding of infinite truth is not communicable by words, and philosophic disagreements come from attempts to interpret and verbalize this truth. An acknowledgement and sharing of that truth can take place when two people, in deep contact with their Cores, open their hearts to each other and vibrate to each

other the love, harmony and truth which is alive in their Cores. I have experienced this during communion, and it is documented in the literature on Tantra Yoga which will be discussed in Chapter VI.

Of interest to me in this paper is exactly how two people sense each other's depth without words. In Core-to-Core contact there is such an exchange of consciousness which extends far deeper than the words spoken. How is this communication afforded? What is the nature of this phenomenon? It is my thesis that during Core-to-Core contact the energy of both people becomes activated and is the vehicle of communication of this consciousness. The energy is the vital life-force which pulsates vibrantly in the Core. When people trust each other they allow their bodies to relax. Letting go of a façade is letting go of the body posture which helps to maintain it. As trust develops and we are more willing to express feelings in front of the other, we relax the muscle blocks which restrict the flow of feelings. As these blocks dissolve, the energy which vibrates in the Core emanates throughout the person and is even exchanged between the two people.

In the next chapter of this paper I will describe the nature of this energy, substantiate its existence and describe its function in the body, its relation to consciousness and the communication of it between people.

IV. PERSPECTIVE ON ENERGY — THE SPARK OF LIFE

Energy is a natural pulsation found throughout the universe. Inanimate objects are filled with energy as well as animate ones. Atomic energy explains the electromagnetic and gravitational forces by nature of the pull between the positively and negatively charged particles within atoms. What we call matter and think of as solid, in reality is rapidly moving particles within a huge space.¹

Electromagnetic energy will travel through any object, animate or not, depending on its conductivity. Wilhelm Reich discovered another energy, a bioelectric energy which he called orgone. He found that "the movement of bioelectric energy is fundamentally different from the known speed and type of movement of electromagnetic energy."² Bioelectric energy moves very slowly and in a wavelike form. Reich equates its movement to that of an intestine or a snake.

It is this bioelectric energy which is of interest to us here. When I subsequently refer to energy it is this bioenergy to which I am referring. I am postulating that this energy is the carrier of consciousness and a medium of interpersonal exchange.

First, allow me to make more clear the distinction between electromagnetic energy and bioelectric or, simply, bioenergy. Whereas electro energy moves at the speed of light between two conductible materials, bioelectric or, as Reich calls it, orgone energy, is capable of changing nonconducting organic material.³ According to Reich, orgone is present in the atmosphere, the soil, plants and animals. Any living cell contains orgone and changes itself by respiration.⁴

There is much evidence, both ancient and modern, which supports the existence of bioenergy. The Hindus believe the world is filled with a vital energy — Prana — which is essential to life and can be taken from the universe by each person through her breath.⁵ Chinese philosophers centuries ago formulated the theory of yin and yang — polar energetic forces which must be kept in balance.⁶ These forces pervade the universe and travel in the human body. John Pierrakos says:

The human being is a ceaseless pendulum of movement and vibration, a unity of energy that has . . . two essential characteristics: the quantitative, or the mass of the energy; and the qualitative, or the consciousness of the energy.⁷

The peristaltic action of the internal organs, the beating of the heart, the flow of breath and the travel of nervous sensations are all part of this ceaseless movement in the human being. The very atoms which make up the human body are not solid matter, but electrons swirling around a nucleus.⁸ The movement which is intrinsic to us is caused by the energy pervading our bodies and the universe. Pierrakos says the inner pulsatory movements "are the sum total of the human life process, of all the energies of the metabolism of life within the body that are generated both internally and externally."⁹

Being alive means to have consciousness. Consciousness and energy in human beings are intrinsically entwined and travel together through the body. Pierrakos defines energy as "the living force emanated by consciousness."¹⁰ For centuries Eastern philosophies have understood energy as a basic life-force and have associated it with consciousness as being the primary carrier of a person's spirituality.

Dr. Pierrakos postulates that the energy of an individual constantly intermingles with the energy of the atmosphere and other individuals.¹¹ The energy emanates from a person's body much as heat rises from a stove or the fragrance from a flower permeates the air. As I will substantiate in Chapter VI, in this intermingling of energy, some of the essence of each person is exchanged. The spirit, or emanations from the Core, of a person, flows with the energy and is projected into the atmosphere. We often speak about how a person has a certain air about them. This is the consciousness a person communicates through her energy.

These energetic emanations are obviously quite relevant to the understanding of the nature of communion, because energy endowed with consciousness is the primary vehicle of communication between people. For this reason, in this chapter I will explore the nature of energy flow, its blockage, and the correlation between energy flow and emotional openness. I will begin by discussing some of the understanding of energy which has developed in the East.

Prana

In the yogic practices of India, the yogi seeks perfection or total harmony with God by raising her consciousness through the building up and harmonizing of her energy, or prana. The concept of prana is fundamental to all forms of yoga. It is present in the atmosphere, in the earth, and is poured out upon us by the sun. All the planets and stars are thought to be vast stores of prana. Our bodies are made up of prana; it is in every cell and atom. Gopi Krishna in Kundalini, The Evolutionary Energy in Man, says:

All systems of yoga are based on the supposition that living bodies owe their existence to the agency of an extremely subtle immaterial substance, pervading the universe and designated as Prana, which is the cause of all organic phenomena, controlling the organisms by means of the nervous system and the brain, manifesting itself as the vital energy. The Prana, in modern terminology "vital energy" . . . circulates in the system in two separate streams . . . clearly perceptible to Yogis in the awakened state.¹²

Prana also means breath; breathing is the principle means of taking in prana. According to yogic theories, prana travels through the nervous system in two streams traveling side by side.

The practice of yoga balances and radiates the prana, increasing physical and mental health. The real object of yoga, however, is more than simply balanced mental and physical functioning. It is to expand the individual's consciousness beyond the "boundaries confining the sense-bound mind, carrying the embodied consciousness to supersensory regions."¹³ That is, to connect a person to her Core, which is the gateway to the universal consciousness, or God. The practice of yoga consists of various postures which are held while breathing in a regular pattern. There are many different postures and breathing techniques, but the point of all of them is to absorb prana and send it to various parts of the body. The increased strength and regularity of prana increases the well-being of the person.

Kundalini

One branch of yoga, Kundalini, centers on gaining enough voluntary control over the nervous system to send a great flow of prana into the brain. By concentration, posture and breathing, yogis awaken the vast energy centered around the sex organs and send it up a hollow shaft

in the spinal column to the brain. This energy is known as Kundalini, and is described as a "vividly bright, fast-moving, powerful radiance."¹⁴ When the Kundalini rises, the person is filled with a sense of overwhelming bliss, a joy and pleasure deeper than anything in the material world.

On either side of the spine are two additional energy channels, the "Ida," which corresponds to the male life-force, and "Pingala," which corresponds to the female. These are said to coil upward around the spine and intersect at seven points.¹⁵ These points are called chakras and are viewed as centers of intensified energy or consciousness. Each chakra is concerned with a particular aspect of human behavior and development.

The first chakra, the Root chakra, is located at the base of the spine. It is related to the basic survival needs, and is necessarily the first to require resolution, for a person cannot develop higher aspects of her Self if her survival is threatened. The second chakra, or sexual chakra, is located at the level of the genitals. It relates to sex and primary interpersonal relations.¹⁶ These too are basic human needs that must have some fulfillment before the consciousness is free to explore other dimensions. The third or navel chakra, located at the solar plexus, is concerned with power drives and social position.

These first three chakras relate to what Maslow refers to as primary needs that a person must have fulfilled before she will have the impetus to explore herself, other people and the world simply for the joy of growth. The Kundalini system is harmonious with Maslow's findings; the last four chakras relate to the elements which Maslow found to be stimulating to the growth-oriented person.

