AHP Biennial Conference

Existential Humanism

Grof and the Holodeck of the Unconscious

Family Therapy

Reviews

IN THE SPIRIT OF LEADERSHIP

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The Human Dimension of Psychotherapy, July 18 – 20, 2008, Toronto, Canada

Rae Johnson, PhD, RSW, RSM, Chair, Somatic Psychology Program, Santa Barbara Graduate Institute; former Director, Body Psychotherapy Program, Naropa University   —  *The Embodied Psychotherapist: How We Teach Must Embody What We Teach*

David Lukoff, PhD, Co-President, Association for Transpersonal Psychology; APA fellow; faculty, Institute of Transpersonal Psychology  —  *Transpersonal Psychotherapy and the Integration of Spirituality*

Dan Merkur, PhD, Author, *Mystical Moments and Unitive Thinking, Unconscious Wisdom, Crucified With Christ*  —  *From Eros to Mystical Experience: The Scope of Psychic Integration in Psychoanalysis*

Linda Page, PhD, Chair, Alliance of Psychotherapy Training Institutions; President, Adler School of Professional Studies  —  *How Psychotherapy Develops: Ontario in an International Context*

Kirk Schneider, PhD, Vice President (and Past President), Existential–Humanistic Institute; Editor, *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*; Professor, Saybrook Graduate School  —  *Existential–Integrative Therapy: An Emerging Cross-Disciplinary Paradigm*

Registration: www.livinginstitute.org  416-515-0404

SUMMER REUNION: WORLD CONGRESS ON PSYCHOLOGY & SPIRITUALITY
August 10, 2008, 7-10 p.m., 6225 Doremus Avenue, Richmond, California, 94805
RSVP stuartcs@jps.net

Please bring your photographs, stories of India and afterward, and desires for a good time.

Share your miracles, connections, new projects, and memories of our time together in Delhi last January. Your nonattending friends are most welcome as we also unfold plans for future transpersonal conferences in California, Barcelona, Pondicherry, and Moscow in the coming year.

AHP-Endorsed Events

THE ESSENTIAL CONNECTION: Mindfulness, Brain, and Body in Psychotherapy. Keynotes by Richard Schwartz and Bessell van der Kolk

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Contact: extend@naropa.edu; http://www.hakomiinstitute.com

INTEGRAL THEORY IN ACTION: SERVING SELF, OTHER, AND KOSMOS
Presented by John F. Kennedy University and Integral Institute
August 7–10, 2008  •  Pleasant Hill, California
Contact: ITC@jfku.edu; Mark Forman at mforman30@usa.net
http://www.integraltheoryconference.org/page/page/5433778.htm

NONDUAL WISDOM AND PSYCHOTHERAPY
Sponsored by California Institute of Integral Studies, John F. Kennedy University, Association for Transpersonal Psychology, et al.
October 30–November 2, 2008  •  San Francisco  •  California Institute for Integral Studies
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The Emerging New Human Being, the Culture-in-the-Self, and AHP’s New Multidimensional Intercultural Initiative

The emerging New Human Being, which I mentioned in my last message, will need to explore and come to terms with a phenomenon, operating deeply, uniquely, and diversely at a core level of all human beings on the planet. I call this phenomenon the “culture-in-the-Self” (a term coined some years ago by cofounders of Interculture Inc., which included new AHP Board member Dina Comnenous, originally from Greece, is just the surface of this phenomenon, often appearing outwardly in the diverse “forms” of cultural scripts, beliefs, values, behaviors, and customs). I want to call attention to what goes on beneath surface culture(s), and how AHP intends to play a primary role in creating opportunities to explore and to address what goes on beneath surface culture(s). In exploring the culture-in-the-Self, individually and collectively, each person on the planet can more effectively traverse the evolutionary terrains as evolving Consciousness-Energy Beings.

Beneath surface culture(s) for each person on the planet is a world of inner energy vortexes, coalesced around internalized “cultural thought and emotional phenomena” that operate at a core level of Self, individually and collectively, to influence core worldviews and paradigms about who we are, what is possible or not, and how to view the Mind-Body-Spirit connection. Sometimes the culture-in-the-Self has an archetypal nature to it, energizing various ways of being on the planet. Depending on where a person resides on the planet, therefore, a person may diversely experience these cultural inner energy vortexes as “that’s just the way I am,” or “that’s just the way we do things,” or
“that’s just human nature,” or “that’s just the way things are.” Cultural inner energy vortexes fuel a great many of our individual and collective experiences for a variety of Spiritual Earth lessons on the planet. Some of these Earth lessons include lessons about Acceptance, Adaptation, Be-ing, Charity, Communication, Creation, Definition, Integrity, Love, Trust, Truth, and Grace (see Steve Rother’s *Spiritual Psychology*). Often these cultural inner energy vortexes or the culture-in-the-Self operate without much conscious awareness, while serving as unique lenses for how we create ourselves and those we consider to be “the Other.”

So, how are these *cultural inner energy vortexes* formed? Each person on the planet is born into a particular surface culture or cultures and uniquely internalizes the surface culture(s) in his or her own unique way. Surface culture(s), provided initially through interactions with significant others, is screened into the developing Mind as thoughts, ideas, beliefs, values, or sensations, which influence how we act, as the developing Consciousness focuses on the external world. Through Universal Energy Laws (Universal Energy Laws are discussed in my forthcoming book *Evolving the Race Game: A Spiritual and Soul-Centered Perspective*), particularly the law of attraction (Energy of any form magnetically attracts similar Energy, the intensity of emotions causing a more intense attraction in both speed and quantity), each person forms unique *cultural inner energy vortexes* by knowingly or unknowingly focusing on and creating “thoughts and emotions” about various aspects of one’s surface culture(s), resulting in similar Energies being magnetically attracted and screened into the Mind and internalized as cultural thoughts and emotions at a core level of the Self as one’s Consciousness about the external world develops. Once formed, these unique *cultural inner energy vortexes* become second nature to the person and may or may not be questioned.

Why is it important for the emerging and evolving New Human Being to examine the culture-in-the-Self? First, it is important to understand at a core level of the Self, not just intellectually, that all culture(s) have their own internal value and worth. This realization at a core level of the Self allows Consciousness to evolve without being threatened by what appears to be “the Other” and his or her unique and different perspective on the world. The inner experience, beyond the intellect, becomes
“Oh, how interesting that you were able to put the world together.” Secondly, however, it is also important to understand that cultural worldviews, paradigms, and scripts are not truths per se, and that they can be liberating, as well as limiting. Third, it is important to understand that each person can consciously examine the culture-in-the-Self, particularly those aspects that are Self-limiting, and that each person has free will to accept, reject, or modify the cultural-in-the-Self in accord with one’s unique life circumstances. This is how cultural transformation occurs, as each person is created by and in turn creates surface culture(s) at individual and collective levels. Culture is not a static phenomenon. The emerging New Human Being, therefore, will and must become aware of any Self-limiting aspects of the culture-in-the-Self and seek to open up and release those cultural inner energy vortexes that are Self-limiting. Such awareness and energy releases help to co-create the planetary cultural context for the emergence of a Truer Self in alignment with one’s Authentic Essence as Consciousness and Human Beings evolve. The Truer Self has the capacity to value and love all aspects of the culture-in-the-Self, to understand and appreciate the culture-in-the-Other, and to transform Self-limiting aspects of the culture-in-the-Self, if one chooses to do so.

