



PSYCHOSYNTHESIS

QUARTERLY

The Digital Magazine of the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis

Volume 5 Number 1

March 2016

Assagioli on Aging, on “I” and Self

**Continuing Assagioli’s East-West Synthesis
Pilgrimage to the Heart of Community
The Three Stages of Imagery**

Psychosynthesis and Non-Violent Communication

**A Conversation about
Psychosynthesis and Esoteric Studies**

Review of Books on Parenting

Psychosynthesis Conferences in 2016

And more . . .

Psychosynthesis Quarterly

Editor: Jan Kuniholm

Assistant Editors: Bonney Kuniholm, Audrey McMorro, and Walter Polt

Design and Production:

Jan Kuniholm, Walter Polt

Psychosynthesis Quarterly is published by AAP four times a year in March, June, September and December. Submission deadlines are February 7, May 7, August 7, and November 7.

Send Announcements, Ideas, Reviews of Books and Events, Articles, Poetry, Art, Exercises, Photos, and Letters: Tell us what has helped your life and work, what can help others, and examples of psychosynthesis theory in action. Notice of **Events** should be **1500** words or less, and **articles** should usually be **4500** words or less. We accept psychosynthesis-related advertising from members. Non-members who wish to run psychosynthesis-related advertising are requested to make a donation to AAP. Send submittals to:

newsletter@aap-psychosynthesis.org

The Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis:

Founded in 1995, AAP is a Massachusetts nonprofit corporation with tax exemption in the United States. It is dedicated to advocating on behalf of psychosynthesis and conducting psychosynthesis educational programs. Membership and donations are tax deductible in the United States.

AAP membership supports this publication and the other educational activities of AAP: \$75 (US) per year, with a sliding-scale fee of \$45 to \$75 for those who need it. Go to

<http://aap-psychosynthesis.org/join-aap/>

or contact us at (413) 743-1703 or

info@aap-psychosynthesis.org

If you are NOT a member we invite you to join AAP and support psychosynthesis in North America and the world.

Views expressed in Psychosynthesis Quarterly are not necessarily those of the editors or of AAP. AAP makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of what appears in the Quarterly but accepts no liability for errors or omissions. We may edit submissions for grammar, syntax, and length.

Psychosynthesis Quarterly is sent to all current AAP members and to others who are interested in our work. Our membership list is never sold.

©copyright 2016 by AAP
61 East Main Street
Cheshire, MA 01225-9627
All Rights Reserved

www.aap-psychosynthesis.org

contents

Volunteers Wanted to help AAP	3
Letter to the Editor	4
The Opportunities of Old Age - <i>Roberto Assagioli</i>	5
Center for Awakening Retreat in North Carolina	7
An Interview with <i>Roberto Assagioli</i> on "I" and Center	8
A Conversation Between <i>Piero Ferrucci</i> and <i>Will Parfitt</i> on Psychosynthesis and Esoteric Studies	10
Pilgrimage to the Heart of Comminuty - <i>Catherine Ann Lombard</i>	13
Meeting at <i>Casa Assagioli</i>	17
Invitation for Presenters for The Synthesis Center Conference	18
The Synthesis Center 2016 Presenters Conference in VT	19
A New Year - An Arduous New Start, or Stymied? - <i>A. DeSoto</i>	20
Continuing Assagioli's East-West Synthesis - <i>R. & B. Schaub</i>	22
Psychosynthesis and Non-Violent Communication: Frameworks for Transformation - <i>Jean McElhaney</i>	25
Review of Two Books by I. Val-Essen: The Best in Parenting	29
Announcing AAP's Program of Grants and Scholarships	30
The Three Stages of Imagery - <i>Jan Taal</i>	31
Introducing the Bulgarian Psychosynthesis Association	43
Conference in Sicily: Psychosynthesis for the Future	45

EDITOR'S NOTES

We join you in the new year bringing a wealth of thought and presentation with this issue. A letter from Piero Ferrucci; and Thomas Yeomans and Ann Gila have shared the transcripts of two conversations with Roberto Assagioli which have not been previously published.

Piero Ferrucci and Will Parfitt write contrasting thoughts about psychosynthesis and esoteric studies in a conversation; Catherine Ann Lombard takes us on a journey to Casa Assagioli in Florence; Richard and Bonney Schaub show us new initiatives that connect psychosynthesis and eastern energy medicine; new contributor Jan Taal from The Netherlands shares his work in The Three Stages of Imagery; Jean Melhaney gives us insight into the connections between psychosynthesis and Non-Violent Communication. We have a review of Ilene Val-Essen's two wonderful books on parenting; Marin Kolev introduces the Bulgarian Psychosthesis Association.

Conferences and Retreats in North Carolina, Vermont, and Sicily are coming up, so plan ahead!

AAP Announces Programs of Grants and Scholarships (see Page 30).