The fourth chakra is located over the heart and is related to love feelings and self-expression. This is love beyond sexual need; love for the other person's being. The fifth or throat chakra is located in front of the throat. It relates to thought communication, expression and self-identification. The sixth chakra, known as the third eye, is located between the eyebrows. This refers to psychic powers, and heightened awareness of the Self and the universe. The seventh or crown chakra is located on top of the head. This is the spiritual chakra, relating to the experience of self-realization or enlightenment.¹⁷

For a yogi, it is a life process not only to meditate and bring the energy up the spine, but to purify and harmonize the psychological components of each of these centers. As the yogi evolves, the focus of her attention will shift from personal, ego-related needs to higher interpersonal needs, finally to a focus on God. The shift is not absolute and clearly defined, but is a shift in emphasis. There may be some spiritual openness at the same time a person is resolving sexual problems. This process of bringing the energy up the spine to higher and higher centers of consciousness is similar to the process of reaching one's Core, which Pierrakos describes.

Acupuncture

Acupuncture is another ancient science which has studied the flow of energy and its relation to health. This is a form of medicine which developed in China and has spread to other countries and is increasingly being practiced in the United States. The results in many cases are quite

astounding. Acupuncture theory is founded on the belief in the existence of a universal life energy, or ch'i. This energy is divided into polar forces, yin and yang, which are opposites and complements. Yang is thought to be masculine, warm, active, light and positive. Yin is thought to be feminine, passive, dark, cold and negative. Together they form a whole which keeps the world and each person in harmony and good health. When they come out of harmony with each other, the person becomes ill. An illness in any part of the body affects the whole body since it signifies an imbalance in the yin and yang.¹⁸

The ch'i energy is thought to travel through the body along twelve main meridians. These meridians run the length of the body, sometimes close to the skin and sometimes penetrating to the internal organs. It is an abnormality in the flow of energy along these meridians which either causes a predisposition to a disease or a disease. An acupuncturist stimulates or reduces the flow of ch'i according to what the particular disorder requires in order to re-establish an equilibrium. This is done by either finger pressure on particular points on the meridian in the case of acupressure, or by the insertion of needles into the points in the case of acupuncture.

Practitioners of this Chinese medicine view the person as a whole. They say that habitual states of mind as well as immediate moods will affect the ch'i. It is in this way that the mind affects the body. "A negative depressed state of mind acts on the Vital Energy like a toxic substance, they say, and will eventually manifest itself as illness. Conversely, the Chinese say, a malfunction in the body could cause a

mental illness. Correcting the Vital Energy imbalances in the body can correct the conditions of the mind."¹⁹

Thus, acupuncture can be an important tool in psychotherapy. It has become an adjunct to psychotherapy in the Soviet Union²⁰ and is increasingly becoming integrated into holistic practices of mental health in the United States.

Auras

Another area of research in human energy flow has been the study of the aura. The aura is an extension of the energy field which emanates in different colors around the body.* Pierrakos describes the aura as "a cloud-like, blue-gray envelope which extends for 2 to 4 feet, where it loses its distinctness and merges with the surrounding atmosphere. This envelope is brilliant and illuminates the periphery of the body in the same way as the rays of the rising sun light up the fringes of dark mountains."²¹ He also says that this field pulsates rhythmically, swelling and disappearing from 15 to 25 times a minute in the average resting person. He says the aura consists of layers, the inner being dark and only a fraction of an inch thick. The next emanates for 3 to 4 inches and is blue-gray in color. The outer layer is sky-blue and extends for 6 to 8 inches.²²

Knowledge of the human aura is very old and long-standing. There are pictures from early Egypt, India, Greece and Rome depicting figures with a luminescence surrounding them. The early Christians also painted

* Most people do not see the aura with the naked eye, but it is visible to most people while wearing cobalt glasses and looking against a neutral background. Seeing auras with the naked eye requires a greater sensitivity which most of us have not developed.

halos around saints. Clairvoyants the world over report on this phenomenon. The average person can also see the aura when looking through cobalt glass if there is soft light and a neutral background.

In the 1940's two Russian scientists, a husband and wife team, Semyon and Valentina Kirlian, began research in observing and photographing the aura. Their research, which has grown over the years, has produced some exciting and provocative results.

First of all, they have been able to produce clear photographs of this energy field which extends beyond the physical boundaries of humans and also of plants and animals. They found that when a leaf was pulled from a bush and photographed immediately, it had a strong luminescence around it. After several hours the field gradually became weaker, the light was duller and extended less. In other words, as the leaf died, the aura ceased to emanate. When the leaf died, no aura was visible.²³

Another interesting discovery was that if they photographed a healthy leaf after tearing off a portion of it, the photograph showed the aura surrounding the entire leaf, including the portion that was torn off. In Psychic Discoveries Behind the Iron Curtain, a photo of the field around a leaf is described as "a mass of sparkling lights all over the leaf; here and there brilliant, vivid flares and around the edges a precise aura of luminescence."²⁴ Then they describe a picture of the same leaf after half the right side has been cut off. "It looked like the same leaf, except . . . there seemed to be a line down the middle of the right side of the leaf. Beyond that line the

sparkling outline and veins seemed airier, the background fluffier."²⁵ Psychics have also reported seeing an energy ghost of an amputated limb in humans.

Clairvoyants have observed that the aura of a person will change according to her emotional state. Fatigue, disease or mood will affect the color and intensity of the emanation. Kirlian photography has confirmed this. When Mr. Kirlian was ill, his hand photographed "a confused, chaotic pattern of energy, blurred and cloudy."²⁶ On the same day, under the same instruments, his wife's hand photographed as a "clear pattern of discharging streams of energy, the colored flares bright and sharp."²⁷ Mr. Kirlian's hands normally showed a similar pattern to his wife's; the change in energy pattern occurred shortly before he became ill. They found the same phenomenon while photographing two identical plant leaves from two different bushes. They expected to find similar light emanations but one leaf was clear and bright while the other was sparse and dark. It turned out that the latter had been taken from a plant which had been contaminated with a serious plant disease.²⁸ There was nothing on the leaf to indicate that it had been infected or that it would become diseased.

Kirlian photography has been tremendously important in the field of energy study. It is the best scientific proof of an energy field. The existence of an energy field has been supposed for thousands of years by many cultures, including the Hindus and the Chinese, both of whom have developed highly successful healing systems based on that belief. It is very interesting and provocative that the changes in the aura which the

Kirlians have photographed and clairvoyants have long seen correspond very closely with the theories of energy flow which the Chinese and the Hindus developed.

For example, according to Acupuncture theory, it is an irregularity in the energy flow which causes the disease, or a predisposition to catch an infectious disease. The Kirlians found that the photographs of their energy fields differed sharply before they became ill.²⁹ This, of course, does not prove that the irregularity in the field caused the illness, but it does prove that the irregularity was present before the illness was suspected and is somehow related to it. Likewise, the Kirlians observed that their energy fields changed when they were under emotional strain, as when an important guest came to observe their findings. This supports the acupuncture theory that emotions and thought affect the energy field and consequently the health of the person.

Perhaps the most interesting correlation between the findings of Kirlian photography and acupuncture theory is that the Kirlians' photographs show "flares of brilliant light" at the points where acupuncturists insert their needles. Here is some concrete indication that the acupuncture points have some special significance in the energy field.

Much other research has been done in the area of the human energy field. Dr. Walter Kilner of London did a number of experiments on viewing human auras. Kilner did experiments in London hospitals for four years using a device of colored screens, using a chemical dicyanine, which gives a violet blue in alcohol solution.

Kilner described the aura much as Pierrakos does. He describes it as a slightly luminous mist, oval in form, with three distinct zones.³⁰

"The first was a dark edging, half a centimeter wide, surrounding the body, Outside this was the interior aura, dense and streaked perpendicularly to the body; this was from three to eight centimeters in width. Finally came the exterior aura, which had no definite contour."³¹

Kilner also found that the aura varied according to age, sex, mental ability, and health of the subject.