How will AHP provide service to those emerging and evolving New Human Beings who wish to explore the culture-in-the-Self? It is AHP’s intention to launch a new Intercultural Certification Initiative. Our hope, desire, and intent is to launch this Multidimensional Cultural Initiative as a series of workshops/seminars (CEC credits available and perhaps credit toward higher education certification), each to be designed to explore the culture(s)-in-the-Self and centered on a particular theme. The theme of the first workshop will be “Culture(s)-in-the-Self: What We Share in Common.” The theme of the second workshop will be “Culture(s)-in-the-Self and Culture(s)-in-the-Other: What Separates Us.” And the theme of the third workshop will be “Culture(s)-in-the-Self and “Culture(s)-in-the-Other:
How We Come Together.” The current thinking is to pilot the first thematic workshop/seminar in Cancun during the January 2009 Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday weekend.

Increased synchronicity experiences, enhanced awareness, vibrational connectedness through logic and intuitive guidance, and Soul-linking are aspects of the experience for the emerging New Human Being. In this context, I think that the time and place for AHP’s new Multidimensional Intercultural Initiative are appropriate, as there may be a number of synchronistic events, fueled by what I have called in other writings the Transformational Archetypal Energies Love, Acceptance, Harmony, and Inclusion, unfolding on many fronts during this period, if the Energy continues to flow in its current direction as of the writing of this Message. So please mark your calendars, and plan to join Dina, the rest of the AHP Board, and me in launching this most exciting new AHP Initiative. Join us in January 2009 in Cancun as we play and explore the culture-in-the-Self in a safe, nurturing, and beautiful environment with kindred spirits on the edge. Stay tuned for specific details in the near future.

—CUF FERGUSON
LETTER OF APPRECIATION

Dear Katherine,

Everytime I see the AHP Perspective, I feel pleased that I had a hand in developing AHP. I’m always pleased to learn of all that you people are doing, which is so congruent with what we were trying to develop in those days. And your newsletter is always a joy to read, and the December January issue, which I just read, seems even better than most. I’m also pleased by the developing rapprochement between AHP and ATP, and hoping it can lead to a merger.

Thanks for all you’re doing.

— John Levy
[former Executive Director of AHP]

DEAR SWAMI

by Swami Beyondananda

“Where Swami answers your questions, and you will question his answers.”

Dear Swami:

I’ve just seen the movie Sicko, and it was excellent. Now I’m mad as hell at the drug companies and the HMOs. When are they going to focus on prevention and lowering medical costs?

— Jacques Kitsch
New York, New York

Dear Jacques:

I agree with you about the movie, and, in fact I wrote an 8-word review for Variety magazine: “Sicko is Socko, ‘Cause Health Care is Suck-o.” And the film is obviously already having an impact because the drug companies and the HMOs have combined forces in a massive billboard campaign to promote wellness: “Don’t get sick. You can’t afford it.”
Dear Swami:

It’s amusing for me to see so many people worrying about the state of the world and trying to figure out what to do about it. For those of us who are already saved, we know where this world is going -- straight to hell! Meanwhile, the righteous will be lifted up and taken from this Godforsaken planet to dwell in the House of the Lord forever. So stop wasting your time and energy and know there is only One Way. The signs are everywhere!

— Benton R. McGedde  
Lynchburg, Virginia

Dear Benton:

Congratulations on buying a condo in the afterlife! I own some of that unreal estate myself. Being a swami who believes in reincarnation, I didn’t even have to pay cash. I just put it on my Ascended Mastercard and billed it to a future lifetime. So maybe I’ll run into you at the Ascended Masters Golf Tournament one of these epochs.

Re your recent spiritual transaction, I hope you read the fine print. While our Father’s Mansion has many rooms, apparently before they let you actually occupy one, they rightly want to make sure you’re not going to trash it. And apparently, they check the record on how we’ve treated the planetary home we now occupy as an indicator of what kind of tenants we’re likely to be in the afterlife.

And here’s more bad news. Remember back in elementary school when the entire class had to stay after school just because of a few troublemakers? Well, apparently our entire species is on the verge of flunking third dimension, and that would be sad indeed. We’ve been on this physical plane for millennia and you’d think by now we’d have learned how to fly it. I mean, come on. Where’s our species pride?

As for the “signs” you’ve been seeing, if your “one way” is anything other than the one way of love, I say “do not enter.” You are obviously going the wrong way.

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The Third Biennial National AHP Conference at California State University Northridge, on June 6, 7, 8, was truthfully and trustingly a grand success. State Senator John Vasconcellos, former AHP President, gave an illuminating talk as the plenary speaker. His own national enterprise, *The Politics of Trust*, fit hand-in-glove with our theme.

Dr. Jordan Charnofsky gave an inspired forty-five minute guitar concert following Vasconcellos, which included several of his own compositions.

On Saturday, the 7th, Roger Moss, popular professor of psychology at CSUN stirred the audience with his iconoclastic approach to healing the planet and our hearts.

He was followed by a discussion between renowned psychiatrist Dr. William Glasser, and the former 30-year editor of the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, AHP’s own Tom Greening. Their topic was *Choice Theory/Humanistic-Existential: Are They Compatible?*

Twenty other remarkable two-hour workshops were presented by folks from all over the country, as well as two five-hour Institutes, one on Jungian Sandplay, the other on Expressive Arts Therapy, using Natalie Rogers’ person-centered approach.

And the Conference finale was an amazing five-hour affirmation by the sparkling Donna Eden and her husband David Feinstein on Energy Medicine, the perfect climax to a stirring, three-day experience. Thanks to all!

— Stan Charnofsky, AHP and CSUN
This conference was my second time presenting at the National Conference at Northridge, and my first AHP board meeting. This is a great group of people with vision and momentum for the new paradigm! The plenary speaker, The Honorable John Vasconcellos—California State Senator—had a very moving message for us regarding our political state of affairs, as did the keynote speaker Dr. Roger Moss. The panel discussion between Dr. William Glasser and Dr. Tom Greening was also noteworthy. The individual sessions were enjoyed by all; we had a great time meeting new friends and reconnecting with old ones. Hope to see all of you at the next conference—Kindred Spirits on the Edge.

— MARY BELL, AHP NEW BOARD MEMBER
AHP Conference Review

All Photographs by Kenneth Ehrlich

Time for reflection. AHP Board Member Ray Siderius

Don Mihaloew teaching

AHP Treasurer MA Bjarkman (center)

Stan Charnofsky and students

Attendees of all ages
AHP Conference Review

All Photographs by Kenneth Ehrlich

Paul Von Ward’s seminar

ATP Board Member Shani Robbins presenting

Donna Eden (left) on her way

See you next time . . .
Stan Grof and the Journey into the Holodeck of the Unconscious

When Anthony Su-tich and Abraham Maslow began Transpersonal Psychology, it was already becoming clear that in the future the potential for it would be unlocked. The pioneering discoveries of Stanislav Grof would cause a revolutionary change in the field of consciousness by moving toward a new holographic future, with the discoveries of LSD and optional aids for experimental trips into transpersonal dimensions. This future would be a decisive turning point for the holographic witness, the explorer, and the traveler of the unexplored territories of the psyche.

Freud provided the first definition of metapsychology in 1896. This psychology went behind the conscious sphere by dealing with states of consciousness. Since then, other connotations of metapsychology have been added, but looking at history from Freud to Jung, we can see that Stanislav Grof is the one who preserves this technique; he is one of the latest pioneers along the path of this discipline.

The Journey Toward the Unconscious

Grof's back door (as defined by Ken Wilber) is a door that opens onto the phytele corridor of human hope. The collective unconscious is the archetypal substratum that Jung theorised as a door hidden behind the inexpressible, from which, beneath the layers of human experience, pulsates mysterious, magical, and in Jung’s words “numinous” qualities.