Jan Kuniholm





Volunteers Wanted:

The Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis (AAP) needs people who are committed to helping to make psychosynthesis a force for good in the world! AAP is governed by a Steering Committee, and its work is done by volunteers from everywhere. Steering Committee members must be from North America, but other work can be done by anyone who wants to see psychosynthesis have a positive impact in the world. Our work usually takes up to ten (10) hours a month, Steering Committee meets by telephone once a month. We need member participation on the Steering Committee, and at all other levels of our work.

If you'd like to be a part of this ongoing work, please email cochairs@aap-psychosynthesis.org. We'd love to welcome new colleagues!

PSYCHOSYNTHESIS QUARTERLY

This magazine needs an additional volunteer copy editor. Must be detail-oriented and good with English grammar and syntax, etc. Work takes about ten (10) hours spread out over three weeks, every three months in February, May, August, and November. The “pay” is seeing this journal go out into the world four times a year!

Contact Jan at Newsletter@aap-psychosynthesis.org.

letters

NOTE: This letter by Piero Ferrucci is in response to a Letter to the Editor from Ann Gila, which appeared in the December, 2015 issue of Psychosynthesis Quarterly —Editor

Dear Ann,

I read your letter to the editor about my article on the Self, and I was filled with sadness. The last thing I would want is to cause you distress. Let me clarify a few points.

First of all, I acknowledge that the change of the egg diagram as well as the theoretical material that goes with it is authored by you as well as John. I will correct that in future editions. My mistake.

As regards having different viewpoints, I am not troubled at all, and I hope you are not either. In any discussion I throw around ideas, words, definitions, in complete freedom, knowing that the relationship between people is on an altogether different plane. I may disagree with you and John on some points, but that does not touch at all the warmth and the affection I feel for you both, as well as the deep closeness that comes from sharing the same source.

Now, a comment about Roberto's therapeutic intervention with the globe of the universe when a student was voicing her concerns. You feel uncomfortable about it. Well, I believe that to form a complete judgement, we should know more about previous sessions, as well as what was going on at that very moment. What context? Every therapeutic situation is unique. A great move with client A may be a disastrous mistake with client B. Of course here the key question is, did that intervention elicit insight or aggravate the student's predicament?

In general, I believe good therapy should have at least two modes: soft and firm. The basis, of course, is compassion, empathy, listening. But at some point it's good to be firm, to vary our moves, to challenge the client, and offer perhaps a radically different viewpoint. When and how to do that is the art of psychotherapy.

As regards the attitude to our contents of consciousness: I agree with the idea (affirmed, as far as I know, by all the great spiritual traditions in some form or other) that we live in a world of illusion. As a therapist I may work horizontally—that is, work through the client's problems and suffering—all very real and tangible. But at some point I may also work vertically (oops), and facilitate him in transcending his predicament—which is disidentification. In that case all worries, all concerns, are seen as much less serious and substantial, simply because they are seen in a wider context and their hold on us is looser.

Last, you say you do not agree that the change in the egg's diagram came from John's youthful suspicion of hierarchies, but from his and your evolving spirituality. Of course you have much more first-hand knowledge of this aspect. However, I happen to believe that our personal history, our battles, our contradictions and uncertainties, our weak points, and also the prevailing climate of the times, are all part of our spiritual evolution. Taking them into consideration does not in any way diminish the truth and the beauty of the ideas we propound.

Dear Ann, your and John's books keep enriching our path and serving our students. Meanwhile, the debate goes on. I wish you well and send you my warmest greetings.

Piero

THE OPPORTUNITIES OF OLD AGE

ROBERTO ASSAGIOLI

From notes made by Solange de Marignac at an interview with Dr. Assagioli on the occasion of her father's birthday.

Question

Many fear that old age will bring physical limitations and that this will have a detrimental effect on their moral and intellectual capacities. May I ask you, whose health has been seriously impaired, what you think about this problem?

R.A.: The moral and intellectual capacities are not necessarily affected by physical limitations, even severe ones - and this is true of any age. Numerous examples testify to this. Remember Charles Darwin, who was able to work only one or two hours a day; William James, whose health was precarious all his life; and above all the shining example of Adèle Kamm, who, although confined permanently to her bed by disease of the spine, inspired numbers of the sick by her uplifting words and writings.

As for me, my considerable physical limitations due to age do not appear to affect my capacities, as I shall indicate in a moment. Indeed, I obtain certain advantages from some of these limitations, such as my partial deafness! In my opinion, a great deal depends on one's own attitude. A serene acceptance of limitations (and this applies also to all the non-physical ones - and who hasn't some?) largely eliminates their negative influence. They can be regarded as presenting a challenge to be overcome, thus acting as a spur to the development of compensations and even over-compensations.

Question

We often hear the statement "I am too old to change." Would you, as a firm believer in evolution, give your opinion on this point? Do you personally have the feeling of being able to continue to perfect yourself, or of still having to modify and develop certain aspects of thought?

