



AAP News

The Newsletter of the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis

August

Summer

2004

Pragmatic Psychosynthesis

Contextualizing Psychosynthesis for Applications in Business – Part 1

By Peter Stonefield

For anyone searching for “spiritual nutrients,” psychosynthesis is beautiful and “soul” satisfying. For people seeking “effectiveness nutrients” in a corporate context, the value of psychosynthesis is far from obvious. Yet, psychosynthesis can help facilitate the next big step in the evolution of organizations. The challenge is how to contextualize it so that it is compelling to individuals and organizations seeking to improve their ability to get the results they intend.

My strategy is to integrate some psychosynthesis models and methods with today's dominant intellectual framework of Complexity Theory, Evolutionary Biology and Natural Systems Theory.

The genesis of this integration began while I was a student at the Synthesis Graduate School in San Francisco. One of the guest lecturers was Eric Jantsch, Physicist/Biologist at UC Berkeley. At the time Eric Jantsch was writing his book *The Self-Organizing Universe*. Based on chaos (complexity) theory and natural systems theory, Jantsch argued, self-organization is a “phenomenon underlying all levels of structure and dynamics, perhaps the vital force of the cosmos.” He used this theory to analyze everything from microscopic particles to molecular biosystems, organ systems, humans, societies, evolving ecosystems and galaxies.

Technically, self-organization is the evolution of a system into organized

Please turn to page 7

Sharing your Child's Enthusiasm

How to make use of opportunities to get closer

By Ilene Val-Essen, Ph.D.

Children and teens love praise. Their faces beam when we tell them we're happy they made the bed without wrinkles. We all like to be recognized for a job well done. But there is a far more meaningful way we can recognize our children—a way that goes much deeper—that supports their growth and builds a close and loving relationship. And the end result is that children and teens become more cooperative.

I can best describe what I'm talking about through a true story:

I was on the phone trying to write down directions to an important appointment when my son Derek came running in from school, shouting at the top of his lungs. “Mom! I want to go to John's house!” When I got off the phone, my first thought was to say, “Okay, settle down. I'm very busy now. You can go, but not till you finish your chores.”

Please turn to page 3

New West Coast Center

Up and Running

Combines Talents of Three Long-Time Friends and Colleagues

Molly Brown of Mount Shasta, Calif., along with Carol Hwoschinsky and Kay Lynne Sherman of Ashland, Ore., are offering classes, workshops, a training program, and psychosynthesis publications in their new Intermountain Synthesis Center, located in both Mount Shasta and Ashland.

Online training and consultation programs with students from across the country and abroad are already underway through Molly's website, www.mollyyoungbrown.com. Classes and workshops will be available for the general public and for helping professionals such as therapists, teachers, and health practitioners. Upcoming events include free introductory sessions held simultaneously at both locations Aug. 6. One-day workshops in the fall and weekend workshops in the spring will build to a training program starting next summer or fall.

For more about Molly, Carol, Kay Lynne, and their work, you can contact the Center at 530-926-0986 in Mount Shasta and 541-482-3992 in Ashland, visit www.intermountainsynthesis.org and www.mollyyoungbrown.com or send E-mail inquiries to info@mollyyoungbrown.com

(from SHARING on page 1)

And then something told me I was missing a great opportunity. Derek was happier and more excited than usual. I decided to put aside what I was doing for a few minutes and see what was really going on for him.

As I listened and tried to understand his world, I finally “read between the lines” and realized why he was so delighted by his friend's invitation. Derek was beginning to feel accepted; he was growing in his ability to be social.

Derek glowed when I said, “I'm really excited for you. It feels so good when someone shows they like you.”

So often we praise children for things that matter to us: looking neat or pretty, taking out the trash or being on time—things children may care little about. There's nothing wrong with that; everyone likes praise and it does encourage children and teens to do things we want them to do. But there is a much deeper way in which we can recognize them: by noticing what matters to them—and being genuinely enthusiastic for them.

The more I paid attention to Derek's world—really listened—the more I could see what he cared about. “We

made up a great game at school,” he would say. That seemed trivial to me—until I realized he was delighted at improving in sports—and learning to play better with others.