Stanislav Grof, like his predecessors and Jung, heads for this archetypal corridor whose various rooms, to use an image from the TV series Star Trek: The Next Generation, are holodecks or three-dimensional holographic fields. They are parallel realities of holograms in the psychic corridor which are evoked as holographic simulations of the exact desired reality. Holodecks are probabilities of the many doors in the corridor; they are no more than “holographic simulations.”

Grof’s BPM perinatal matrices, like holodecks, are very similar, because, coming from the great cosmic womb of undifferentiated, amniotic, foetal experience, the various matrices become claustrophobic places where the foetus is overlain with BPM II and BPM III (Basic Perinatal Matrices). This experience is an infernal dead-end matrix. The matrices as theorised by Stan Grof culminate in transcendence or damnation.

In BPM IV, the final matrix, the afflicted foetus ends where death is reborn and turns from the hellish experience of a manic, borderline neurotic state into spiritual ecstasies where the life-death interface unhooks itself from its internal BPM state and moves to the three-dimensional holodeck. By unhooking oneself, through rebirth and reliving, a patient regresses into anxiouss one-way states ranging from catastrophic visions and catastrophic hells with no escape to hells from which he/she can return.

This journey through the back door of the unconscious is a regression into the conscious sphere. It’s a back door to consciousness.

Stanislav Grof called this process Holotropic: a movement toward a whole. The existential field of one is the universal sphere of Everything. By losing the sense of self, man regresses into cosmic states of being and identifies himself with all things vegetable, mineral, and biological. Heavenly paradises and angelic visions are accessible in these dimensions as well as universal archetypes such as the great goddess mother Kali, the sustainer of life who is also an arachnid monster with numerous limbs.

Where consciousness meets holodeck, doors to parallel universes (Star Gates) open. For this to happen, consciousness has to project itself onto a super-hologram and identify with the internal field of experience. Holotropic experience is a journey beyond the usual confines, beyond the limits of the mind. Stan Grof is the precursor of a pioneering adventure of transpersonal explorations of man’s unconscious from the cosmic holodeck (probability, location) to the whole cosmic experience. Grof has inherited this sum of archetypes which come back as ghosts in the matrix from the collective unconscious of Jung. Or like liberating model a priori visions of consciousness, he has taken the boundaries of the unconscious threshold into the non ordinary psycho-active. The door between heaven and hell acts as an interface to the matrices, and its keystone is what Grof describes as “non ordinary states of consciousness” (NOSC). By using quick breathing, holotropic practices, and evocative music, one breaks away from ordinary experience and travels in a transpersonal experience where waiting for the death-rebirth event is a holistic cosmos; a whole field of all events. The journey toward the unconscious is a conscious mor-
The holographic paradigm suggests that objective reality is nothing more than a small holographic plate, a fragment of the infinite holographic probabilities. If objective reality is nothing more than a small holographic plate, a fragment of the infinite holographic probabilities, the remains of the hologram will be latent and hidden. That is why it is necessary to bring back the experiences which are concealed behind the objective universe of Everything. This is where they lie dormant and we need to bring them back to the whole. Only through immersion in the state of consciousness can we explore this whole in its parts and as a result find the whole plate in a holographic process.

The NOSC journeys into non-ordinary states of consciousness are prerequisites for a dimension which spans the Alpha and Omega of human experience. Stanislav Grof has reached the transpersonal threshold, imagining it as a bridge to the unconscious (as anticipated by Jung), leading to a journey into a cave of monsters and demonic presences and finally coming out into the corridor of regressive, transpersonal experience--regressive being part of what is transpersonal. The condensed experiences (COEX), archetypal constellations, and the BPM matrices are indispensable stages for the great return and for transpersonal individuation. These enable us to access the Sacred and to journey into the holodeck, a new unconscious.

DIEGO PIGNATELLI is the author of Awakening of Intelligence: Toward a Psychology of Being: Eastern Philosophy in the Direction of Transpersonal Theories. diego_pignatelli@libero.it
An Essay on Existential Humanism

— Spyros P. Damascos

With the leap of anxiety at birth, we become the primary mental and emotional caretakers of ourselves in the sense of gradually defining self-identity, interpersonal relationships, the physical world, responsibility, value system, self-esteem, and self-affirmation. This is accomplished as our inner strength is being forged with every developmental task accomplished, with every success, with every adversity conquered, and with every emotion experienced.

Iris Murdoch might have commented that this is "a dramatic, solipsistic, romantic, and anti-social exaltation of the individual" (Conradi P, 1999, Existentialists and Mystics, Penguin, pp. 151-153). Certainly "no man is an island," but in experiencing the world we are alone, and it takes enormous strength to accept and transcend existential loneliness.

In my humble opinion, existentialism was born amidst man’s bewildering encounter with the world, the fear of nature’s formidable and humbling power, and life’s awe-inspiring divine miracle of creation and procreation. We are not mechanical things subject to quantitative dissection and standardization. We are not mere mathematical equations, but conscious beings empowered by Basic Needs (Fromm), dreams, aspirations, self-actualization (Maslow), and the desire to ascend and transcend.

Transcendence is attained through introspection, spirituality, and creativity. Transcendence is reached by permitting ourselves to experience the immensity of our spirituality emanating from the wonder and sacredness that is life, and setting free our innate creative process in whatever we do best in a benevolent, ennobling manner: a prayer, a Pieta, meditation, communing with nature, a nocturne, a new dish entree, a drawing, an embroidery, dance’s sublime aestheticism, a simple but sincere expression of caring a verse, as cases in point. Emily Dickinson, for example, transcended her spirit through poetry. Thomas H. Johnson writes that "Dickinson’s judgment persistently asserts that neither intuition or reason can solve the riddle of existence. . . . Dickinson assesses the problems of anxiety and loneliness, the extremity of pain and its duration and redemptive quality, and she thereby steadily participated in the issues of existing" (Johnson TH, 1961, The Final Harvest. Emily Dickinson’s Poems, Little Brown, pp. v-xiv).

Only the human experience is expressed in speech and writing, pictorially, artistically, musically. Only humans can relate and narrate their thoughts, ideas, anxieties, aspirations, as well as provide an account of their past, present, and hopes for the future. Ruben Abel emphasizes that animals have no concept of ancestry; they may have individual biographies, but they do not have meaningful histories, only humans do (1972, Man Is the Measure, The Free Press, pp. 164, 229-231). The difference between animal and human communication, Abel points out, is that animals communicate in a mechanical, unchanged, repetitive, and more or less inborn manner. Human language is not instinctively controlled as a reflex action by specific external stimuli or infernal states. Human language, Abel elaborates, is not limited to conveying information; it is inventive, resourceful. Humans can enunciate, articulate, and comprehend an unlimited number of new sentences; even though animals have a degree of intellect to solve some problems, complete tasks, and obey, follow some instructions and directions, they do not have the ability to communicate an infinite number of meanings. Human language is sui generis "species-specific” for homo sapiens, as building dams is for beavers.

Most significantly, the instinctive behavior of animals excludes the unique human quality of appreciation for its own sake. A lake, for example, is a source of thirst quenching or a refreshing swim for many an animal or human; however, only humans can experience appreciation for the setting of the lake, its natural beauty, the diversity of life it supports. Only humans can appreciate gazing at a mesmerizing fiery sunset, be emotionally affected by it, and give this natural phenomenon the man-bested attributes of beauty.