(Continued on [page 6](#))

R.A.: In all sincerity I will state that it is still possible for me to continue to perfect myself, and that I apply myself thereto no less actively, and perhaps even more effectively, than formerly. My thought is continually developing: new aspects of Reality frequently present themselves to my mind, and this kindles joy and enthusiasm in me. But it is not devoid of inconveniences, because I feel urged to modify and improve (at least so I hope!) what I have written in the past - although I am aware that the time I still have left on the earth would be better employed in producing something new.

Question

If it is not an indiscreet question, may one ask in what terms you think about death, and about your own in particular?

R.A.: I neither desire nor fear the death of my physical body, for I am firmly convinced, not only of survival, but also of life's continuity. I am convinced that the "spiritual nucleus" which is the essence of ourselves is immortal, and that the renewal of its manifestations will be accompanied by an increasingly extended awareness and ever greater creative power.

Question

Finally, what answer would you give someone who asked you how to grow old well?

R.A.: Growing old well demands that we achieve what I have termed the "psychosynthesis of the ages". This means keeping ever-present and alive in us some measure of what is best and most sound in each age: the simplicity, the open-heartedness towards the world, the capacity for admiration, of the child; the eagerness of the adolescent; the dynamism of the young; the balance and maturity of the adult; the abundant fruits of experience - and the gift of wisdom which accrues from them - of advanced age.

In such manner the old are privileged in being able to become once again a child with children, young with the young, and in fact to communicate from a basis of warmhearted understanding with persons of every age. So, as he gradually withdraws from active participation in the life of his environment, the man of advanced years (and this naturally applies as well to women) can serve as a steadfast point of support and a beneficent, loving centre of radiation and inspiration.

I came across this short interview with Roberto Assagioli, conducted by a colleague of his, in the papers of a colleague of mine who had visited him in the early 70s in Florence. Roberto died in 1974. And when my friend died some time after, the papers came to me. Roberto is his own inimitable self in his responses to the questions and they remind me of the conversations Anne and I had with him when we studied with him in Florence in the fall of 1972. I can attest to the truth of what he says here, for he was very alive, present, funny, and wise at 84 to us at 31, and influenced us in the profoundest ways. A few months ago I told Jan about the interview and he thought that it would be of interest to readers of the Quarterly. In re-reading it, at age 75 now, I find it very timely and inspiring.

—Thomas Yeomans.

The Center for Awakening 2016 Spring Retreat “Trusting the Invisible World”

This retreat is offered for people interested in the inner journey. During the retreat, participants will discuss topics related to finding and hearing that inner voice. In addition to meditation and periods of silence, there will be other activities that emerge as the small group spends time together. Beautiful mountain views, easy companionship, laughter, joy, humor, and playfulness will weave their way through the day.

This is our fourth year in the beautiful mountain setting of Wildacres in the Blue Ridge Parkway of North Carolina, having moved from Wisconsin where the annual retreat was held for many years. We look forward to seeing those of you returning and those of you who are moved to join us this year.

Facilitator: Hedwig Weiler, MSN, CNS, Founder of the Psychosynthesis Center of Wisconsin, and one of the Center for Awakening’s founders—mostly retired now, but still conducts retreats and occasionally teaches psychosynthesis and meditation.

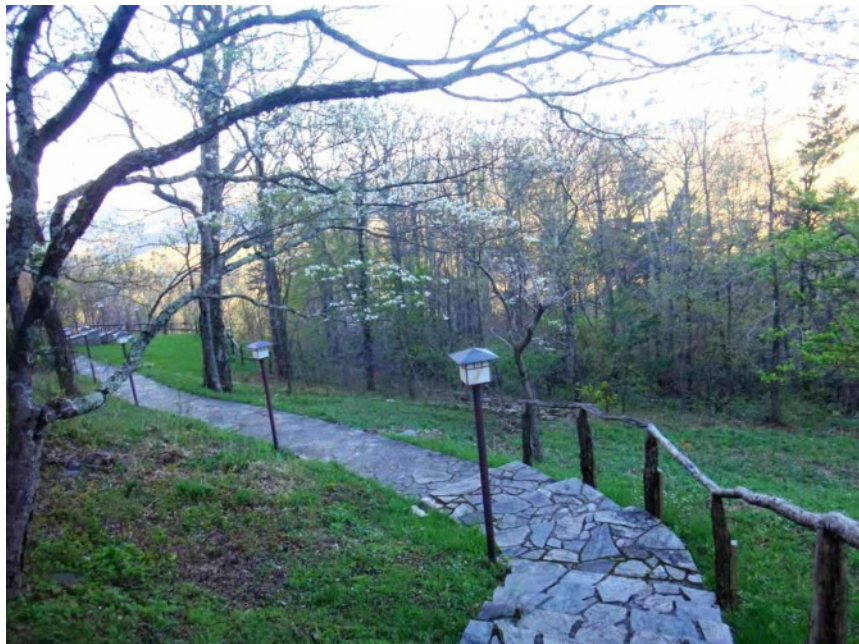
Where: Wildacres Retreat,
Little Switzerland, North Carolina.