Edgar Cayce, a well-known psychic who specialized in doing readings for people's health, says this about auras: "I do not think of people except in connection with their auras; I see them change in my friends and loved ones as time goes by — sickness, dejection, love, fulfillment — these are all reflected in the aura."³²

One of the more recent investigations of the aura has been that done by a Britisher named Oscar Bagnall. He used a chemical called pinacyanol which he inserted into a glass trough: "By looking through this, the eyes soon become sensitized and eventually a thin inner and a wider outer aura can be seen." He thinks that the dye affects night-seeing nerves of the retina — called retinal rods — enabling one to see shorter wave lengths than one could see under normal conditions. The wave lengths that make up the aura emanations, he believes, are largely from the ultraviolet part of the light spectrum. It is Bagnall's opinion that "the pinacyanol, as it sensitizes the eyes, conveys the effect of wearing a convex lens. Thus, it opens up a section of the ultraviolet spectrum not usually available to human beings."³³

Western Approaches to Energy

In the last thirty years there has been much research in this country on conscious human energy. The approach to this study has been quite different from the study of energy in the East. This research has

been carried out by several psychiatrists who have examined the correlation between energy flow, muscular spasms, and emotions. Wilhelm Reich, the first known to have studied this correlation, found that when a person's energy flows freely she is in touch with her feelings, aware of physical and mental reactions. When the energy is bogged down, the person often experiences muscular spasms and is disassociated from her feelings, out of touch with her reactions to events, and distant from her Self.³⁴

An example of this is given by Elsworth Baker an associate of Reich's. He describes the case of a 48 year old patient of his who called one morning for an emergency appointment, complaining of acute abdominal pain, nausea, weakness:

"The skin was cold over his abdomen, the chest and legs were warm, pulse rapid and of fair volume. There was rigidity and tenderness over the upper abdomen; he had not contracted anywhere else. I gently massaged the upper abdomen and produced gradual relaxation. The abdomen became warm, the pain ceased, and he felt much better. His awareness of the true nature of the condition became clear. This state lasted for a few minutes, then suddenly abdominal cramps again overtook him. His whole body became cold, his pulse weak and rapid, and his face ashen. His eyes were sunken and his voice weak; he became pleading and anxious and complained that he was very ill. I agreed. . . . I again gently massaged his abdomen, and worked vigorously on his thighs which had now become spastic, and reassured him. I had him gag two or three times and then he grew suddenly sad; tears came to his eyes and I encouraged him to turn over, sob, and give free vent to his feelings. At the same time I released the spasm in his dorsal muscles. He burst into pitiful sobbing, called his mother — who had died when he was ten years old."³⁵

In this case, before the session the man had not been aware of the emotional origin of his abdominal pain. He had a severe block there which numbed his perceptions physically and emotionally. As the block

broke, the withheld energy flooded his body, releasing with it the sadness over the loss of his mother.

The findings of Reich and two of his followers, Alexander Lowen and John Pierrakos, relate directly to this study of intimacy. They make a direct correlation between the degree to which energy flows freely in the body and the contact a person has with her Self. For example, in the anecdote related above, when the man released his abdominal block, he connected with repressed feelings of sadness, and in essence knew better who he was. It is this contact with the Self which opens the gates to intimacy. The man with the abdominal block had to know who he was, what he was feeling, in other words, contact his Self, before he could share that with someone else.

Emotions flow with bioenergy. To allow the bioenergy to flow freely is to allow a flow of feeling to travel through the whole person. This means a person will be aware of physical sensations as well as emotional reactions. In other words, a person is not censoring any material which emerges from the Self. The truth, on a physical, emotional or spiritual level, will be allowed to flow through the person. It is through truth that people establish communion.

The study of the relationship between emotional problems, physical constrictions and energy flow was begun by Wilhelm Reich, a psychiatrist who had worked closely with Freud. The theory and practice which he developed is called orgonometry or Reichian therapy.

He stated that orgone is primarily sexual in nature.³⁶ He said that individuals will seek a balance of this energy because either too much or too little will be experienced as uncomfortable. They will

establish an equilibrium by moderating energy intake or charge, with the amount they can discharge. The greatest release of this energy is through a complete sexual orgasm, though other releases of orgone come from menstruation and childbirth. He found that when people are blocked sexually, and do not have a full orgasmic discharge, they establish equilibrium by reducing their intake of orgone.³⁷ This is done by tightening groups of muscles and thereby preventing energy charge from building up. An equilibrium is established by unconsciously reducing the energy charge to that which the person is capable of discharging.

Reich found that this method of maintaining an equilibrium is effective, but obviously terribly limiting. People cut themselves off from their greatest ranges of creativity and pleasure and only live with half their abilities. He found that he could not treat their psychological problems without working with their muscular blocks and the disturbance in their energy flow. Reich studied the nature of muscular block and the consequential restriction in energy flow. He found that different emotions are blocked in different areas of the body. He also found that some of the character types described in traditional psychiatry have energy blocks and muscular spasms in similar patterns. This is quite natural since people of the same character type have similar problems and tend to repress similar emotions.

The configuration of muscular and energetic blocks a person has Reich called her character armoring.³⁸ Armoring is an important factor affecting a person's ability to contact her Self and to make contact with others. I will discuss this in some detail.

Muscular tensions develop in childhood and correspond to psychological traumas. Many children pick up messages from their parents that they should not be sexual — must not masturbate or be aroused by the parent of the opposite sex. Sometimes these messages are relayed directly and sometimes the child senses a subtle disapproval from the parents. The child, seeking to avoid parental disapproval, will restrict the energy flowing into her pelvis. This is done by retracting the pelvis and pinching the buttocks. Because the prohibition against sexual feelings tends to be a constant factor in a household and not a one-time occurrence, the child adopts an attitude where this unnatural pelvic tension becomes the norm. She soon is unaware of the tension; it would seem unnatural for her pelvis to swing freely and the buttocks to be open and loose. It would certainly be frightening to allow the energy to flow into the pelvis because she still unconsciously fears parental anger. We can now say that the pelvis is armored. It is rigid, lacking in vitality and good skin tone.

Other authorities have also reported on this. Ron Kurtz and Hector Prestere, M.D., in their book, The Body Reveals, say:

"Blocks impede not just chemical or mechanical energy, but that special life force which gives the others meaning. Beliefs, perceptions, and needs are the true energizers of human action. This kind of energy, this constant flow of feeling and purpose, is disrupted by blocks."

An armored area of the body holds back a vast array of sensations. Sexual feelings, fears, desires and anger are only a few. Memories are barricaded from awareness by muscle blocks, as are thoughts and ideas. Anything which would make one feel vulnerable, any part of one's Self which has received criticism or judgment, or which is threatening to the

ego-mask can be blocked from awareness by the muscular armoring. This will include perceptions and insights as well as memories and feelings. While receiving massage or while doing bioenergetic work, memories of past events may become much sharper, feelings clearer. People often spontaneously remember childhood events which relate to the area of the body being worked on, or recall whole scenes including their feelings and reactions which have no apparent relation to their body, but seem to have been released in the process of their relaxing and reducing their defenses.

An example of this is one of my massage clients, Nick, who had intense muscular contractions along the outside of his thighs. He responded well to massage, easily giving up his tension and allowing energy to flow more freely.

After I had worked with him several times I very deeply massaged his thigh muscles. Soon I noticed his shoulders tighten and a look of terror pass over his face. I asked him what was happening and he said he was vividly reliving a battle he was in during World War II, seeing mortars explode and men shouting.

Since I had already triggered as much material as I felt he could integrate, I stopped the work on his legs, and while doing a soothing massage to relieve his anxiety I encouraged him to talk about the experience and release its emotional charge.

I do not know why this experience was stored in his thighs. Perhaps it could have been released by deep work on any part of his body. It is also possible that he somehow connected the experience to his thighs

through some experience he had with his legs at the same time. In any event his armor, which was particularly strong in his legs, seemed to insulate him from the experience until such time that he felt safe enough to let go of that pain.

Ken Dychtwald says:

Body armor, the physical counterpart of character armor, serves the function of encasing the person in his own protective muscular shell. This shell not only kept out harmful or painful stimuli, but also served to limit the experience of fearful and painful emotions from within. The more armor there was, the less were the feelings able to flow through the bodymind, and the important corollary was that healthy sexual functioning lessened also.³⁹

Other areas of the body can become armored. If expression of angry feelings are prohibited a child will develop tension in her shoulders and across her back. This holding pattern indicates the restriction of the impulse to hit. Chronic tension in the jaw would result from a prohibition on verbally expressing anger or crying. The tight jaw muscles hold back the impulse to shout or cry; they literally prevent prohibited words from escaping. If someone deeply massages the tissue around the jaw, the feelings which have long been locked into that area may be released. A person may dissolve into tears, or find a scream of intense rage or fear well up inside and emerge quite spontaneously. Such a block can break without physical manipulation of the tissue; sometimes just breathing deeply and rhythmically can open up a dead area. Alexander Lowen describes his first session of therapy with Reich as containing such an incident.