I learned to genuinely share his enthusiasm: “Doesn't that feel great? You're getting so much better!” The more I learned to do that, the closer we became. Derek felt understood; I was able to share and acknowledge his world. As a result, I noticed that he was more inclined to be cooperative. He felt more willing to do the chores I cared about when there was warmth between us and he felt understood and supported.

We want children to grow and become more responsible; it's our job to be sure they do. But what we often miss is that every child wants to grow—has a strong inner drive to become the best he or she can be. We support that growth when we take time to listen: when we discover where the child is growing right now and act as cheerleaders.

Paying attention to the positive things your child or teen truly cares about—and then sharing his or her enthusiasm—is one of the greatest gifts you can give. It will return to you many times over.

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The more I paid attention to Derek's world—really listened—the more I could see what he cared about.

Quotables

“Several years later I started doing work in corporations. Corporations resisted anything too psychological and deemed terms like subpersonalities psychobabble. Personal process sharing was “touchy-feely.” Jantsch's ideas began to come to me like echoes. Subpersonalities became “attractors,” “self-organized roles,” and later “success strategies” or “defensive strategies.” Most of the resistance disappeared.”

— From “Pragmatic Psychosynthesis” page 1



Mandala Page-a-Day Calendar ~ 2005

Created by Clare Goodwin (from The Synthesis Center, Amherst, MA)

and published by Workman Publishing, Inc.

Release date August, 2004

Imagine a new mandala every day with inspirational quotes, and 52 black-and-white mandala images to color in yourself.

Beautiful mandalas in this calendar have been created by artists Kim Aronson, Barbara Alana Brooks, Timothy David Crawshaw, Inge DeJong, Sally Rose Dolak, Clare Goodwin, Lisa Greenleaf, Paul Heussenstamm, Daniel Holeman, James Jemison, Sandra Joran, Carolyn Kulik, Cara Lee, Jay Mohler, Komra Moriko, Walter Myers, David Rankine, Steve Smith, Veno Stieger, Sugatha, Tibet Shop, Julia Weaver and Ray Whiting.

Pre-order your Mandala Page-a-Day Calendars now from Amazon.com! Or ask for it at your local bookstore: ISBN: 0761133771

(from PRAGMATIC PSYCHOSYNTHESIS, page 1)

forms without external constraints or pressures. Self-organization is different than natural selection. Selection is a choice between competing options where one form is preferred over another based upon some external pressure or criterion. In self-organization the system moves toward an “attractor” (a new pattern of expression) independent of environmental pressure. Complex systems can have many “attractors” and these can alter with changes to the system interactions. Studying self-organization is equivalent to investigating the “attractors” of the system, their form and interactions.

At the end of the course the students were asked to compare psychosynthesis and self-organization. The following is an excerpt from my paper. “The central differences between Jantch’s self-organizing theory and psychosynthesis are Jantsch offered no concept of the soul or “I.”

However, he argued that through mythologically driven self-organization humankind would eventually end up as “spiritual man. . . .” He didn’t offer a map or model of personality nor any tools or strategies for how to facilitate self-organization. It was, however, fairly easy to see subpersonalities as “attractors.” I concluded, “His self-organizing theory, including the coevolution of different levels of living systems, was probably more palatable to the non-spiritual-seeking world than Psychosynthesis.”

Lacking a “soul,” self-organization never got immediate traction with me or at Synthesis Graduate School. As a former electronic systems engineer turned marketing and sales director before attending the graduate school, I was receptive to a systems perspective and sensitive to what is saleable.

Several years later I started doing work in corporations. Corporations resisted anything too psychological and deemed terms like subpersonalities

psychobabble. Personal process sharing was “touchy feely.” Jantch’s ideas began to come to me like echoes. Subpersonalities became “attractors,” self-organized roles, and later “success strategies” or “defensive strategies.” Most of the resistance disappeared.