When: Monday, April 25 4 PM to
Thursday, April 28, 2015, 11 AM

Cost: \$350 covers everything for the
entire stay including lodging (two people
per room), meals, program and materials.

Registration Deadline: March 28, 2016
The number of participants is limited to
the first 15. Register ASAP. Checks will
be cashed in April.

See www.centerforawakening.org
for registration form and more
information.



Roberto Assagioli on “I” and Center



John Firman studied with Roberto Assagioli for two and a half months in the fall of 1973. John and his first wife, Heidi, met with Roberto both in Florence and in Assagioli’s home in Capolona. John taped the sessions, and I believe transcribed them while he was still in Italy. His transcriptions are very helpful, because to listen to Roberto on cassette tapes speaking English with his strong Italian accent is a challenge. In transcribing these tapes soon after the sessions took place, John was able to remember what was said and to capture what Roberto spoke almost word for word.

The following is a conversation with Roberto about “I” and “center.” I thought others might find it interesting and useful to hear Assagioli speak of the distinction between the two. Notice that in this discussion John followed the custom of referring to “I” as “*the* ‘I.’” John and I changed this many years later. We believed that using the definite article, “the,” before “I,” makes “I” an object rather than the subject that we are, the living entity that Roberto refers to in this conversation. The words in brackets are inserted for clarity, and several describe what Assagioli was pointing to as he spoke. —Ann Gila

Q: What is the difference between the “I” which can become identified with a subpersonality off center and the center?

RA: When the “I” is identified with a subpersonality off center, it is no more at the center; there is no center. The “I” should be...well the disidentified personal “I,” is at the center, but that is the outcome of successful disidentification. Normally, the “I” is identified with something. So the average person is never at the center. When we say self-centered, that means that it is identified with a selfish, ego-centric, subpersonality, but not the pure personal “I,” the pure reflection of the Self. The “I” is a reflection, but it is never a pure reflection at first, it is always colored and pulled left, right, and downward by subpersonalities.

Q: If the Self is always there, is not the center always there, even if we are not at center?

RA: No! Not at all! You see, the personal “I” goes here and here and here, is never at the center. Except during disidentification.

Q: So, there is a distinction to be made between the “I” which becomes identified and the center which is disidentified?

RA: No! No difference! When the “I” is disidentified, then it remains there [center], and so the communication [with Self] is easier and stronger. First it [“I”] has to free itself from all identification and coloring, then when it has achieved some measure of disidentification, the pull of the Self is stronger than the pull of the subpersonalities. The existential crisis is that there are all these pulls. These are all subpersonalities who try to pull to themselves—and often succeed—the “I.” And meanwhile the pull of the Self is negligible, then it becomes stronger and stronger, and finally it may win.

Q: So the center is something created by the “I”?

(Continued on [page 9](#))

(Continued from [page 8](#))

RA: But, no. There is no center in the sense you say; the center is a locality, not something existent. What you call the center is the “I,” but temporarily it is eccentric. Center is a geometric; just as in a circle there is a center, a locality, a point in space, not a living entity. The living entity is the “I.” [What is] much confused is the locality with the living creature, the living being. When you say “I am angry,” then this goes here [“I” to lower unconscious]. When you say “I love you” in a personal way, it goes here [“I” to middle unconscious]. When you have a transpersonal experience, it goes here [“I” to higher unconscious]. So it shifts all the time. That is what creates the confusion and the conflict. These are all localities in the inner space, and the entity [“I”] moves around. All the questions of subpersonalities can be faced this way. And that is the value of recognizing subpersonalities; it is the beginning of detachment.

Q: It makes sense that the “I” is a reflection of the Self, is a living entity and thus is distinct from any “locality” within the psyche. The “center” is a conception and a locality?

RA: Yes. That’s basic. In psychosynthesis we always speak of living realities, living beings. All the rest is conceptual, not reality, as something existent. The rest is description, but the “I” is a reality.

Q: So the “I” is still a reflection of the Self, even if it’s in the lower unconscious?

RA: Yes, but colored. It is the bulb, colored and shifted here and there. It can be covered by several veils, the veils of maya. It is there, but it is paralyzed, powerless, ignorant, unconscious. In Eastern terminology, disidentification would be to tear off the veils of maya in order to discover, uncover, what is under there.

Q: The Self is the light bulb; the center is a place where the light is most clearly seen by the “I”?

RA: No. The “I” is the light bulb, the reflection. Don’t take all this too literally. The Self is a resplendent sun, a star, which creates the reflection which is a bulb. Then the bulb often gets colored, veiled, shifted here and there. It is the “I” that is the bulb.

Q: What are the characteristics of the place called “center”?

RA. No characteristics. It’s just a location. It is the place which is in the same direction as the Self.

Q: We are also talking about alignment – the “I” or bulb, if off, is colored; if not, then it is clear?