I lay back again and resumed breathing, this time with my chest moving outward on inspiration and inward on expiration. Nothing happened. My breathing proceeded easily and deeply. After a while Reich said, "Lowen, drop your head back and open your eyes wide." I did as I was told and . . . a scream burst from my throat.⁴⁰

It was not until after a couple of years of therapy that he understood what he had screamed about, what repressed memory had been provoked.

A block is a manifestation of the fear to express truth. It is the body's way of lying. The body is actually saying, "No! I won't let this sensation pass through! I don't like it, so I will squelch it before it reaches conscious awareness." Pierrakos says:

The suffering person elects to deny the natural primal emotions, no longer because these spill out spontaneously as in childhood and bring punishment, but because he or she fears that they will. At bottom, every form of blockage expresses terror of even perceiving emotion, which, as Reich saw so clearly, is simply the flow of body energy.⁴¹

Lowen and Pierrakos studied under Reich and went on to create Bioenergetics, an offshoot of Reichian therapy. They more finely tuned the interpretation of body messages. They found that armoring comes in configurations which are repeated over and over in the population, and from these configurations they delineated five basic character types, which are somewhat different from those with which Reich worked. While each person is individual and unlike any other, there are similarities that are so striking that it is useful to study the commonalities which appear. They found that people with similar bodies tend to have similar relationships with their parents as children and to have similar problems not only in energy flow but also in life — relating to members of the opposite sex, to working and developing themselves. They avoid closeness with other people in similar ways and use similar defenses to hold themselves back.

The practice of bioenergetic or Reichian therapy begins with an evaluation of "vocal tones, body postures and gestures, skin texture and resilience, hair quality, eye luster, and other evidence (which) reveal the location of blocks, their intensity, their interrelationships, something of their overall configuration — the type of character structure."⁴² The therapist will then attempt to mobilize the energy locked in the musculature. The Reichian therapist will do this primarily with breathing and physical manipulations of the frozen tissue. The bioenergetic therapist will also ask the client to make voluntary movements, such as hitting, kicking or reaching, designed to "stimulate involuntary movements and dissolve the energy blocks."⁴³

The breathing, movement and manipulation of frozen tissue will increase the energy flow and thus allow the flow of true feelings to resume. One is thereby reconnected with the Self. By penetrating the pain and negativity within the Self one can reach the peace and refreshment of the Core.

Summary

There has been a broad range of study of energy, ranging from psychiatrists to yogis. There have been different findings — different ideas about how it flows and what a malfunction in its flow will do. There is much information about energy which seems to be broadly accepted. All sources I have cited believe that energy pervades the entire universe, composing animate as well as inanimate objects. Energy is broadly regarded as an immaterial substance which is the carrier of consciousness, a spark of life which brings vitality with its flow.

There are different views of the manner in which energy circulates. Bioenergetic and Reichian therapies see energy as flowing with the blood and being blocked by muscle tensions which restrict the blood flow and hold back feelings. Acupuncturists see the ch'i as a universal life energy, a substance endowed with consciousness which travels in meridians. Blocks in its flow will cause imbalances leading to mental distress and disease. The Hindus see the universe as filled with energy or prana, which can be taken in through the breath and will travel through the nervous system, particularly the spinal column. The prana is endowed with consciousness and an increase in prana will raise a person's consciousness and bring her closer to God. My personal opinion is that energy travels in all these channels, through the blood, the nervous system, and the meridians. Since energy is so pervasive, forming the very structure of every atom, it probably travels from cell to cell in millions of yet-unknown patterns.

Human beings can alter the amount of energy flowing in and around them depending on how much and how deeply they breathe, their emotional state, their mental attitudes and muscular contractions. A low energetic charge will in turn have drastic repercussions on the whole bodymind, predisposing a person to disease, depression and alienation from her Self, other people and the source of life. Numerous approaches, some ancient, some modern, have developed which seek to balance the person's energy and encourage the restoration of its free flow.

We see that physical and emotional energy are inseparable. When a person is emotionally upset her aura will change, becoming less bright and sharp. The change in the aura caused by emotional upset is very

similar to the changes the aura undergoes when a person becomes sick.⁴⁴ Acupuncture is being used now in conjunction with psychotherapy to help mental depression and anxiety. Reichian and bioenergetic therapists have found that by physically charging up energy through breath and movement, they can elicit an emotional discharge. Just as the integration of blocked energy results in an integration of suppressed feelings, the release of suppressed feelings will result in the integration and building of the energy flow.

Taking this one step further, we find that the emotional rapport, which is the foundation of communion, is related to energy flow. The amount of energy a person has flowing will be a reflection of her emotional harmony, since harmony indicates an absence of or reduction in armoring. Harmony is contact with one's Self and integration of Core feelings. Core contact will result in greater flow of energy. Contact with one's Core happens in the whole body, not only in the mind. It is a physiological phenomenon as much as an emotional and spiritual one. Likewise, communion, which is two people sharing Core energy, develops not only in two people's minds but in their whole being — body, mind and spirit.

Just how is communion experienced in the whole being? How is the true essence of a person revealed beyond verbal expression? In what way does energy flow, related as it is to emotional integration, affect the development of communion? These are some of the questions I will address in the next chapter. I will explore some of the ways in which the body is an active communicator, how true feelings find expression in

the body in spite of the mind's attempts to suppress them. I will explore a few of the many unconscious means of expression. These include the way we hold our bodies, including minute unconscious gestures, subliminal facial expressions and eye contact.

The atmosphere of trust, which is essential for communion to emerge, is developed largely by thousands of these nonverbal messages, most of which are sent and received unconsciously. Nonverbal messages have a great importance in the state of communion. Some nonverbal messages will affect the amount of energy exchanged between people, and others are important because they indicate a person's true feelings. By sensing a person's nonverbal, even subliminal, messages, we know whether her words match the sentiments her body is expressing and we then know how much to trust her, how much of our vulnerability it is safe to expose. It is also important to study these nonverbal cues, because they are an important bridge between verbal communication and the even more subtle communication afforded by the direct exchange of conscious energy.

V. NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION — MESSAGES FROM THE SELF

The significance of nonverbal messages lies in the high amount of truth communicated through them in spite of our defenses and masks. Most nonverbal messages are beyond conscious control, and many are so subtle that they can only be seen by watching a film in slow motion. These subliminal communiqués affect us unconsciously. Nonverbal messages, because they cannot be controlled, convey uncensored feelings and attitudes. This means that truth is being communicated in spite of our attempt to hide it.

Establishing communion begins with a delicate dance of finding the other person's truth. In communion a communication network is established that bridges the isolation of each person. By communicating nonverbally people often share truth which is deeper and more subtle than that which verbal expression allows. The minute sparks of truth, which form the bulk of nonverbal communication, both help to unravel the truth about another person and build a bond through common understanding. Nonverbal messages are clues that the receiver must put together to form a picture of the person which contains the life, the essence of the other.

How does one communicate oneself? Gestures, expressions, movements, words and intonations are simply little puzzle pieces or messages sent to the surface with the hope that the receiver will be able, from the tangible symbols, to recreate in his awareness the intangible being that exists behind his communications. Word, gestures, etc. are only the media with which the being tries to express himself — the receiver attempts to experience the whole which is greater than the parts.¹

It is important for us to examine briefly some of the ways we communicate nonverbally. By doing so we will develop a stronger understanding of the role the body has in developing communion. Communion

begins with a testing period, an intense series of nonverbal questions and answers designed to determine whether or not a person can be trusted. In this chapter we will examine some of the ways we consciously and unconsciously "read between the lines" in order to determine whether we are safe in disclosing our Self to this person. As a state of communion develops, these messages are important ways of exchanging sentiments, visions, reactions and assurance. They are the foundation to an even more subtle communication through body energy.