Miguel De Unamuno in his journey of introspection perceives himself as being the encapsulation, preservation, and perpetuation of everything that has passed before him in terms of ancestry, genes, folklore, which he will pass on to his descendants (Crawford TE, translator, 1954, The Tragic Sense of Life, Dover, pp. 202-203). He passionately presents and supports his perspective that essence, beauty, eternity, and divinity are interchangeable, interwoven. Like his individual essence, which is
Spirit appears to be breaking amidst feelings of doubt, abandonment, meaninglessness, and despair. It is the human will’s tenacity to persevere, exist, move forward, which was idealized by Kant, scorned by Schopenhauer as being unquenchable, glorified by Nietzsche, and exalted by Tillich.

Since we first came upon the world, frightened, unprepared, unskilled, we conquered our terrain, sailed the oceans, climbed the highest mountains, soared in the skies, ventured into space, landed on other planets; we invented and are still working on perfecting a form of government which guarantees our inborn right to live free, we are combating diseases, famine, and rebuilding after natural catastrophies, whilst we have been adorning our home, Mother Earth, with architectural and artistic masterpieces. Where once there was only the roar of animals and the chirping of birds to be heard, we filled the void with music, theatre, dance, laughter. Neil Armstrong’s uttering from the surface of the moon: “One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind,” echoes throughout the universe as a testament that a human being was here in a moment of greatness, ennoblement, creativeness, and magnanimity on behalf of humanity and beyond.

Perhaps it is in our mission to explore, populate, beautify, and enlighten. Perhaps we should only be concerned with the Here and Now, life’s next port of call, destination, rather than with questions such as why us, the humankind, but if not us, who else?

In the beginning was the Logos...

Spyros P. Damascos, MA, NCC, LCPC, practices in Maryland, holds a Master’s Degree in humanistic psychology from State University of West Georgia, and leads groups on spirituality and phenomenology.
“My Wife at the Time”:
The Case for Family Therapy

After retiring from 27 years of full-time practice as a clinical psychologist in Beverly Hills, I began my advanced tutelage as a jazz musician by joining Local 47. I studied mandolin with Mischa Shenkyman, who defected from the Soviet Union because he was Jewish and they would not let his children go past high school. When I asked him the difference between the United States and the Soviet Union where he was known as the Paganini of the Mandolin and was a soloist for the Leningrad Symphony and had his own radio show, he said: "In the Soviet Union they treat musicians very good and Jews very bad, and in the U.S., they treat Jews very good and musicians very bad.

And on trumpet, I got to study with Frank Szabo, Charlie Davis, Bobby Shew, Wayne Bergeron, Bill Watrous, Stacy Rowles (daughter of Jimmy Rowles), and Ron Stout. Several years ago, KJAZZ, put on a four-day conference entitled "East Coast versus West Coast Jazz”. All the greats who were still living played in concerts, and then the concerts were followed by hour-long panels where these world-renowned jazz musicians presented their lives to the audience, and then the audience was allowed to ask questions at the end of each conference of six panelists and moderator.

COMMON THEME
On the last day, at the next to last conference, I took the microphone, and the moderator said: "Do you have a question?" I said: "No, sir, I never ask questions." I paused, and people took notice. “Obviously there is a lot of wisdom here. I see the gray hair on the panel members and the prolific experiences they share. However, the conference has been inappropriately named. There has been very little here over the last four days that would differentiate East Coast Jazz from West Coast Jazz. In fact, I have heard only one common theme over the past four days.” I paused again. The moderator said: "And what was that?” I said “My wife at the time. Nearly all the world-renowned musicians in discussing their lives made that statement during the four days. Sometimes it was one wife, sometimes two, sometimes four. Their family lives were tragic.”

WHAT WORKED
In psychology training, as well as in Jazz, I trained with the best I could find—among them Milton Erickson (the father of modern medical hypnosis), Jim Simkin (premier Gestalt therapy trainer after Fritz Perls), Carl Whitaker, and Walter Kempler (both pioneers in family therapy).

I once said to Dr. Simkin: “I am looking for a trainer whose life is as congruent as his therapeutic ability!” Simkin was like a little bulldog grabbing hold of your pant leg with an unwillingness to let go. He looked at me and said: “I know of no such evidence.” In other words, no one escapes the tragedy of human living no matter how good a therapist they might be.

When I was in private practice, my focus was on working with individuals. In returning to practice after 1999, I made a decision to only work with families. The reason was this: When I think about the effects all my training and therapy had on me, it stands out to me that Family Therapy is what brought the most value to my life.

MARRIAGE MADE IN HELL
In my marriage, which ended in a 22-year legal battle over my children, I had the following therapeutic clarifications from the experts.

First I worked with Walter Kempler, whose strength was in paying attention to the couple with precision and unorthodoxy—he looked a little like you would imagine Zeus or a fire-breathing dragon might have looked—and he made a marriage made in hell last seven years longer than it should/would have. And the result was the birth of my two children, Alex and Lisa. I never was sure if Kempler worked for God or the Devil, but who can argue with the greatest gifts of my life, my two children—the result of family therapy.

Milton Erickson is known for his brief and uncommon therapy. He could see details that others do not pay attention to. I went all the way to Phoenix to study with this man. He asked: "What can I do for you, young man?” I said: “Dr. Erickson, I want you to help me find a resolution to my marital difficulties.” His advice was: "When I counseled Joe and Mary, I counseled Joe to move to California and Mary to move to Atlanta.” Then he stopped. I said: "Is that it?” He said: "That’s it.”

My family therapy and my family therapy training with Carl Whitaker began after he wrote the foreword to my book and after
Milton Erickson died. I met him at the first Ericksonian conference, in 1980 or 1981. I said: “Hi Carl. Do you supervise family therapy?” He said: “Yeah.” I said: “Well, there is a problem. You are at the University of Wisconsin Medical School, and I am in Los Angeles.” He said: “Get a speakerphone.” I said: “Well, there is another problem. There are no families in Los Angeles.” He said: “Well, maybe God will be good to you.” Sure enough, two families came into my private practice, and Whitaker was supervising me via speakerphone from Wisconsin to Los Angeles. In one of those sessions he kept saying: “How can I take your seriously that you want to learn family therapy when you don’t have your own family in family therapy?” Pretty soon I had “my wife at the time”, her parents, her brother and his soon-to-be wife, and my parents on two phones from Connecticut. We had 26 weeks of multigenerational therapy.

In working with Carl Whitaker, I once said: “I want to know what the existential facts are between me and my wife!” Whitaker said: “There are none.”

PARENTAL PAIN

My parents had always given lip service to moving to Los Angeles to be closer to me in their sunset years, but I never really took them seriously. Whitaker in talking to them when the issue came up took the side of devil’s advocate. He said: “That would be the craziest thing you two could ever do. Your son is so busy with his practice he would never make time to see you. You would lose all your friends and relatives in Connecticut. Change is very difficult for old people.” He went on for about ten minutes, stating every fear they had expressed over the last ten years, and ones I had never heard, and then in the last second of the session, when there was no time for rebuttal, he said: “Take a chance! Time up!” I didn’t even notice he had said it, and I didn’t think anything of it.

Two weeks later my parents called and said: “Len, we are moving to California.” I thought they were joking, but they weren’t. As a result, I had my Dad nearby for the last two years of his life and my mother for the last six years of her life.

That was the second greatest therapeutic gift I had received; the opportunity to do all I could with and for my parents when they were living, and to finish unfinished business, which might have remained an open wound forever.