Today complexity theory and systems theory are the dominant intellectual frameworks informing organizational development, information technology, network theory, bioinformatics, control theory, and systems thinking. IBM, Sun Microsystems, HP, and Microsoft are starting to use self-managing, self-healing and related terms to describe their visions of computing. I drafted a computing vision for Sun based upon self-organization, called Agile Computing. As it turned out Sun couldn’t use it because Microsoft had already copyrighted, but not published, very similar schemes.

The ascendancy of complexity and systems theory is a response to the challenges individuals and organizations are facing. We are going through the most integrative period in history. Everywhere you look, people, countries, technologies, medical approaches, business strategies, even sciences are integrating. Even longstanding business competitors are forming strategic partnerships to provide the “integrative solutions” the marketplace is demanding. Paradoxically the increasing integration is enabling greater differentiation and independence, adding to the complexity.

- To be concluded -

(Please tune in next issue for the conclusion of this discussion, in which Peter explores challenges corporate leaders face—and proposes answers from psychosynthesis.)

Goings On

Clinical Imagery and Clinical Meditation Training in Huntington, NY

with Bonney and Richard Schaub

Starting September 18, 2004

Ten Saturdays, 9:30 AM – 3:30 PM

For more information:

New York Psychosynthesis Institute
109 East 36th Street,
New York NY 10016

2 Murray Court,
Huntington NY 11743
631.673.0293

e-mail: rschaub@ix.netcom.com

Website:

www.newyorkpsychosynthesis.com

website: www.dantespath.com

Membership

Online Member Directory

As part of your membership benefits, the AAP website, with the online directory of all our members, is currently undergoing a major face lift. During this time you will be receiving an email and/or letter that will ask you to update your information and give permission for us to list the parts you choose. Only members will be allowed access to this locked ‘members only’ area. When you receive the request for information, please respond promptly to help expedite this project. Many thanks.

Shamai Currim, Veronica Fisher

Janet Messer, Jean Rhea

Norwegian Fire

by Mary Eileen Kiniry

Went to Norway

A conference in spirit weaved

With the sensual and sexual

Loamy smells of life

Held in both the dark and light.

Come here by the fire

Within and between us

Here sits the Beloved

Welcome...Farewell

Diverse Tools for the Journey

We asked in our last issue for examples of “successes and challenges using psychosynthesis with ethnically and racially different individuals and groups.” Here is a response from Oklahoma City.

Psychosynthesis with Diverse Clients

By Edwin Miller

I use Psychosynthesis at two levels: 1. It is foundational to all my understanding about people and their spiritual and psychological interactions. 2. I develop specific exercises/interventions based on such classics as the “Door Exercise” (clients call forth and interact with parts of themselves) and adaptations of the exercises in Piero Ferrucci’s *What We May Be* and Molly Young Brown’s the *Unfolding Self*. I begin almost every session with relaxation leading into a psychosynthesis exercise.

In order to ground the language of psychosynthesis in everyday experience, I talk to clients about “parts of ourselves” rather than “subpersonalities.” I help them develop inner resources such as “Wisdom” and “Essence.” Both may be aspects of “Higher Self” in Assagioli’s meaning.

I use psychosynthesis with culturally and ethnically diverse clients. Of 52 clients in groups over the past year and a half, 20 have been male, 32, female. Ethnic distribution: 10 percent each Hispanic and Native American, 25 percent black, 55 percent Anglo/white. Cultural diversity is harder to describe. About 15 percent have been middle-class with secure incomes, about 25 percent semiskilled with steady jobs, the remaining 60 percent somewhere between “working poor” without benefits and “welfare moms”—some with their own home or apartment, some living in shelters or homeless. All of the men and a few of the women have been court-mandated for anger management in relation to a driving-under-the-influence arrest. Most of the women have been Child Welfare-mandated for drug/alcohol-recovery in relation to a family reunification plan after their children have been removed from the home.

The work is with anger-management, spirituality-in-recovery, and trauma-recovery therapy groups that are part of a drug/alcohol-recovery program.