RA: Well, alignment means to bring to the center the “I” which is eccentric and colored. Alignment is also a process, and interaction. The “I” says “I am that Self, that Self am I.” Thus it aligns itself with the Self. In a nutshell, I am not angry, or in love, or this or that. I am a reflection of the Self. Therefore of the same nature of the Self, which is light. That is alignment. ■

a conversation

I began this conversation with a question in an email to Will Parfitt in the UK. Will included Piero Ferrucci in our conversation, and the results are presented here to show two viewpoints regarding the relationship between psychosynthesis and esoteric studies. I began by noting that many people are aware of, and sometime confused by, the relationship between Assagioli's activity in both psychosynthesis and "esoteric work," knowing that he did both, but uncertain how to regard one or the other and how they are related. In the US, the phrase "wall of silence" was used to indicate that Assagioli kept a strict demarcation between his activities in these two streams of thought and activity. My understanding is that "the wall of silence" was a phrase that originated with Assagioli himself, intended to be a metaphor to keep all the activities of two streams of thought and activity completely distinct from each other, and to allow them to function independently. The "wall" took physical form in the USA, when Frank Hilton was director of both the Psychosynthesis Research Foundation and the School for Esoteric Studies, both of which Assagioli had a hand in founding. At the time PRF and SES offices in New York City were both in the same building on the same floor, separated only by a wall with a door through—to be used only by Hilton. The "wall," then, was the physical divider between the offices. The SES still is active as an independent entity now based in Asheville, North Carolina, and AAP is the indirect successor to the PRF.

What follows are separate commentaries on this subject in response to my emails, somewhat edited for this publication—*Jan Kuniholm, editor*

The Inauspicious Wall

Piero Ferrucci

[Use of italic font below indicates words of Assagioli I remember from conversations with him]

There is, and there should not be, any "hiding". This is a matter of principle. In the age of Internet it would be ludicrous.

Esotericism and Psychosynthesis belong to two different universes of discourse. Mixing the two may be useful in certain situations, but it can be messy. Esotericism proceeds from the universal to the individual, psychosynthesis proceeds from the individual to the universal. Esotericism demands acceptance of some traditional ideas, such as reincarnation, astrology, the existence of Masters. Psychosynthesis most definitely does not.

Assagioli was inspired by spiritual teachings handed down through the ages—certainly by Theosophy and Alice Bailey, but also by Plato (read his *Republic*: some people say it is the same as psychosynthesis), Shankara, the Bhagavad Gita, Mahayana Buddhism, Dante, Goethe, and others.

(Continued on [page 11](#))

The Wall is Gone, but Not What Was Behind It

Will Parfitt

I completely agree [that there is not, nor should there be, any "hiding."]

[Keeping Esotericism and Psychosynthesis separate is] not as messy as trying to keep the two streams separate.

It is great that psychosynthesis does not [demand acceptance of some traditional ideas, such as reincarnation, astrology, the existence of Masters] but the description of 'esotericism' [as proceeding from the universal to the individual, and demanding acceptance of some traditional ideas, such as reincarnation, astrology, the existence of Masters] is partial and factually incorrect (although more true in Assagioli's time than now). You can follow an esoteric path with no interest or belief in any or all of these ideas. What Assagioli was referring to is a particular (and very partial) version of esotericism.

(Continued on [page 11](#))

(Ferrucci - Continued from [page 10](#))

However, he always wanted to make a crucial distinction between historical traditions and psychosynthesis: *The plumber may be Catholic, but I just want him to fix the tap.* The plumber is psychosynthesis: it is a set of ideas and techniques which anybody can accept, whatever their faith or lack of it. You don't have to go to Mass with the plumber.

For these reasons I believe it does not do justice to psychosynthesis to say, as it is sometimes done, that it is a translation of esotericism in exoteric words. Psychosynthesis is fully autonomous and complete in itself as a school of psychology. And it has surely been inspired by many spiritual traditions and the perennial philosophy.

The expression “wall of silence” is a disgrace. It is misleading, because it generates an aura of mystery. Assagioli made no mystery. He had the Bailey books right there in his library.

They were moved upstairs only after his death.

However, in his conception psychosynthesis was an independent system. More so today, when neuroscience research is proving one of his teachings after another. Inspiration from many spiritual sources does not change this. To say that RA was going to “remove the wall of silence” does not quite make sense—there was no real wall of silence, although some of Assagioli's students took it literally and strictly, while others completely ignored the request, or even had fun in doing the opposite.

A simple Internet search will tell you that the expression “wall of silence” is currently used to mean the cover up of a crime, especially an odious crime such as pedophilia. I propose we dump it for ever.

It is important to keep the two realities separate for the sake of clarity and easiness in teaching and public acceptance.

Recently one of our colleagues was heavily attacked in a scientific conference because “Assagioli was an esotericist.” Yes, just like Montessori, Edison, T.S.

(Continued on [page 12](#))

(Parfitt - Continued from [page 10](#))

Yes, but a plumber who understands the more difficult and deeper aspects of his work is going to be a better plumber (not just a ‘fix it guy’)—same applies to psychotherapy.