Posture

Posture is the easiest message for a person to pick up. There are certain postures which indicate an openness to another person. Albert Sheflen has studied films of courtship and found repeated postures and gestures with people who are sexually attracted to each other. Some of these include facing each other squarely, and leaning toward each other. People courting each other often extend an arm or leg as if to block off outsiders. If they are talking with other people they will often leave the upper half of their bodies open to view while forming a closed circle with their legs, crossing their legs toward each other with the toes nearly touching. They tend to preen themselves a lot and assume provocative positions. Many of these postures are assumed by people who are not really courting each other, but wish to assume a deeper level of intimacy.²

Other more obvious postures include leaning forward with back slightly rounded when you like someone. Conversely, to signal distance or dislike, a person often leans way back. There are many thorough

studies of postures and their impact and meaning. Many people are aware of the messages conveyed by posture, but most people are not aware of their effect on their energy field.

Many people unconsciously read postures, noting the other person's openness towards us, and his general attitude. I believe these postures are more than a testing ground for more open relating; they may significantly affect the amount of energy flow between two people. For instance, when two people are feeling open towards each other, they face each other directly with arms and legs uncrossed. This unguarded posture will tend to build a common energy field. Their bodies form an almost complete circle, causing the energy flowing out from their arms and legs to arch across the gap between them and flow into the other person. Because the arms and legs are uncrossed the heart and pelvis are less guarded and more energy can pass from these centers into the other person's body. This can be experienced by sitting with someone, first turned slightly at angles to each other with arms and legs crossed and chest slightly collapsed. Then turn directly toward each other, with arms and legs unfolded and chest open. Now compare the level of communication you were able to establish. Most people experience far more contact in the second posture. By opening up one's body, one is allowing more channels of communication.

Subliminal Communication

Kinesics is a science devoted to the study of body motion in relation to speech and communication. It was developed by Ray Birdwhistell in the 1940's. He photographs people interacting and then views the film

frame by frame, noting the minute gestures which each person makes, observing patterns which are repeated, and how they are affected by the other people's minute gestures. He discovered that there is an extremely subtle communication between people based on these high-speed gestures.³

For instance, in a film of two psychiatrists interviewing a mother and daughter, Birdwhistell noted that every time the girl began courting movements towards one of the psychiatrists, the mother would wipe her nose and the girl would withdraw again. That psychiatrist would normally fiddle with his pipe right before turning his attention to the girl, and the mother began her nose-wipe gesture than, in anticipation of the girl's courting behavior. Soon the other psychiatrist subconsciously learned the nose-wipe trick and used it when the girl began her courting behavior with his colleague. Birdwhistell believed that none of the participants were aware of this level of their interaction, which clearly had a strong impact on the session.⁴

After years of studying such films, Birdwhistell concluded that the foundation of human communication is carried out on a subconscious level where words are only indirectly relevant. He estimated that only about 25% of the messages conveyed in a conversation come from the words spoken. The rest comes from the thousands of motions a person makes with his or her body. He says:

Years ago, I started with the question: how do body motions flesh out words? Now I ask instead: when is it appropriate to use words? They're very appropriate to teach or to talk on the telephone, but you and I are communicating on several levels right now and on only one or two of them have words any relevance whatsoever. These days I put it another way: Man is a multisensorial being. Occasionally, he verbalizes.⁵

Although all kinesiologists do not agree, he found that there are no universal gestures or movements which have the same meaning cross-culturally. The nonverbal messages must be understood in their context. While all people smile, the smile means different things in different cultures.⁶ It also would be a mistake to assume that a nose wipe is an indication of disapproval in all cases because one mother used the signal that way.

There is other evidence of subliminal communication. Ernest Haggard and Kenneth Isaacs have reported that while studying films of psychotherapy groups in slow motion they have noticed some facial expressions which come and go within a split second.⁷ They say that the expression is invisible when run at normal speed. These high-speed expressions seemed to show up when the person was in conflict — feeling both longing and anger, for instance. These expressions were often quite different from the expressions which came before or after. It was as if they are little snaps of truth, split seconds where people express the feelings which they believe they should not show or even should not feel. It is a valuable question whether or not these microexpressions have a role in communication. Since they are invisible to the average person in their normal speed, how could they affect us? There has been much research on how we may see more than we think we see. In the 1950's there was an uproar about the use of subliminal messages at movie houses to get people to buy Coke and popcorn. The words "eat popcorn, drink Coke" were projected on the screen for a split second. An American market researcher claims this increased sales.⁸

Paul Ekman, a psychologist, designed an experiment to test our ability to read these subliminal expressions. He flashed expressions at high speed onto a screen with a tachistoscope. His subjects said they saw nothing, just a blank screen. He says:

"We have all the perceptual apparatus to decode faces at one one-hundredth of a second, which raises a very interesting question: why don't we use it? I think we teach people systematically in childhood not to pay attention to these brief facial behaviors, because they reveal too much.

Perhaps we do use these messages in our evaluation of an interaction. Ekman says we see the expression subconsciously and can usually recall subtle gestures that we make which Birdwhistell has found so significant. These cues may be used unconsciously to determine the level of revealingness that we are willing to enter into with a person. These, plus still more subtle nonverbal messages, are the material we use to determine whether we can trust a person. If someone is saying how much he likes us and how he wants to get to know us, we are not going to believe him if subliminally we see a look of anger pass over his face. We may not be aware of why we distrust a person, there may just be a nagging doubt, but that will probably be enough to prevent us from opening up too much with this person.

Another interesting finding of Ekman in his studies with a tachistoscope of people's abilities to read subliminal facial expressions is that about half the people consistently missed one emotion. Differently subjects have different blind spots -- all of them were more unpleasant emotions such as anger, disgust or fear. No one missed joy. He concluded

that there was an unconscious block present which varied in individuals according to mood. This could explain why we sometimes seem unable to sense certain emotions in others, not noticing the fear or anger which may seem obvious to other people.

Eye Contact

Eye contact is probably the most powerful way of communicating nonverbally. Eyes can express a thousand different feelings. The amount of eye contact a person will make is a significant communication. People who are sexually attracted tend to make more eye contact, and people who are uncomfortable or frightened of someone tend to make less. A person with higher status will tend to make more eye contact than the person with lower status. The quality of contact made with the eyes can tell a person even more than the amount of contact. Pupil size varies not only in relation to light but also according to a person's reaction to something he sees. Pupils dilate when people see something they like, and constrict when they see something they find abhorrent.

Eckhard Hess, a psychologist who had studied pupillometrics, says "Embryologically and anatomically, the eye is an extension of the brain. It is almost as though a portion of the brain were in plain sight for the psychologist to peer at." Alexander Lowen regards the eyes as "windows of the soul." He points out that windows can be open or shut, however. Eyes are often impenetrable, with a vacant or distant look. Lowen says:

"Vacant eyes give one the impression that 'no one is there.' This look is commonly seen in the eyes of schizoid persons.

Looking into such eyes one gets an impression of inner emptiness. Distant eyes indicate that the person is far away, off somewhere. We can bring him back by gaining his attention. His return coincides with the contact that is established between his eyes and our own, as he looks at you and his eyes become focused on you.¹⁵

I imagine that such distance is common in people who are afraid to establish contact, for whom closeness is frightening. They protect themselves from establishing a revealing relationship by shuttering their eyes.

Viewing eyes as the windows of the soul, one would expect to see the energy which vibrates in the Core to be visible in the eyes.

Lowen goes on to say.

"Eyes light up when a person is excited, and dull off when the inner excitement fades. Conceiving of eyes as windows...allows us to postulate that the light which shows in them is an inner glow emanating from the fires that burn in the body. We speak of burning eyes in the face of a zealot who is consumed by an inner fire. There are also laughing eyes, sparkling eyes, twinkling eyes, and I have seen stars in a person's eyes. Most common, however, one sees sadness and fear in people's eyes when the shutters are open.¹⁶

I have also seen eyes white with rage. I think the amount of expression in a person's eyes is directly related to the amount of energy flowing in his body. A common result of intense bioenergetic work is clearer
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vision.