Two nights before he died, and when he was still able to speak, I said: “Dad, you were a good Pop.” In a rather severe manner, he said: “How can you say that to me at a time like this?” Frankly, from my point of view, I never knew he gave it much thought, but I said: “And for when you weren’t [a good Pop], I forgive you.” It was as if a hundred years of wrinkles came off his face, about an issue I did not even know was bothering him.

He was taking morphine for pain, and he could not swallow and had to be given it with an eyedropper. So I got two small glasses of cognac and said: “Dad, this is to celebrate your life.” I gave it to him with the eyedropper. He had a twinkle in his eye. That was the last time we spoke.

So those are the reasons that I decided to do “only family therapy”. That is where I saw the most value come from therapy in my own life.

LEN BERGANTINO, Ed.D., A.B. P.P., is a licensed psychologist and a Diplomate of the American Board of Professional Psychology, and a Member of Local 47. He is the author of *Psychotherapy Insight and Style: The Existential Moment.*
ATP ADDS THREE NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Les Lancaster, Ph.D., is Professor of Transpersonal Psychology at Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU), UK, Honorary Research Fellow in the Centre for Jewish Studies at Manchester University (where he is an expert on Kabbala), and an emeritus Chair of the Transpersonal Psychology Section of the British Psychological Society. Through LJMU he runs online courses in Consciousness and Transpersonal Psychology. “I’m really looking forward to contributing to the further development of Transpersonal Psychology internationally through my membership on the ATP Board.”

Shani Robins, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, and an Instructor at Stanford University and at UC Berkeley. He completed his B.A. in Psychology and Philosophy from UCLA in 1989, his M.A. and Ph.D. in Cognitive Experimental Psychology from UC Santa Barbara in 1996, a 2-year NIMH Postdoctoral Fellowship at UC Irvine in 1999, and a second Ph.D. respecialization in Clinical Psychology in 2002. He is a licensed psychologist, and the author of numerous scientific journal articles and book chapters. He pioneered Wisdom Therapy, has given presentations worldwide on its clinical and organizational applications, and is President of the Wisdom Therapy Institute (www.wisdomtherapy.com). In his spare time he runs marathons, plays Go and Racquetball, and enjoys stand-up comedy.

Kirti Patel is in the Clinical Psychology Ph.D. program at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, where she began her studies after living in various cultures, including Bahrain, Costa Rica, India, Japan, and Amazonian Quechuan. She is surprised at how these cultures have become creativity-integrated in her meaning-making process, allowing for multiple perspectives and creative solutions. While at the University of Illinois, she co-organized the Minorities in Political Science Career Conference, which included panel discussions in Social Work, Public Policy, Teaching and Research, Peace Corps, and Law School. On a fellowship in 1981, she lived in the Ecuadorian Amazon studying indigenous healing rituals, shamanic journeying, and the Quichua language.

Spirituality and Psychology Conference

Planet, Culture and Conscience: The Development of Humanity in the 21st Century
Barcelona, October 29 to November 2, 2008

The Catalan Transpersonal Association (ACT) is organizing the next EUROTAS International Conference, to be held in Barcelona. The meeting will be an opportunity to hear from and to work with many European and American experts in the transpersonal psychology movement. Also on the program is:
— a tour of the sacred mountain of Montserrat
— more than 40 workshops and academic lectures
— yoga and meditation on the beach
— shamanic practices and sacred rituals
— dance and music
— a transcultural party and our “Castanyada”

http://www.eurotasbarcelona2008.eu

Transpersonal Internet

Jacob Kaminker has taken over from David Lukoff to oversee the expansion and maintenance of the Guide to the Transpersonal Internet on the ATP website at http://www.atpweb.org/TranspersonalInternet.asp. Please help to strengthen the transpersonal community, and this valuable resource by e-mailing him links to your favorite transpersonal sites at jakek47@hotmail.com.
A
fter successful US transpersonal conferences were held in the 1960s, these were extended internationally to Iceland (1972, 1973), Finland (1976), and Brazil (1977).

Stan Grof then formed the International Transpersonal Association (ITA) in 1978 to offer additional conferences. Under Grof’s leadership, these were held in the US (1979, 1987, 1988, 1991, 2004), Australia (1980), India (1982), Switzerland (1983), Japan (1985), Czechoslovakia (1992), Ireland (1995), and Brazil (1996), after which it was Grof’s wish that ITA disband.

David Lukoff explored forming another international transpersonal organization by creating a Google group (see http://atpweb.org/googlegroup/) and convening a well-attended meeting at the World Congress of Spirituality and Psychology held in Delhi in January 2008. Meanwhile, Harris Friedman, Les Lancaster, and Glenn Hartelius, editors of the International Journal of Transpersonal Studies (IJTS; http://www.transpersonalstudies.org) had received a small grant from the British Psychological Society to use IJTS to link international transpersonal associations—and they all attended Lukoff’s meeting at the Delhi Congress. Followup Google group e-conversations led to resurrecting ITA, after Stanislav and Christina Grof gave their blessings to adopt the name, and the Floraglades Foundation offered funding. Friedman, Lukoff, and Hartelius are ITA’s President, Vice-President, and Secretary–Treasurer, respectively. Plans for the next international conference are underway.

HARRIS FRIEDMAN is at the University of Florida.

Stanislav and Christina Grof Photo Archive

More than 200 new photos from ITA (International Transpersonal Association) and ATP (Association for Transpersonal Psychology) conferences as well as other transpersonal programs have been added to the Stanislav and Christina Grof Photo Archive (available to ATP nonmembers and members on the ATP website).

There are several photos of Albert Hoffman who presented at several ITA Conferences. He died of a heart attack on Tuesday morning, April 29, at the age of 102, fully lucid and deeply satisfied that LSD psychotherapy research had been permitted to resume. He spoke several months before he died about the renewal of LSD psychotherapy research, sponsored by MAPS (Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies) in patients with anxiety associated with end-of-life issues, as the “fulfillment of my heart’s desire.”

Obituaries for Albert have been printed in newspapers around the world. Additional information about Albert Hoffman’s work with LSD and other psychedelics can be found on the MAPS website. MAPS has carried on the work of demonstrating the value of psychedelic drugs in therapy for many life problems. http://www.maps.org
Humanistic Psychology in Practice Conference

The 2nd Annual Conference of The Society for Humanistic Psychology is being sponsored by Division 32 of APA on August 11-13, 2008. This conference occurs prior to the annual American Psychological Association convention, in Boston.

Conference presenters will include accomplished humanistic psychotherapists and practitioners from all over the world who have made outstanding contributions to the field. Presenters will include, among others, Roger Brooke, David Cain, Robert Elliott, Harris Friedman, Larry Leitner, Maureen O’Hara, Robert D. Romanishyn, Ilene Serlin, Jonathan Raskin, Kirk J. Schneider, Lois Shawver, E. Mark Stern, and Alberto Zuconi.

The conference fee will include the cost for meals during the conference, and these meals will afford ample opportunity for community building and enriching conversation. Considerable savings can be gained by early registration. Conference attendees will also receive a special conference rate on the hotel at a savings of up 35% the usual cost. You can earn up to 24 hours of continuing education credits.