I totally agree [that The expression “wall of silence” is a disgrace].

Assagioli's Bailey books were in a separate library ‘upstairs’ and not generally kept in his consulting room.

One of his major students who set up one of the largest (even largest?) psychosynthesis training centres used the ‘wall of silence’ position when I did my training in the late 70s ... it was uncomfortable for me as a student, I don't approve of it, but it wasn't a joke. His other major students in the UK who set up another large training centre also engaged with it. Were they doing this against Assagioli's wishes? I don't think so! In fact the very situation was created by Assagioli's pragmatic wish to keep the wall of silence (i.e. keep the two strands of psychosynthesis separate).

If we dump forever the term “wall of silence,” we have to discuss what was ‘behind the wall’ and allow it to be in the open—including therefore in psychosynthesis trainings the truth of Assagioli's life and interests, and not try to ‘push it under the carpet.’

Keeping psychosynthesis and esoteric teachings separate is a matter of opinion. In my many years of teaching psychosynthesis I have found students are enriched by the knowledge of the ‘perennial philosophy’ underpinning psychosynthesis and are then able to ‘lean back into’ thousands of years of tradition. The

(Continued on [page 12](#))

(Ferrucci - Continued from [page 11](#))

Eliot, and Conan Doyle. So what? Still, the damage was done.

I believe we can put it this way: there are two different games. If you play soccer you are not supposed to touch the ball with your hands, if you play chess the bishop can move diagonally and not vertically or horizontally. And even Mozart had to contain his stupendous creativity within the rules of harmony and composition. If you do psychosynthesis you use the terminology, accept the constraints, adopt the purposes of psychosynthesis and of psychology.

What if esotericism is, for you, in your practice of psychosynthesis, an inspiration and a guide? Well, Tolstoy, Spinoza, or Aeschylus can be that too. Of course you can quote them and refer to them, but they do not strictly belong to the field of psychosynthesis.

With esotericism the question is, however, more delicate. As we know, there are different kinds of esotericism—some are serious and respectable, some are crazy and cultish. That is why I would use great discretion in associating esotericism with psychosynthesis publicly, with a greater caution than I would use for Tolstoy, Spinoza or Aeschylus.

I believe that whenever we express ourselves it is always useful to ask ourselves: is what I am going to say going to be fruitful and suitable, is it respectful of the work of my colleagues, or is it likely to be damaging or divisive?

Obviously, there is no dogma, no set law, no central authority on how to present psychosynthesis to the public. Everybody follows his or her own good will and conscience. ■

(Parfitt - Continued from [page 11](#))

‘esoteric’ is not about ‘believing in reincarnation’ or anything like that; it is the story and experience of many individuals and groups attempts to ‘know thyself’ better.

Psychosynthesis with its ‘esoteric’ roots removed is a toothless creature, and becomes just another form/theory of therapy, coaching and/or counseling. There are literally hundreds of different schools of therapy—let’s keep psychosynthesis as something unique and special, not despite but because of its deeper, older connections.

[I understand that some of our colleagues have been attacked on the grounds that “Assagioli was an esotericist.”] The ignorance of others is not a reason to hide the truth!

Who decides the rules of the game of psychosynthesis? Assagioli left that very open, as Piero has said, there is no central authority. Good job too!

Assagioli does make several references to various ‘spiritual traditions’, ‘esoteric practices’ and ‘arcane philosophers’ in his Psychosynthesis manual, especially in Chapter 1 (i.e. at the beginning!) ...so also do Dante, for example, or the Rosicrucians, referred to by Assagioli in his primary book, not belong to the field of Psychosynthesis?

Totally agree—but caution in referencing things is not the same as attempting to remove them.

Very good, yes indeed.

Absolutely! ■

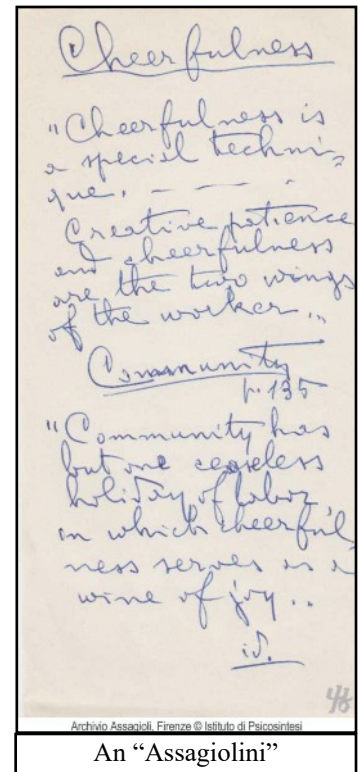
PILGRIMAGE TO THE HEART OF COMMUNITY

Catherine Ann Lombard

One September morning, eighteen enthusiastic pilgrims gathered from across the globe in Casa Assagioli, the Florentine coral pink home of Roberto Assagioli (1888-1974), the founder of psychosynthesis. As guests of *Gruppo Alle Fonti* (“Group at the Wellspring”), the thirteen women and five men planned to spend four days journeying through Assagioli’s archives. Like all pilgrims who must suffer earthly discomforts while soaring towards spiritual heights, no one was immune to the sticky humidity, sirocco winds from Africa, temperatures up to 32° C (90° F) and ferocious, merciless mosquitoes.