“Giving Back” Exercise (Example of an Exercise Used in a Diverse Group)

In a trauma-recovery group, after working on safety and security for two sessions, we used this exercise:

- ✧ We invited the participants to identify a significant person in their lives who had either abused them, abandoned them, or both.
- ✧ Then we invited their “Wisdom” and “Essence” to be present to protect and nurture them while they grieved the loss of the relationship they needed but did not have as a result of the abuse/abandonment.
- ✧ Participants wrote and/or drew this experience.
- ✧ We helped them return to a relaxed state with “Wisdom” and “Essence” and place all the loss, hurt, pain, anger and other distressing feelings in a box.
- ✧ In imagery they delivered the box to the person they were grieving in the first part, saying something like, “You gave me all of this. I don’t need it anymore, so I am giving all of it back to you.”
- ✧ Again they wrote/drew.
- ✧ Finally, participants shared feelings—like “relieved,” “lighter,” “more free.”

Follow-up:

We reviewed this work the following week when participants reported results such as the following:

One “young mother” (identity disguised) reported she had come to see that the safety and security she thought she was providing for her children was not all that they needed. For instance, she had been focused on seeing that they had enough to eat, but not on providing them with appropriate, nurturing adults.

The abuser she focused on in her process had been an adult friend of the family who had raped her when she was preadolescent. She came to recognize how much this event had distorted her thinking. She said about the “giving back” exercise, “I am done with that, now. I’m not letting him ruin my life any longer.”

I have been amazed at how readily these very wounded people take to this psychosynthesis approach, without questioning the “reality” of inner resources, and do phenomenal imagery with real-world results.

I see the influences on my work of several approaches to therapy: Gestalt, NeuroLinguistic Programming, Eye Movement Desensitization, and others. Psychosynthesis is the foundation and the unifying concept in all my work.

Edwin L. Miller, a Licensed Professional Counselor and Licensed Marital and Family Therapist, is clinical supervisor and group therapy facilitator for an outpatient drug and alcohol recovery center. He is also part-time pastor of an Episcopal congregation in Oklahoma City. Currently he is serving on the steering committee of the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis.

Goings On

Psychosynthesis Manhattan Fall 2004 Workshops and Groups

Free Introduction to Psychosynthesis
Friday, September 17, 2004,
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

*Fundamentals of Psychosynthesis:
Integrating our Personal and
Spiritual Nature*
12 Wednesday Evenings beginning
Late September 2004

*Professional Training Foundations
of Psychosynthesis - Level Two*
10 Monthly Saturdays beginning
September 25, 2004

*The Inner Lives of Men/A Men's
Group for Psychological and
Spiritual Development-(Ongoing)*

For more information:

Scott Thompson, Director
Psychosynthesis Manhattan
19 West 34th Street, Penthouse
New York, NY 10001
212.947.7111 ext. 296
www.PsychosynthesisManhattan.com
Scott@PsychosynthesisManhattan.com

Summer and Early Fall Activities of the Kentucky Center of Psychosynthesis

July 30 – 31, 2004:

*Forgiveness as Seen in the World's
Great Spiritual Traditions*
Keynote speaker Al Lingo

August 18 – 22, 2004:

*Basic Professional Training Program
in Psychosynthesis*

September 24 – 26, 2004:

Embodied Consciousness
Leader, Ed Gutfreund.

Fall 2004 and Spring 2005:

*Continued Training Program in
Psychosynthesis*

For more information:

www.ky-psychosynthesis.org

Co-chair Report

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

The 'dog days of summer' are upon us. Hopefully, this note finds you lying around and enjoying a slower pace of life, even if briefly. As for your steering committee, we probably get to do a little less lying around as we embark on several exciting new tasks for our organization—and you can join in. Many of you have seen our new brochure (please let us know if you need copies). Next, look for the revamping and updating of the AAP website. A committee is in place and plans are underway. You will be able to use streamlined registration for our conferences and have access to articles and other features. We are beginning plans for your next issue of *Conversations*, with material from our "Day of Conversations" held in Amherst in the spring. The groups and range of issues was truly astounding. We will be contacting you about your contributions for this endeavor.