For more information, please contact the Conference Coordinator, Brent Dean Robbins, Ph.D., at bdeanrob@roadrunner.com. Or visit the website at: http://www.apa.org/divisions/div32

Human Dimension of Psychotherapy Conference

July 18-20, 2008, Hart House, University of Toronto, Canada

The traditions of humanistic, existential, psychodynamic, transpersonal, and somatic psychology have a long history affirming the complex holism of the human experience. These “alternatives” to manualized, outcome-oriented therapies have a substantial academic and professional history, integrating the complex dimensions of being human. How do we bring each individual into full presence? How do we integrate this clinical knowledge into 21st century psychotherapy? ATP Co-President David Lukoff and Editor of the Journal of Humanistic Psychology Kirk Schneider are presenting. http://www.livinginstitute.org

The conference is sponsored by the Living Institute, an active member of the Ontario Association of Psychotherapy Training Institution, which is taking on a political role in Ontario as regulatory legislation is being drafted. In 2007, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care passed The Psychotherapy Act, regulating psychotherapy as a profession for the first time in Ontario. Over the next two years, there will be a series of dialogues with the government and the professional community which will create the basis for the new regulatory College of Psychotherapy. We are very concerned that the modalities and values of humanistic, existential, transpersonal, psychodynamic, and somatic psychology be respected and preserved within this political definition.

Toward that same end, the Living Institute is founding a chapter (now called energy centre) of the conjoined AHP/ATP. This is taken from the Living Institute newsletter:

The AHP/ATP perspective on psychology, culture, and cosmos, and the place of humans in the natural world, is moving out into the field of global consciousness, with centres in England, Europe, Japan, Russia, India, and other places. Let’s add Canada to this international network of like-minded souls.
Some 440 therapists, scholars, scientists, physicians, lawyers, artists, musicians, business persons, politicians, and several saints joined together for a memorable four days at the beautiful Habitat Centre in Delhi, India, for the long-planned World Congress. Coming from 40 countries, including Venezuela, South Africa, Latvia, Poland, Russia, Japan, Sri Lanka, Kyrgyzstan, Romania, Italy, Germany, UK, Canada, Spain, Portugal, France, Slovenia, Switzerland, and Austria—a community instantly sprang together who had (at least) one thing in common: a deep sense of the place of spirituality in their personal and professional lives. Thus, a deep sense of “one world family” emerged so thick you could cut the ancient India air with a knife. It nourished everyone and persists to this day in the hearts of all.

More than 280 presentations were given, including keynotes by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Karan Singh, BKS Iyengar, Robert Thurman, Stan Grof, Jack Kornfield, and Geshe Samten (representing the Dalai Lama). Foremost themes included The Future of Spiritual Practice in the World, India’s Contribution to Transpersonal Psychology, The Next Wave of Spiritual Transmissions. Panel topics included Spirituality of Death and Dying, Future of Women’s Spirituality, Tantra, Spirituality in Business, Shamanism, Russian Transpersonal Psychology, and Vedic Psychology. Please visit http://www.atpweb.org this summer to order from a select list of DVD recordings of the most popular presentations.

To join the International Transpersonal Google e-group where continued discussions are under way, e-mail dlukoff@comcast.net.

E-mail stuartcs@jps.net to inquire about special interest e-groups such as The Future of the Family, The Future of Yoga and Meditation, Preserving World Cultures, Spiritual Conflict Resolution, Trauma Therapy, World Spiritual Music Festivals, Consciousness Studies, Shamanism, Business and Spirituality.
IN THE SPIRIT OF LEADERSHIP: A Vision into a Different Future; REFLECTIONS ALONG THE JOURNEY: A Journal; SELECTED POEMS CD

By Cheryl Esposito
Plumb Road Publishing, 2008, $19, $17, $15, or $49 for all three, ISBN 9780979925207

Reviewed by Paul Rest

International leadership coach Cheryl Esposito has written a book that boldly moves into a new genre, one that is very exciting. Her book combines, as the material accompanying the book states, a book that is neither leadership how-to, nor poetry book nor self-help guide. It is a blending of all three and brand new, one intended to inspire the originality, which guided its own creation.

The book and accompanying Journal and CD are attractively packaged and easy to use. The generous use of space within the book and Journal allows the reader’s eyes to move easily between the written words and the graphics the books employ. The Journal has lined pages with prompts from the author as well as blank beautifully marbled paper. Ribbon page markers are provided in both the book and Journal. And the spiral binding of the Journal makes it easy to open and use. The questions the author uses in the Journal are both thought-stimulating and provocative: How can I nourish myself? How do I listen? When am I lonely?

Selected poems from In the Spirit of Leadership add to the book’s appeal. Esposito’s premise is that “authentic and effective leadership requires deep soul searching into the heart of the self.” She believes that leadership is knowing oneself, “in order to lead others.” Another quote states that “honoring the person and their talent is key. My purpose is coaching leaders to build on their strengths and reach into their core of integrity. We work in a collaborative way to shape them and their presence in the world.”

In the Spirit of Leadership reflects the tensions, problems, and challenges of leadership, through Esposito’s poetry and prose. A prose insight sets the tone for each of the poems that follow. The poems look deeper into the tone, insight, or question the author asks. For example, she asks in one prose section, “Sleep...or Not:” “Things to think about/ What has your self talk been lately?/ What can you do to enhance your sense of well being?” The poems that follow: “Insomnia,” “Sleep,” and then “My Mind is Awake should resonate with all who have had those nights when sleep for one reason or another, eludes them as they wrestle with an issue, question or just life in general. In “Insomnia,” the author writes: “We wait & see &/only see when we’re done waiting.../Last night I lay awake/waiting to go to sleep/ waiting to stop thinking/waiting to feel myself drifting/seeing if I could close my/eyes & make myself go to sleep/except I can’t see when/I close my eyes/And I wasn’t done waiting...”

Other poems give the reader insights to Esposito’s own personal journey. During a 28-day solo wilderness quest in 2005, a small portable propane stove caught fire. The author writes that she received “extensive second degree burns.” The series of poems and prose sections about this experience includes one poem that is truly magical. As she attempted to move away from the fire, she reports that: “...as I walked around the circle of the fire to figure out what to do, the flame was following me. I would go in one direction and it would move with me.” The poem “Fire Chasing Me” describes this experience with a stark vividness.

The sections that follow, “Letting Go,” “What Is,” “Shedding,” and “The Spirit of Leadership” gives Esposito a platform from which to ask the difficult questions those in a leadership position (and in everyday life) must ask about themselves: what is important in their lives and in the lives of those around them. “We often focus on what isn’t rather than what is,” the author writes in the prose section, “What Is.” She continues, “We regret what was, we fear what could be, and we ignore what is. Pay attention, feel your body. Practice awareness of each moment. Powerful leaders and coaches live here, in the now. This is where our essence is revealed. What is...it’s about presence.”

In The Spirit of Leadership concludes with three excellent poems: “Heart 1,” “Heart 2,” and “Heart 3.” In the prose section that precedes these poems, that author writes: “My hope is that you let this in, that it touches you in a way that makes a difference. Because this is what leadership is really all about. The inner work we rarely hear about, the work that happens in the heart.”
The book's dust jacket comes with supporting statements from John Milton, Angeles Arrien, Richard Strozzi-Heckler, Betty Sue Flowers, and Richard Leider. The only criticism this reviewer has is that the paper in the Journal is so glossy it may be difficult to write on without smudging. The smudge-proof ink has fast drying ink. It would be a shame to ruin such beautiful paper (and book) because of this one small problem.

PAUL REST recently reviewed Richard Strozzi-Heckler's book on leadership in this magazine. He has written book reviews for The San Francisco Chronicle, Creation Quarterly, and other publications. He can be reached at poetry@sonic.net.

STANDING AT WATER’S EDGE: Moving Past Fears, Blocks, and Pitfalls To Discover the Power of Creative Immersion
BY ANNE PARIS

Excerpted from Interview & Essay

What does it take to be creative? It takes feeling “connected in”, or immersed with the artwork. Sometimes it takes a great deal of courage to allow yourself to dive into that state of creative immersion—that state of being merged with the art form—because the whole process is very unknown and uncertain. I think that connections with others, whether in reality or fantasy, are what give us the courage to take that dive.