However, these minor discomforts were of little consequence when compared to the intimate, serendipitous and moving encounters all experienced as they explored the handwritten notes and typewritten manuscripts in Assagioli’s archives. The small, energy-packed pieces of paper, affectionately referred to as “Assagiolini,” are addictive to any lover of his vision. In the former bedrooms and dining areas of his home, these pilgrims spent hours tenderly leafing through slips of paper (even the backs of theatre tickets), correspondence, typed manuscripts, and carefully preserved news clippings, all of which held snapshots of his profound wisdom. His handwriting, often accented with boldly underlined words, can leave one’s heart burning with deep conviction, profound understanding, and reverence. Often one has a sense of accompanying Assagioli in his own search towards clarity. The pilgrims also had access to the books in his library. While leafing through them, one can find the margins full of his penciled question marks and notations. Underlined passages only seem to affirm his psychosynthesis concepts and techniques.

The pilgrims, however, did not only have the solitary pleasure of being with the thoughts and insights of their Italian master. Pausing to look out the tall windows towards the sunlit Fiesole hillsides, they periodically stopped their note taking to drink in the shifting Tuscan light. They shared lunch and dinner conversations over a palate’s delight and parade of color—fiery red tomatoes, fleshy green peppers, the deepest violet aubergines, translucent artichoke hearts. Olive oil danced over everything that nourished them. Wine wound around their tongues and eased their hearts open.



Eina McHugh enjoys her encounter with Assagioli

The pilgrims’ were hosted and guided by *Gruppo Alle Fonti*, a circle of devotees all dedicated to Assagioli’s home, archives, and library. *Gruppo Alle Fonti* also accompanied the pilgrims in their additional task of “co-creating an international psychosynthesis community.” On one level, each pilgrim was already inwardly busy relating to Assagioli as friend, teacher, scholar, philosopher, esoteric visionary, mystic and humanist. On another, each had their own relationship to being in Italy—some were challenged beyond their comfort zone, others thrived in the unparalleled world. And then, on top of it all, the pilgrims were also asked to relate to one another “by recognizing, affirming and strengthening their common ground.”

(Continued on [page 14](#))

(Continued from [page 13](#))

According to *Gruppo Alle Fonti*, this was supposed to happen underneath their interplay, “not in any structured or formal way,” but organically and dynamically.



Members of the international psychosynthesis community: Marylouise Barros-Niska (United States), Giuliana Caldirola (Italy), and Paul Kennedy (Scot living in Austria)

There was one catch—the pilgrims had come from ten different countries: Australia, Great Britain, Italy, Sweden, the United States, Portugal, Bulgaria, Ireland, Germany and Austria. But things were even more complex: the Irish woman lived in Northern Ireland, the Scotsman in Austria, the German in Italy, an American in Germany, and an Israeli in Sweden. Even though English was the common language between them, I, as a fellow pilgrim, observed our struggle to communicate with each other. Over morning cappuccinos I watched bemused as the American complimented the Irish woman in a way that could be easily misinterpreted. “Why *are* there so many great Irish writers?” the American asked with innocent curiosity. “Well, why shouldn't there be?” the reply zipped across the breakfast table. Meanwhile the British were enjoying a lively banter of witticisms that seemed to float on air, and the Italians kept telling me that they couldn't understand a word of the Queen's English. “We understand you *so* much better!” they confided. But then I had taught English as a second language for years and knew how to

slow down my speech and simplify my verbs. These same Italians all understood me until I decided to inflict my terrible Italian on any of them within reach. Meanwhile, my desperate attempts were seen by a number of non-Italian speakers as fluent expertise!

Organically, circles of common culture and language began to settle around the two majority nationalities. The British seemed to spend most meals together and so did the Italians. The rest of us floated between them or gelled into a mass of our own. I watched with admiration during one lunchtime as a brave soul who didn't speak a word of Italian settled herself in the middle of the “Italian table.” Her eyes widened as the debate (in Italian) swirled and crisscrossed the table. The topic was typical for Italian dining—What is the best way to skin roasted peppers? (Grill them and let them cool in a paper bag.) How do you preserve artichokes under olive oil? (A long detailed recipe that ended with, “Just go buy them in the store.”)



Sandwiches and grilled vegetables await us.

The co-creation of community was further encouraged by *Gruppo Alle Fonti* with what they called “Inspirational Laboratory Groups.” These small groups met each afternoon to share the experience of *being* at Casa Assagioli. We are supposed to talk openly (even nakedly!) about our thoughts or questions that evolved out of our experience with the archive/library materials, as well as about psychosynthesis in general. Questions that my group contemplated included: Do we choose our own death? Do we choose when we die? How do you differentiate the will of the Self from one's personal will? Why am I always late to everything I do? How can I transmute ambitious drives into higher aspects of Love and Acceptance? Why didn't Assagioli publish more? Why isn't he better known?