Your next annual conference will be held in **Minneapolis, Minn., June 17 to 21, 2005. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday (June 17, 18, and 19) will be the conference dates, and Sunday, Monday and Tuesday (June 19, 20, and 21) will be reserved for our 3rd annual Trainer Development Program.** A request for proposals will coming to you shortly.

Lastly, we have developed a marketing intention and strategic plan for your organization's membership. The goals include expanding membership by 10 percent this year and a total of 30 percent over the next three years, as well as expanding opportunities to teach, train, and publish Psychosynthesis articles in various institutions and publications.

We are excited by your new Steering Committee members and their energy and talents. Many of them are involved in the tasks above. By the way, our nominating committee has convened and is beginning its search for new Steering Committee members to come on board next spring. We hope to count you among them.

We wish you continued peace and relaxation for the summer.

Warmly,

Scott Thompson and Mary Eileen Kiniry
Co-chairs, AAP

And this moment is all right...

And this moment is all right...

And this moment is all right...

Ram Dass in the video "Fierce Grace"

Wonderful Ideas for Summer Reading!!

Go to Synthesis Distribution Web Site where the titles of all the PDF articles and Ted Slawski's Book/CDs and Monographs are listed with a **** 10% Discount ** for AAP members:** <http://www.synthesiscenter.org/syndist/catalog.html>

Mention AAP membership in the comments field . . . and Keep shopping.

You will find all 42 articles and monographs in a PDF format that is Mac and PC compatible. Ted also is offering the CD with all the monographs to date to AAP members for \$40! What a great deal! Support our own!

Goings On

A Path to the True Self

This annual retreat is held for the Psychosynthesis Community as well as for like-minded people who are comfortable with meditation. There are periods for discourse on spiritual topics chosen by the group, periods of meditation and chanting, times of silence, times of playing and laughter. In a beautiful woody setting in the Baraboo Hills (about 30 miles from Madison, Wis.) there are many opportunities for being in nature, hiking trails, exploring, or simply sitting and enjoying the surrounding beauty and peace.

4 PM Thursday, September 23, 2004, to 12 noon Sunday, September 26, 2004.

For information and registration:
Hedwig Weiler
hedwigw@aol.com
or call 608-273-3051

A retreat with Thomas Yeomans & Friends

This retreat will be led by Tom and three collaborators who have studied and worked with him over the past few years in deepening and expanding the field of *Spiritual/Global Psychology*.

Together, they are seeking to embody a new shared model of teaching and group facilitation. October 28 - 31, 2004 at The Growing Edge Center for Sustainable Peace & Healing Big Sur, California
For information:
Kay Brownfield
831-667-2366
www.growingedge.org

Call for Proposals and 2005 Annual Conference Update Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis Grounding Spirit in Body, Mind and Community

June 17, 18, and 19, 2005
(Friday evening, Saturday, and Sunday until 3 p.m.)
Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota

Call for Proposals

We invite you to send in your proposals to present at our annual conference. We are looking for workshops that support the theme and provide new developments and creative methods for applying psychosynthesis. Proposals from other creative arts practitioners, trainers, educators, pastoral counselors, medical professionals, and psychotherapists will be considered also.

You will receive the proposal outline as an email attachment shortly. Proposals must be postmarked by Monday, October 11, 2004, for consideration. Each proposal must be submitted on a separate form and must include the original and three copies. You will be notified regarding the disposition of your proposal. We look forward to your joining us next year.

Conference Update

Conference planning continues. John Firman and Ann Gila will offer the keynote address on Friday evening, June 17, 2005 to open the conference. Among other things, they will talk about a new book they are working on which will focus on psychosynthesis and psychotherapy. We have already seen how well they fill in the gaps and present new material supplementing Assagioli's work in their most recent book, *Psychosynthesis: A Psychology of the Spirit*. We're looking forward to hearing about their new work.

On Saturday morning, June 18th, 2005, a keynote will be offered by Martha Crampton,. Martha is particularly interested in applications of psychosynthesis which include and emphasize the body, a significant piece which has been underdeveloped. She has been working and writing for some time on extending theory and practice using the Will to penetrate beyond sub-personalities to patterns of energy at the archetypal level, particularly as found in the energy body.