Lawrence Uman in an unpublished master's thesis, The Effect of Emotions and Psychotherapeutic Relationships on Vision, describes the changes a woman's eyes underwent following bioenergetic work. The woman described her experience as follows:

"I was working with John Bellis [a bioenergetic therapist] on how angry I was at my father. Then the anger became very strong as I realized how much I had to hide all my

sexual side around my father. After many intense minutes of yelling, kicking, and thrusting my pelvis, I felt my body soften and my whole body turned on and felt sensual. I really enjoyed showing John [a surrogate Daddy] how turned on I could be. As this happened my vision cleared, the near sightedness was much less and everyone in the group told me how beautiful my eyes were, and there was a lot of energy coming out of them. I've had other periods of my vision clearing after doing intense work, but this was the strongest."¹⁸

We see from this description that the bioenergetic work in which she broke through sexual blocks affected her eyes in two ways: It sharpened her vision and intensified the expressiveness of her eyes.

It seems that greater energy flow into the eyes is something which is experienced both from the inside or out. The dull or glazed look in a person's eyes is an indication that the energy is sluggish or blocked. Poor eyesight is also often an indication of an energy block in the ocular region.¹⁹ The blocked energy in the eye, according to Lowen, is usually a result of fear.²⁰ In the case cited above, perhaps it was a fear of her sexual feelings for her father. The tension may be in the ocular muscles, but it will usually also be found in the neck, jaw, and occipital region of the head. The muscles on either side of the nose and the brow are also often tight.

When a person starts to express some of the primal negative emotions, the energy begins to move more freely. Expression of these emotions means that the blocks are at least temporarily loosening. Consequently, the eyes of a person who is extremely angry, terrorized, or sad tend to be alive. I have observed these feelings coming right

out the eyes. When a person has reached beneath the level of primal negative emotions to the Core, I have observed a glow which is quite distinct. It is different from the sparkle in the eyes of a person who is excited; instead there is a calm openness in the eyes which is often referred to in literature when describing a saint.

Eye contact is one of the strongest links two people can make. Not only is increased eye contact a gesture indicating willingness for greater revealingness, it is also one of the most significant means to reveal one's Core. Dull eyes will tell a person, even if he is only unconsciously aware of it that the other person is not willing or able to meet him, either to disclose or fully see. When two people are willing to allow the other person to look deep into their eyes, tremendous energy is exchanged through the eyes. Lowen says:

"Eye contact is one of the strongest and most intimate forms of contact between two people. It involves the communication of feeling on a deeper level than verbal communication because eye contact is a form of touching. For this reason it can be a very exciting contact. When, for example, the eyes of a man and a woman meet, the excitation can be so strong that it runs through the body to the pit of the belly and into the genitals. Such an experience is described as 'love at first sight.'" 21

There are also high-speed questions and answers exchanged via the eyes. The eyes are so mutable that the fine differences of expression can easily be detected. One person can ask with their eyes, "are you going to hurt me?" That can be understood by the other, and a reassurance sent in the form of greater amount of loving energy. Recognizing another person's fear can be reassuring, because he seems more human and less threatening. My experience of prolonged eye contact has been a revealing of a potpourri of emotions. Doubt, distrust, and disdain

mix with longing, fear and love. When revealingness is expressed through the eyes, the whole range of feelings of a persons will show, without censoring.

Energy Blocks

In recent years a new aspect of body-work has opened up. This is the methodical examination of a person's physical structure, called body analysis, to determine where energy blocks are and what emotional traumas relate to these blocks. A detailed history of a person can be determined by reading his body. His present emotional state and general attitudes can also be read from a person's body. To read the fine details a person must be trained in the language of body structure, but most people, at least unconsciously, will perceive obvious blocks in other people.

"It is easy to recognize a person by his walk, even at a distance. In doing so, we use the same cues that tell us of his life-style. A drooping head, slumped shoulders, a caved-in chest, and a slow, burdened gait reflected the feelings of weakness and defeat, while a head carried erect, shoulders straight and loose, a chest breathing fully and easily, and a light gait tell of energy and confident promise. Such physical patterns become fixed by time, effecting growth and body structure, and characterizing not just the moment, but the person. Rather than simply a present disappointment, the crushed posture of hopelessness could be pointing to a lifetime of endless frustration and bitter failure."²² [Prestera p.1]

Most people will notice, at least unconsciously, the general stance a person maintains and will use that to evaluate a person's openness, his in-touchness with his Self and his body, and his willingness to express and accept feelings. Naturally, the more blocks

a person has the less he will be in touch with his Self and also the less he will be able to respond to someone else.

Ron Kurtz and Hector Prestere in their book The Body Reveals give a general analysis of several people. These provide a good illustration of how a person projects his attitude through his posture and body structure. They describe one woman, Ellen, in the following way:

"Ellen's body shows compression. It is crushed down from the top, and drawn in at the waist. Her head is tucked down into her shoulders, which are held up tightly and drawn in toward the ears. Her buttocks seem drawn in and up. The head and the body are both large, and except for the chest cavity, give the impression of massiveness or heaviness. The legs, as seen in the side view, are locked at the knee, and her whole body seem braced against an expected blow, perhaps to her upper back or the top of her head. In the side view, Ellen's hands also show this expectation. Seen from the back, the tension in her shoulders immobilizes her arms while attempting to protect her head. The overall picture is one of holding in, with a fear of, yet a readiness for, an attack. We would expect Ellen to have difficulty expressing herself."²³

Psychotherapy in its highest form facilitates this process. Real therapy, or healing, comes to the client when he can establish communion with his therapist. The work of bioenergetics or neo-Reichian therapy involves assessing the blocks the client has in establishing intimacy with the therapist and working to release them. The counselor, of course, will also have to release his blocks to communion. Therapy, then, ultimately becomes a process of establishing communion between client and counselor.

Our perception of another person's energy blocks will affect us as we open to another person. We will not share our vulnerable feelings with someone who is closed off. Our level of revealingness will be determined by how sincerely responsive and caring we believe a person is, judging not by his words but by the composite picture his body message present. I agree with Professor Birdwhistell that most of the message we read nonverbally, we usually trust the nonverbal messages. Nonverbal processes between people are the foundations of communication. The words flesh out the communion which develops without words.

When two people are drawn towards each other and begin to feel trusting, they undergo many physical and emotional changes. Their bodies relax, thereby further releasing blocked energy; they become even more authentic with each other, revealing more and more of their Self. This further increases trust. A feeling of rapport develops between them as they each pick up more messages that the other is listening and capable of understanding the deeper layers of their being.

Conscious energy exchange is the deepest medium for this communication and facilitates the bonding which occurs in deep communion. In the next chapter, I will discuss how this happens.

VI. Energy and Communion

The conscious energy which flows within a person does not stay within her physical body, but emanates outside the body in the form of an aura which expands and contracts in accordance with a person's emotional state.¹ Stanley Keleman, the director of the Center for Energetic Studies in Berkeley, California refers to this movement of energy as vibrations, pulsations and steaming. The feelings which move with the vibrations are exchanged with other people. In his book Your Body Speaks its Mind, Keleman describes an exchange of feeling and vibration.

"I asked a woman I was working with to stand up and breathe in such a way as to prolong her exhalation without tightening her abdomen. After a bit, she felt afire; she was shaking and tingling. These vibrations, sensations, developed into rhythmical contradictions which then, to my eye, became a pulsatory series of elective explosions. She expressed these waves of feeling as tender movements and sounds. I felt in me a responding vibration of tenderness, and then, as her expression increased in assertiveness, I experienced the rhythmical intensifying of my tenderness and a softening, which became a stream of softness reaching across space, connecting this woman and me in a river of excitement and feeling."²

This is an example of the communion which is established through the exchange of energy and feelings. It is not an isolated phenomenon but similar experiences have repeatedly been reported in the literature.

Roberta Delong Miller, formerly the head of the massage department Eslon Institute, also reports an exchange for energy and feeling while doing massage. In her book, Psychic Massage, she says:

"As energy circulates between you and the person, you'll notice that Energy is given and received simultaneously. At first, perhaps, it will seem that you're receiving as you inhale and giving as you exhale. But as your own body opens more and more to the life-force, you'll find that your giving is continuous and that you receive the other's, unique vibration without interruption.

In the massage work she does she projects her energy out of her hands in order to soften and bring life to places in the client's body which appear blocked. To do this she focuses on her center, which she designates as the Solar plexus region, and expands this energy by breathing deeply and concentrating on mobilizing her center. Soon she feels energy moving throughout her body and she uses the energy moving through her finger tips to enliven others. She describes her experience with one of her clients.