Is this book only for fine artists? No! It is for anyone seeking to be creative, whether that is in fine art or in any endeavor that requires creativity, ingenuity, or scholarship.

You say that our sense of autonomy and self-sufficiency are illusions. Aren’t we all trying to be independent? Isn’t independence a good thing?

I say that self-sufficiency and independence are illusions because there is a dimension of interpersonal experience within us that is operating all the time but generally outside of our conscious awareness. When we tune into it, we see the powerful impact that our sense of connection with others has on our internal life—it can be good or bad, but when we pay attention to it, we discover that it affects our day to day, even moment to moment, behaviors, feelings, and productivity. Even when we’re alone, we have active imaginations and fantasies about longings and hopes for connection. This deep, even primal, longing for connection often goes unrecognized, or is dismissed as weak, needy, or defective. But I argue that we create in order to feel connected. We want to be seen and understood, to engage with and have an impact on others, and to have something valuable to offer. Although we have been taught that being strong and “grown up” means becoming independent and separate from others, this new perspective argues that we gain our independence, individuality, and self-confidence through our connections with others. Self-growth happens within connection, not apart from it.

These are bold statements that challenge our society’s emphasis on being independent, strong, and self-sufficient. What is the basis for your radical argument? I was trained in contemporary psychoanalytic theory, which has been coming to these conclusions over the past 30 years. The training that a therapist receives will certainly affect what kinds of things they tune into and “hear” when listening to a client. Because of this framework for understanding people, my clinical experience in talking with many artists has naturally involved empathizing with, and inquiring about, their deeply felt hopes, fears, and dreads. Over the last decade, a plethora of scientific findings in neuroscience, primatology, and child development are supporting this new direction and are highlighting the power of interpersonal experience in propelling psychological development forward. I have applied these understandings to the artist involved in the creative process.

You say that connection with others is crucial in the creative process. Many of the artists I know are very private people who are most comfortable being alone. What about the isolated artist who produces a lot of work? There are most certainly genetic and personality differences in how much connection we need to feel comfortable and at our best. Isolated or introverted artists often have a vivid and alive fantasy life of connecting with others that plays a powerful role in their creative productivity. Also, these artists...
may be turning to other types of connections (spirituality, play, pets, and others’ artwork) to sustain their work. For some artists at certain times, creative immersion may feel like the safest and most comfortable way of connecting with others, so their creativity flourishes even when they are isolated.

You argue that nowadays people have a much more difficult time attaching with others than being independent. What about people who attach too much and seem to lose their independence?

Healthy attachments involve mutuality—a give and take between people. When this give and take is relatively balanced, both people are strengthened. However, many of our struggles in life are about finding this balance. People who tend to give more than they receive, or put the other person’s needs and feelings consistently ahead of their own, are likely to lose their sense of individuality and independence. It’s not that they should be less connected—it’s that they need to become more aware of their own needs and find ways to equalize the balance in the relationship.

You describe how all artists struggle with fear, vulnerability, and self-doubt. Many of the artists I know are arrogant and don’t seem to care what others think. How do you understand these people?

The bigger the fear, the bigger the defense. These “arrogant” types are often the most sensitive and most insecure—they are emotionally fragile on the inside and cannot tolerate any hint of criticism or injury. They must hold tightly to their protective shell of grandiosity because negative responses from others are deeply threatening to them. The level of their arrogance equals the level of their internal fragility.

I’ve always thought I was supposed to be self-confident enough not to care what others think about me or my work. Isn’t it unhealthy to be reliant on the approval of other people?

No! We are social beings that constantly gauge what others think of us. It is normal, it is natural, and it is okay! When we can accept that we need others to be at our best, we can turn our attention and energy towards building mutual, give-and-take relationships with others that will propel us and them forward! Now we view “mental health” as the capacity to create and maintain relationships that will gratify and sustain us. Strength, inspiration, and confidence do not lie preformed in a person, covered up and waiting to be found. They are found in immersive connections with others, with the art, and with the audience.

What is the basis for blocks in the creative process? How does connecting with others help us along in our solitary creative endeavors?

Fear and a lack of connection with others are the basis for creative blocks and procrastinations. Developing and sustaining relationships with mirrors, heroes, and twins (see definitions below) actually gives us the psychological nourishment—which we take in and make our own—to risk taking the dive. Finding support, inspiration, and comfort with others helps us to feel worthy, confident, and hopeful. These are the feelings that propel us forward.

Find Strength in Mirrors

An artist finds the strength to create through feeling special, recognized, and appreciated by others. Share your ideas and your work with others who are likely to appreciate your talents and your efforts. Allow yourself to “take in” this kind of psychological nourishment. If you don’t have this kind of support, imagine it.

Find Inspiration in Heroes

An artist finds motivation and inspiration to create through admiring, respecting, and hoping to please a parent, teacher, mentor, or idol. Reach for connection with your “real-life” hero or immerse in your idol’s work, ideas, or art.

Find Comfort in Twins

An artist finds comfort through the creative process by feeling understood and understandable by others who are in the same boat. Reach for connections with “like-kind” (for example, join a writer’s group, or take a painting class, or go to conferences, artist retreats, or galleries). Share your hopes and dreads, triumphs and defeats, with these empathic others—they’ve been there—they understand.

Throughout a creative project, you are likely to grapple with core feelings of safety, trust, and hope. When you become aware of how your relationships with others (or lack of relationships) impact your ongoing sense of self, you can then try to elicit more of what you need to carry you through the myriad of emotions involved in the creative process. It is not weak to need others. In fact, being able to create and sustain mutual relationships is the key to our continued growth as artists and as individuals. In the end, it is not really how much willpower or discipline we have that determines our capacity to enter into a creative state. Standing at water’s edge, looking at the vast unknown and uncertainty involved in the creative process, it is our relationships with others that will empower or inhibit our dive.

ANNE PARIS, PH.D., is a clinical psychologist who has helped artists in their creative processes for more than 20 years. Her approach, based on cutting-edge psychological understandings and research, appreciates the inner world of the artist in a new way. She has helped famous, professional, and hobby artists start and sustain their creative process so they could complete a work of art. http://www.anneparis.com.
PEAK VITALITY: Raising the Threshold of Abundance in Our Material, Spiritual, and Emotional Lives
Edited by Jeanne M. House, Courtney Arnold, Dawson Church, Randy Peysner, et al.

Reviewed by Barbara D. Stahura

So many ways to transformation, so little time. Bookstore shelves groan under the weight of self-help and transformational books. The Internet, television, and radio brim with information about making positive life changes. Entire magazines are devoted to health and wellness, spiritual growth, and concepts such as prosperity and consciousness. So when the time comes—and it will—to give your life a boost or a shift, or even a top-to-bottom overhaul, where do you begin? Just finding a starting place for your exploration can be a daunting task.

A new anthology might be just what you need. Peak Vitality: Raising the Threshold of Abundance in Our Material, Spiritual, and Emotional Lives contains fifty-four chapters of wisdom from experts in the field of personal transformation, many widely recognized and others not so well-known but no less knowledgeable. Taken together, all the chapters offer a sparkling treasure trove of information, yet any one of them could be the springboard to changing your life.

No matter how happy or satisfied we are, we might at times wonder if we could move beyond our current best to enjoy life even more—to feel more vibrant, be healthier and more energetic, express ourselves as more loving and spiritual beings, be more productive and effective.