Following the two keynotes we plan to have a panel and open discussion with senior psychosynthesis practitioners which will emphasize new and emerging ideas about theory and practice. Also, there will be many concurrent sessions offered by psychosynthesis teachers and practitioners from North America and hopefully one or two describing psychosynthesis applications in other countries.

Be sure to block out the time for this conference in your calendar, June 17 to 19. Also, if you can attend the Trainer Development Program immediately following the conference, you'll want to block out June 19 (evening) and June 20 and 21, 2005. Please stay tuned; more information will be coming your way.

Dennis Wynne
2005 Conference Chair

A View of the World Today Through a Psychosynthetic Lens

“Our world is torn asunder by men and women who claim that God is on their side...”

John Firman and Ann Gila wrote a timely paper **“On Religious Fanaticism”** which offers a psychosynthesis understanding of that phenomenon. Here’s an excerpt:

“Our world today is torn asunder by men and women who claim that God is on their side, and who, secure in the righteousness of their positions, perpetrate acts of violent destruction. . . .

“Although this disorder can be called “religious fanaticism,” those afflicted need not appear wild-eyed or deranged; quite the contrary, they can present themselves as thoughtful and responsible people inspired by the loftiest of ideals. . . . We need not point out specific examples of this disorder perhaps, except to say that it can afflict anyone, from the person on the street, to the international terrorist, to the leader of the most powerful nation on earth.”

The full article is available as a free download from PsychosynthesisPaloAlto.com

Good news: In May, John and Ann led a workshop for the trainers at the Italian Society of Therapeutic Psychosynthesis in Florence. While there they learned that their first book, *The Primal Wound*, is being published in Italian. Congratulations Ann and John!

David Bach’s Passing

Hi all.

Judy Bach asked me to pass on the news that David died peacefully on June 23. I had the pleasure of being with him earlier in his transitioning and he was joyful and full of peace. Please pass this on to others who knew David.

*May we all know peace, love,
Didi Firman*

(We hope to present some of your thoughts about David and his extraordinary life in the fall issue.)

Night and Sleep

At the time of night-prayer, as the sun slides down,
the route the senses walk on closes, the route of the invisible opens.

The angel of sleep then gathers and drives along the spirits;
just as the mountain keeper gathers his sheep on a slope.

And what amazing sights he offers to the descending sheep!
Cities with sparkling streets, hyacinth gardens, emerald pastures!

The spirit sees astounding beings, turtles turned to men,
men turned to angels, when sleep erases the banal.

I think one could say the spirit goes back to its old home;
it no longer remembers where it lives, and loses its fatigue.

It carries around in life so many griefs and loads
and trembles under their weight; they are gone, it is all well.

—Rumi

Trans. by Robert Bly, 1981, in *Night and Sleep*, Yellow Moon Press

If my devils are to leave me,
I am afraid my angels
will take flight as well.

—*R.M Rilke*

Quotables

“The word “evil” is commonly used to describe that which we fear, don’t understand, or feel separate from. The use of such terms allows us to not own these projected qualities/behaviors/emotions ourselves. For instance, when we call someone a “terrorist,” we project the source of terror onto the “other” and don’t own our participation (through taxes, consumptive lifestyle, etc.) in terrorizing others (through military occupation, bombing, or economic policies).

— From “Letter to the Editor” on page 2

AAP News

Coeditors:

Mary Eileen Kiniry
Walter Polt

Design:

Erlinda Brent

Submissions:

Please *send your ideas*, poems, articles (especially about use of psychosynthesis, whether explicit or implicit, in our world), book reviews, art work, exercises, etc. that have been helpful to you in your life and/or work. Length guideline: 600-or-so words max.

Don't forget to write letters to the editors with your responses, comments, or questions about newsletter and contents.

New submission deadlines:

Oct. 1, Jan. 1, April 1, July 1

This will give us both the time to edit, review and make editorial decisions when space is an issue --and get the magazine out in the last week of the month so everyone will have it in hand by the month on the newsletter!