"Daniel's body was quite rigid when he first layed down on the table. I massaged his chest but couldn't get any Energy flowing. I searched the shoulders and neck area: there was a gap in his spine where the fourth cervical vertebra should have been. So, after loosening his neck muscles generally, I held my palms under his head and reached with my index and middle fingers far into the neck to contact the buried vertebra. Two or three minutes went by, and finally a flow of energy* began. His neck lengthened; the vertebra moved into line; and then Daniel began to moan. The sound -- soft desperate, resigned -- came from deep within and was highly charged with energy. It seemed like the moaning went on forever, intense, charged, but never loud. His body began to tremble, while rushes of energy pushed upward through his head out through me: I was tingling all over. When the stream finally subsided, Daniel was much more relaxed and jubilant."

*She uses energy with a lower-case "e" to refer to a single vibration separated from the flow of Energy, and blocked within the body.

John Pierrakos has observed the energy fields of groups of people and has noticed the formation of a common energy in a synchronized group.

"During lectures, when the speaker and the audience are deeply receptive to each other, I have observed an extraordinary formation of new energy -- an umbrella shape that arches up at least 10 feet, streams into and out of the individuals, and pulsates more than 50 times a minute. The same phenomenon occurs in core-energetic training and therapy groups.³

Another way of viewing this is that people who are synchronized are in touch with their Cores. They have significantly reduced their defenses and are vibrating Core energy to each other.

The communion which results from an exchange of conscious energy is a state of healing. Roberta Miller and other healers work by contacting their Core energy and helping other people contact their own Core energy. Jesus is said to have been a great healer, and sometimes would heal simply by touching a sick person. I hypothesize that healing is allowing the connection to one's Core to be a channel for divine energy to flow through the healer into the sick person. The charge of Core energy thus received will re-establish the harmonious flow of the person's energy long understood by acupuncturists to be the source of healing.

Healing through the use of energy has been widely done.

There are numerous reports of psychics healing simply through touch. Perhaps psychic healers do not have supernormal powers, but are more able to contact their Core energy and use themselves as a channel. I am led to believe this is true because of the tremendously greater

power of healing "ordinary" people have when they are in touch with their Core energy. In Psychic Massage, Miller says that with a little practice, any one can develop the capability to heal through energy exchange.

Ambrose and Olga Worrall, well-known psychic healers in this country for forty years describe their sensation of energy passing when they do healings. Olga says "It feels to me like warm air coming out my hands...sometimes a person will say, 'I just feel something penetrating like an electric current, and it's hot, It's burning me.' ... If a person is not sensitive to the energy being transmitted he may not feel it, but I can feel it coming out my hands." [Mann, p. 183].

Edward Mann author of Orgone, Reich and Eros says, "Those regularly engaged in effective healing generally possess a surplus of natural vitality and radiate a quite self-confidence. They may be likened to reservoirs of unusual bio-energy."

There have been increasing numbers of studies of the nature of healing through touch. In the first part of this century, L. E. Eeman, a prominent member of the British Society of Dowzers, began investigations into healing through the use of life energies. His method, called cooperative healing, involved making a closed circuit by people either by having them hold conductors or touch each other directly. He obtained best results when the people joined opposite hands -- left to right -- or when the healer placed her hands on the opposite side of the ill person's body.

Eeman's results are similar to the findings of Dr. Randolph Stone, an American who developed Polarity Therapy. He also found that healing was best accomplished when the healer placed her right hand on the left side of the body and vice versa.⁸ He developed Polarity Therapy into a multidimensional program synthesizing many of the findings of Eastern medicine. The polarity massage is a series of physical manipulations at specific points of the body, similar to acupuncture. The idea is to restore the free flow of energy in a person's body through the use of the practitioner's own energy. He found that the right side of the body had a positive charge and the left has a negative charge. It is for this reason that it is most effective to work on opposite sides of the body; the opposite charges attract and increase the flow.

People who practice Polarity Therapy report feeling the energy passing through their hands and moving into the other person's body.⁹ The benefits are often astounding; not only does the client feel revived, the therapist often feels more refreshed after a treatment than before. Because a closed circuit is formed between the therapist and client the energy charge which goes into the client comes back and flows through the therapist.¹⁰ The energy flows back and forth, building up strength as the treatment progresses and eliminates blocks in both the therapist and the client. The client will receive the greatest benefit because the energy is directed at the blocks she may have.

I have reported these various approaches to healing because they all work through the exchange of bioenergy. Bioenergy is a real, studyable phenomena, which when exchanged between people has a healing effect upon their bodies and tends to expand each person's consciousness.

Tantra Yoga is a discipline which uses the exchange of bioenergy, not to heal the body, but to raise each persons consciousness. Tantra uses the sexual energy to bring both people into a state of meditation. Meditation is the process of quieting the mind in order to feel more strongly one's connection to the universal consciousness. This is synonymous with contacting one's Core, because the Core is the gate to the universal consciousness. By using the exchange of sexual energy Tantra dissolves the blocks in each person bringing them into Core contact and directing that contact toward merging with God. Bhagwan Rajneesh says, referring to Tantra, "If love cannot help you into
11
meditation nothing will help."

Instead of denying the sexual energy and attempting to suppress it as many other yogic disciplines do, Tantra utilizes the power of
12
the sexual embrace to increase self-awareness and raise consciousness. Before making physical contact the lovers meditate together and undergo certain rituals designed to build a spiritual bond between them. They develop a mood of respect for each other and the sexual union they are about to share. While continuing to meditate, the participants make genital contact. There is very little physical movement and both people bring their attention not to their individual feelings of

pleasure but to the energy which is streaming into their genitals and moving throughout their bodies. The energy moves up their spines and crosses and intermingles at each chakra. This is pure, conscious energy, the life-giving force which originates in our Cores and contains the essence of our most positive Self. The joining of male and female creates a whole, a unity of yin and yang.

The essence of Tantra is surrender.¹³ It is through this surrender, this giving up of control and allowing one's Self to merge with one's partner, that many changes take place. As the barriers dissolve, the partners become one. Their energy begins to flow as one.

"If a man and a woman are deeply relaxed with each other, simply melting into each other, absorbed into each other, not in a hurry, not in any tension, many things happen -- alchemical things happen -- because the life juices of both, the electricity of both, the bio-energy of both, meet. And just be this meeting...they invigorate each other, make each other vital -- more alive.¹⁴

The relaxation signifies a release of blocks and naturally leads to greater energy flow within each person and consequently between them. The surrender of Tantra is a meditation, it is attention to the loving flow of consciousness between two. This is the God-presence in each. I believe Tantra is the highest, most pure form of relationship that two people can enter into. They meet physically to fertilize each other's spiritual growth. Ken Dychtwald succinctly sums up maithuna, or the Tantra love-making experience.

"Both lovers are attempting to merge with their partner in such a way as to totally dissolve the material bonds

that separate them and make them distinct people. With this bonding comes an increased awareness of the Kundalini energy and of its ascending path along the spine. By activating this energy, the lovers are given an opportunity to use the Kundalini energy to evaluate their consciousness and turn the sexual focus into a truly 'enlightening' experience.¹¹

This in essence is communion. By giving up defenses each individual expands her Core energy, sends it out to her partner, and allows herself to be permeated by her partner's energy. Because the Core is the access point to a consciousness from which each individual sprang the expansion of Core energy will bring a person into close contact with that source. The exchange of Core energy is more than a sharing of individual truth, it is sharing the wisdom of the source.