The key to a life more vital, prosperous, and creative is one we often don’t realize: We have created the lives we have, mostly unconsciously, by following patterns we absorbed as children or due to constraints imposed on us later. However, by remaining aware that we are indeed the creators of our own reality, we can consciously transform our lives and ourselves.

Peak Vitality offers many places to dip your toes in the water before deciding where to dive in. Its authors include physicians, health gurus, scientists, prosperity teachers, therapists, relationship experts, life and sports coaches, and others. The book opens by addressing the body and the emotions, and then it expands outward to relationships, life on our small planet, the new medicine and new psychology, breaking through barriers, and finally wraps it all up with the section on “Dancing with the Universe.”

One of the Peak Vitality authors is Stephen Lewis, founder of the energy balancing method EMC2 and its technology, called AIM. Long a student of spirituality, energetic healing, and quantum energy, Lewis understood that illness arises first as an imbalance in a person’s energetic/spiritual field, or Life Force, before it manifests in the physical body. Therefore, the AIM Program of Energetic Balancing helps people to restore their Life Force to harmony—to self-heal, in other words. Lewis points out that all healing is something we do on the spiritual level as we direct our Life Force. It is vastly different from curing, which is something done to a person through some type of medical intervention.

“There are two things to know about self-healing,” he writes in Peak Vitality. “First, it requires an empowering shift in our consciousness that allows us to take back our power to heal ourselves. This power may come from prayer, from meditation, or more recently from exciting new applications of technology designed to alter our own energy and create a new reality. Second, we must accept responsibility for the circumstances that caused our need for healing. Once we do that, we can ignite our own unique self-healing capabilities and alter our material world.”

BARBARA D. STAHURA, MPA, Barbara Stahura has been working in the field of medical practice management since 1985.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM 2005
Edited by Con Stough, Donald H. Saklofske, Karen Hansen
Tertiary Press, 2006, $70, 276 pp., ISBN 0864584616
HELP REBUILD A LIBRARY

AHP Board Affiliate Don Eulert lost 4,000 books in the Witch Fire in Southern California last fall (and everything else except himself and his truck). Don is Director of the Center for Integrative Psychology at California School of Professional Psychology San Diego. AHP is asking for donations of books, especially: Jung’s Collected Works, authors from Jung’s First Circle, Fairy Tale collections, or anything on ritual. Please send books to: P. O. Box 38, San Ysabel, CA 92070-0038, or 18998 Old Julian Trail, San Ysabel, CA 92070. Thank you for your thoughtfulness.

REVIEWS

Reviewed by David Ryback

A single day in which to present, summarize, and discuss the latest on theory and applications of emotional intelligence—it happened in Melbourne, Australia, one summer day early in July 2005. The spectrum of topics ran from construct validity through the biological basis of emotional intelligence (EI) to applications in the workplace, clinic, and schools. Luckily, the organizers had the foresight to record it all so that it could be faithfully reproduced in this handsome, though expensive, volume.

EI and aging—do we get wiser, does our EI increase as we age? We tend to get more impulsive as we age, say these scientists. So EI does not increase with age. “That’s really clear,” declares Professor Stough, an Australian brain science scholar, unless “you do something about it,” like continue to develop your EI. Well, that’s hopeful, especially since we know that pure intellect does continue to increase with age, albeit marginally in the later years.

The best way to develop your own EI, according to Australian test designer Ben Palmer, is to learn how to evaluate how your thoughts and feelings are affected, then to decide on your purpose and, finally, to practice getting your purpose accomplished by inner discipline. You can ask yourself questions such as: What can I do differently? What can I change in terms of how I think and interpret our environment? Feedback from others in a confidential setting can help greatly. Dr. Palmer found such groups of five worked best—shades of Roggerian client-centered groups. Here one can ask: How do I become more aware of others, deal with emotional information, manage my own and others’ emotions in a purposeful way?

At the end of the day, Dr. Palmer found that, overall, he could increase leadership effectiveness, using the above approach, by roughly 10%. Most interesting was the spillover into personal life. One of the benefits of EI training for work was better communication with spouse and children.

But all this commotion about EI seems to overlook the need for any recipient of training to be ready to change. No change will likely take place unless there’s readiness for such change, some existing inner struggle. if we’re not emotionally ready, nothing will change except perhaps our rationalizing about it.

**DAVID RYBACK** is the author of *Putting Emotional Intelligence to Work* and coauthor of the recently released book *Psychology of Champions*. He can be reached at David@EQAssociates.com.

**THE ENNEAGRAM OF PASSIONS AND VIRTUES: Finding the Way Home**

BY SANDRA MAITRI, FOREWORD BY A. H. ALMAAS


Reviewed by Kathleen Erickson

Of the half dozen Enneagram books in my library, all well-thumbed, this is my new favorite. It has the best description of how to use your personality point’s driving passion (and pitfall) for higher functioning. However, it also has several other unique characteristics.

**SPIRAL DYNAMICS**

First, and most important, is that the whole focus of the book is about using the Enneagram for development, by understanding the Enneagram as a three-dimensional hologram-like exploration of the possibilities for human behavior and identity. We can stay at any stage (out of about nine stages) of our primary Enneagram personality (out of nine personality points), or we can use the strengths of that type to develop within
it, in a “spiral dynamics”—like way. This kind of approach takes the more two-dimensional 9-point system and emphasizes the vertical dimension. This brings the wisdom of the Enneagram model of human personality into more focus as a vehicle for human transformation, which is Ken-Wilber–like in its practical spirituality.

FREUD IS STILL WITH US
another pleasant surprise, long awaited by me, is an application of Freudian analysis that is minimal, understandable, and appropriate. Although a many-decade fan of the Enneagram system, I have never believed the strict pronouncements of some authors that the Enneagram point that a person most identifies with is determined by the constellation of early parental treatment (for instance, Ones were criticized by the father but had a responsible mother—even though I fit this—or that Nines were abandoned by both parents, or felt that they were, etc.). Even if these parental attachments for each point have some validity, they may be a result of inborn personality more than actual parental behavior. This author does not insist on this origin for the primary personality orientation point of an individual.

Also, the understanding of id, ego, and superego are novel as applied to Enneagram modeling. Here they are considered to be personality divisions that are necessary for childhood growth, but expendable in adulthood when we are mature enough to let go of them.

ENNEAGRAM HISTORY
The Enneagram Model of 9 points was introduced by George Gurdjieff in 1911 in Turkey. Oscar Ichazo was a student of Gurdjieff’s who brought the teachings to South America. In Chile, he taught Claudio Naranjo, who brought the Enneagram to America, where the author was in his first classes.

DIAMOND APPROACH
Another enrichment of the original model comes from Almas’ explorations of essence, which inform and update the Enneagram. The Diamond Approach to transformation folds into the Enneagram model with such precision that the two systems reinforce each other.

My daughter and I recently attended a weekend workshop on the Enneagram called Levels of Development. This is the first time this Enneagram workshop topic had been taught on the West Coast. And so my “finding” this three-year-old book on my shelf when I got home was fortuitous. I had never opened it because of its unfortunate title, which gave no hint of its multilevel approach and developmental model of the work.

Those who can function at the best levels of their true nature and personality (about 1-2% of the population is estimated to operate at the top 3 levels of their point) are observed to draw from all nine points of the Enneagram in their behavior, and to embody at times any of the strengths, passions, and values of all nine points. This book is the clearest guide to using the Enneagram understanding of our most usual personality point and its drives to attain more natural, holistic, and enlightened functioning.

KATHLEEN ERICKSON, is an editor and writer, and Editor-in-Chief of this magazine.

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