How to reach us:

Address e-mails to
ebrent54@excite.com
or write to

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NY, NY 10028

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The Essence of Desire

I did not
have to ask my heart
what it wanted
because of all the desires
I have ever known
just one did I cling to
for it was the essence of
all desire:
to know beauty

—St John of the Cross c.1542-1591

Letter to Editors

A Dissenting Opinion on the Use of the Term “Evil” in Psychosynthesis

A group discussion topic at the Conversations in Psychosynthesis at the April Conference in Amherst dealt with the topic of “evil” in Psychosynthesis. A definition was not reached, but discussion ensued assuming “evil’s” existence. My dissenting opinion is that we must rise above the use of this and other terms (terrorist, communist, witch), which represent projections of something we fear/hate, without definition. Additionally, “evil” is a term emanating from religious worldviews. Psychosynthesis’s usefulness is as a psychological model which helps explain human consciousness, motivations and behaviors, among other things, in open, non-religious terms.

The use of such a blanket term as “evil” to describe people or their/our behaviors is a contributing factor in the world’s current polarization. Like the evolution implied in the synthesis triangle diagram, we must find our way to a higher/more inclusive perspective. At bottom, behaviors we call “evil” are motivated by fear/attachment. Imagine calling a child “evil” or sitting with a client and thinking they are/have “evil.” Surely most of us would qualify that thinking with consideration of the motivations behind the behaviors. As teachers and therapists, we name behaviors and the motivations giving rise to them rather than to generalize and call the person, behavior, or motivation “evil.”

Of course, we humans do have shadow, dark, unconscious, harmful and harmed parts of ourselves. To call these aspects “evil” is to block them off. Such generalizing and denying is not useful. As psychosynthesists we identify these parts, shine the light of identification, see the actual emotion, fear/attachment that is born out of life’s suffering and in that instant move up the synthesis triangle to a more inclusive perception.

For the sake of our politically, socially, and religiously troubled world, let us move from this particular habit of dichotomizing ourselves, clients, children, social and political individuals, and groups by the use of such projective terms. Let’s stop going dead to the motivations of others by the use of generalized negative terms, which ultimately say, “I don’t understand you, I fear you, you are ‘other’ than me.”

The word “evil” is commonly used to describe that which we fear, don’t understand, or feel separate from. The use of such terms allows us to not own these projected qualities/behaviors/emotions ourselves. For instance, when we call someone a “terrorist,” we project the source of terror onto the “other” and don’t own our participation (through taxes, consumptive lifestyle, etc.) in terrorizing others (through military occupation, bombing, or economic policies). By calling another person or group “evil,” we disassociate ourselves from the motivations and behaviors (fear-based greed, denial, harmful behaviors) that we participate in which may look to the “other” person as “evil.”

Seen from the more inclusive view from the top of the synthesis triangle, two parts, unconscious of each other’s motivations, call the other “evil.” In this circumstance, “evil” becomes a moot point. There is no meaning derived from these mutual projections. However, if we identify specific fears, harmful behaviors, and move to identify with the “other,” we raise consciousness. As psychosynthesists, let’s join with others leading the way in the use of unifying, conscious language, reflecting greater unity in our perceptions and in humankind.

(We inadvertently may have lost the author’s signature to this letter. If the author would like to be known we ask that you submit your name for attribution. Our apologies. Editors.)

Inside this Issue...

You Speak My Language?

Two AAP members show some of their ways of letting different populations experience psychosynthesis through the words, phrases, concepts, and goals meaningful to each audience:

- Peter Stonefield interacts with folks in American corporations
- Edwin Miller assists ethnically and culturally diverse client groups

BodyBodyBody

- Brad Roth gives us a quick, ready-to-go body experience (more in future issues).
- He also reports on a group's answers to a burning interest:
integrating body and movement awareness into psychosynthesis.

What's Up With You?

Psychosynthesis activities are everywhere. This issue alerts you to upcoming events ...at least the ones we know about.

Dear to the Heart of Every Parent, Lover, Leader

Ilene Val-Essen shows how to get close and influence: by comprehending someone's enthusiasm and sharing it.

...And More! Enjoy!

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



Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis
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