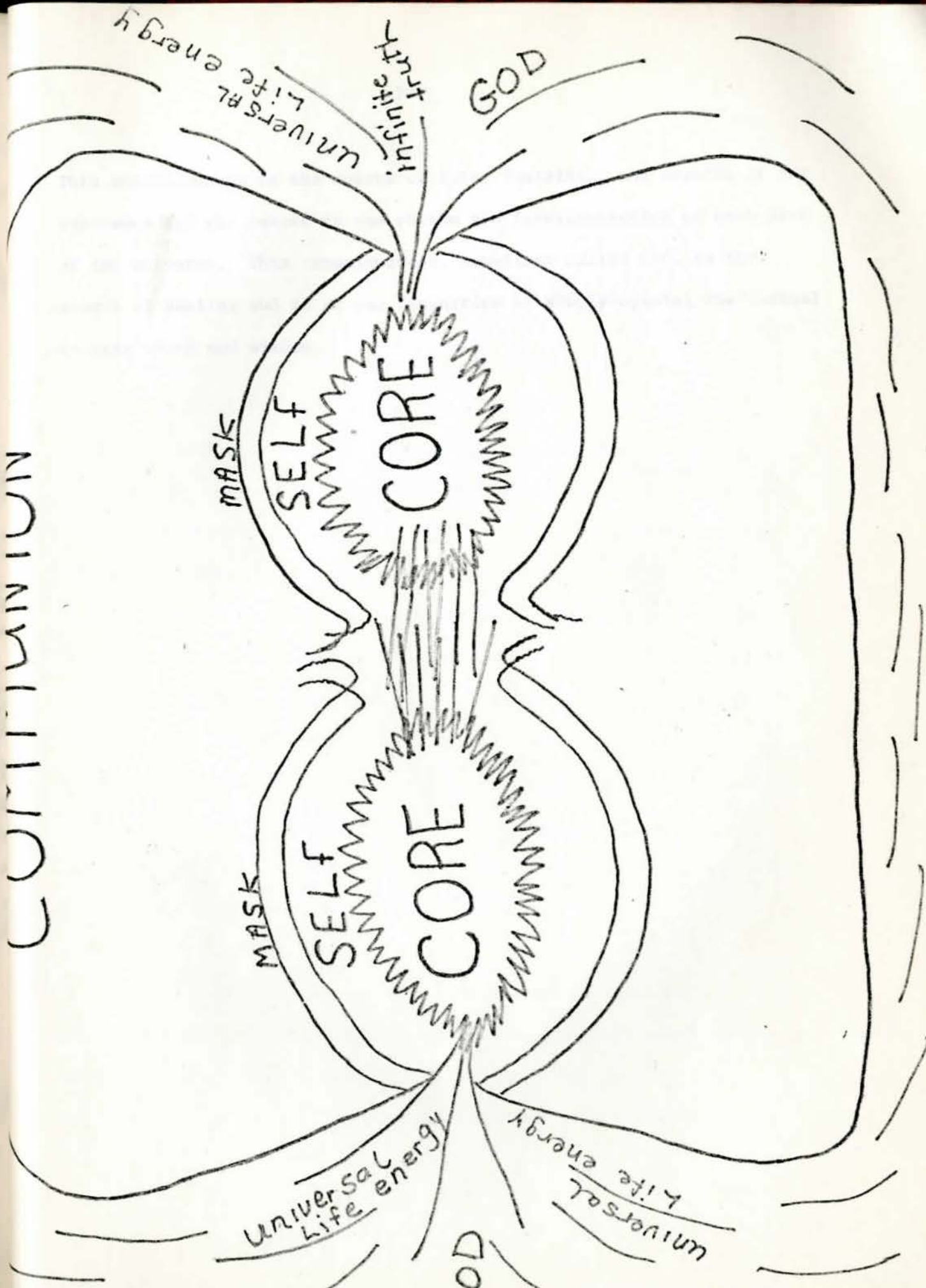
Communion is truth. It is truth in verbal expression and it is allowing the truth of body massages to come through uncensored. Communion is being willing to see the truth of another person, to look and sense and hear; to give up images and models and see something fresh and formerly unknown. As communion develops, more and more messages of truth pass between two people and each continues to accept the other, they feel safer and safer to allow more truth to flow. As this happens and builds, the energy blocks begin to soften and both people become more and more integrated in their energy. They feel connected to their heart as they talk, and perhaps connected between heart and genitals. They may feel warm love feelings moving from their heart and flowing through their body. As the integration in

their own body develops, energy shoots out to the other person. At first perhaps only for microseconds two people pour energy between their hearts. As their own energy becomes more integrated, they sustain this flow for longer and longer periods of time.

The ultimate communion with another person is when so much trust has developed that the two energy fields merge and pulsate as one. This happens when both people take the other into their Self, when they trust the other and listen to the other. When there is nothing to hide, when there are no illusions to protect, when there is no physical holding back, then two people merge with each other at an energetic level. Since the energy is conscious their knowledge about the other person's consciousness grows correspondingly. A bonding develops between them as they explore new territory together. If each person is at her frontier of openness, the experience of sharing at this level will take each beyond that border and the two will discover truth formerly unknown to each. Here is an example of the two being greater than the sum of the parts. As the energy surges between them, it will continually open more blocks (unless one or both become frightened and regards herself) and new levels of truth open up to both people.

A diagram of two people radiating Core energy towards each other, that I designed is on page 77. One can see that the barriers of the mask and the outer layers of the Self have been burned off and each person is able to allow her Core energy to radiate to the other. The gate leading from the Core to the source of consciousness, is open, giving each individual access to the vast oceanic wisdom upon which we float.

CORPUSCULUM



This consciousness is the source of life, containing the meaning of our existence and the secret to the rhythm and interconnection of each part of the universe. This consciousness, sometimes called God, is the source of healing and is at our fingertips by simply opening the channel to this truth and wisdom.

VII. Conclusion

I believe that the greatest meaning in life is found in continually coming closer to the essential truths of life, to knowing and living from one's Core, and from knowing the relationship between one's deepest Self and the universe. We gather a sense of wholeness when we remember that all people are souls, alive in bodies that have been created by a miracle of nature, that the universe itself is a miracle. By allowing the wonder of the infinite to live side by side with our pragmatic dealings with life we begin to integrate the two. It is this integration which leads us to our Core.

It is my thesis that the greatest meaning of life is found in knowing. Knowing or sensing from our depth the infinitude of the universe, the miracle of the creation of everything in the world, the rocks, water, plants, other people and ourselves. It is through knowing that we sense the harmony, the interrelationship of all things. By maintaining a diffuse awareness of our place in this wonderful, infinite miracle of nature while we deal rationally with worldly events and our day to day interactions with people, we can bring our Core, our source, into our daily lives.

It is my quest to understand the source of life and our place in the spectrum of nature which has drawn me into this study of the nature of deep meetings between people. Believing as I do that meeting is a function of each person's contact with her Core, intellectually,

emotionally and energetically, I see communion as one expression of contact with source energy. There are billions of ways to expand a contact with source energy, billions of ways to develop our knowledge of the universe and our understanding of source truths. Deep meetings with other people is one of these.

In this paper I have explored some of the necessary preconditions to deep meetings, or communion. Communion is a state of being between two people in ; which they explore new territory, a mutual consciousness, following the integration of their Core energy. To begin with, each person must be in touch with her own Core energy. This comes by breaking through the defenses of the mask and by experiencing the negative primal emotions which are part of the Self, and finally reaching the Core, which is the positive essence of a person. The defenses are maintained by muscular blocks which restrict the flow of conscious energy. Energy is the major conveyor of consciousness so emotional/muscular/energetic blocks restrict the exchange of consciousness, which is communion. When two people wish to express themselves deeply to each other, they test the receptivity of the other by evaluating the nonverbal messages which are constantly being exchanged. If the other seems receptive and caring, each will relax and express themselves with greater and greater authenticity. The relaxation causes more energy to flow, and as it does, it arches across to the other person. A common field of energy develops between two people who are in a deep state of communion. The common field allows them to enter a state of mutual consciousness in which they together explore the universal truths at a deeper level than either could explore independently.

The implications of this study of communion are quite far reaching. The principles I have established can be used to deepen relationships of all kinds. Most notably, the relationship between counselor and client can be affected positively. If the counselor seeks to exchange Core truth with a client and knows that the deepest truth will be exchanged energetically, not verbally, she can open the way for communion to emerge. This experience of communion is tremendously healing in and of itself.

Communion, ultimately, is a religious experience. A minister can help a parisher experience her Core, and through the experience of communion, make available to her an internal experience of her soul and God. Such an internal experience is infinitely more inspiring than intellectual knowledge of God.

As I have studied communion, I have applied and tested this knowledge on my friendships. I have found that just an awareness of some of the preconditions of communion has helped me establish deeper, more revealing and more satisfying relationship. My friendships have seemed to hold greater potential. I know that I want to share Core truth with my friends and the Core is limitless. By consistently looking to a friend's depth the relationship stays fresh, alive, constantly new and rewarding.

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