Our group leader kept asking us if we could weave all the threads of our sharing into a tapestry of continuity, but . . . no, we couldn't. Three days together was simply not enough to comfortably take off *all* our clothes. During the last afternoon, despite the loud rock music coming across the courtyard from a psychosynthesis training session,

(Continued on [page 15](#))

(Continued from [page 14](#))

we chose to leave the window open to catch whatever breeze might waft over us. But after about 25 minutes, we finally shut the window. The song blasting at the time was Joe Cocker's assurance that *You Can Leave Your Hat On*. This felt significant. We had shut our open window, and our hats and everything else were still on.

Perhaps we might have begun with just holding the questions about our challenging task: What does it mean to co-create? How do we know when we have co-created a community? An international community? And, ultimately, an international psychosynthesis community? What inspires each? What is the purpose of each?

In his essay "From the Couple to Community," Assagioli talks about how nations are psychological realities with "cherished traditions, emotional attachments, pride, tendencies to self-assertion, and internal solidarity." He further explains that each nation, like each organ in the human body, has a specific, vital and differentiated function for the psychological structure of humanity as a whole. Similar to individuals who wish to form a community, nations that want to achieve solidarity must first realize individual psychosynthesis as a "preparation and introduction to the psychosynthesis of humanity."

These ideas appear to state that while our first and foremost task is to work towards our own personal and spiritual psychosynthesis, we are also obliged to strive to develop psychosynthesis within the context of our national psychological reality and to discover the higher qualities innate in our national identity. Maybe the small national groups that quickly emerged in Casa Assagioli were the unconscious awakenings of such a task.



Bust of Assagioli
now in his library

Assagioli was an idealist, but also a realist. In his essay, he quickly acknowledges that most nations show psychological characteristics and types of behavior typical of an eleven-to-fourteen-year-old child, or a "primitive human being"! We can easily see how he came to this conclusion, having survived World War II. These days we only need to follow the daily news to confirm this belief. However, in true Assagioli style, he encourages us to be optimistic. "We may hope that the wrongs due to immaturity will decrease with growth." Evolution of nations, he states, is cyclic, passing through highs and lows, death and rebirth.

Most interesting perhaps is his observation that the greatest part of a nation's psychological life takes place at unconscious levels. A national psyche seems to be similar in structure to an individual's psyche as depicted in Assagioli's egg diagram. Both nations and individuals have an irrational and emotional subconscious. In addition, a nation has a self-aware and authentic "national personality" that is comparable to an individual's personal "I" and field of consciousness, and both have a higher consciousness.

He continues to explain that nations manifest their spiritual Selves through unusually gifted individuals—its leaders, geniuses, and saints. These individuals who have reached a certain degree of psychosynthesis can then act as spokespersons for their nation. Examples he cites are Lincoln for the United States and Dante Alighieri for Italy. Those that come to my mind are Gandhi for India and Nelson Mandela for South Africa.

In this way, it seems to me that those who wish to co-create an international psychosynthesis community must begin by recognizing: (1) Assagioli's model of the human psyche is also a model for the psyche of any community; (2) The individual's work is towards personal and spiritual psychosynthesis; (3) Alongside an individual's task towards psychosynthesis is the need to develop with fellow nationals a synthesized "psychological entity;" and (4) Then the national psychological entities, depending on their "place and specific function in the great body of humanity," can begin to synthesize with one another.

This all sounds terribly ambitious for a four-day retreat, but by the second evening, I did experience a beautiful glimpse of the ideal international psychosynthesis community. Quite spontaneously, a group of us wandered down

(Continued on [page 16](#))

(Continued from [page 15](#))



Florence from the Villa de la Stella

the busy road to the nearest bar. We were five in total and each from a different country: Scotland, Ireland, Sweden, the United States, and Italy. After we settled in with our drinks, the evening conversation became intimate, confessional at times, and punctuated by roars of laughter. The evening was balmy. The *limoncello* slipped down my throat to warm my tummy. I appreciated the ease that I felt to just be me. We all seemed to understand each other, without explanation. At one point, one of the group challenged a presumption of mine. Warm feelings overcame me. I was grateful that someone had seriously listened, pondered what I had said, and kindly offered another perspective. I felt kinship and love.

By the next morning, my euphoria had plummeted into a feeling of sadness. The evening spent participating in an international psychosynthesis community had forced me to exhume long-buried loneliness. Too much time had passed since I had last experienced a night of heady conversation and connection. The long years of living isolated in a remote corner of Germany were suddenly juxtaposed against one magical Florentine evening in late summer.

Grateful for both the experience and insight, I managed to bounce back by lunchtime. Besides, the best was to come. That last evening together, we were all invited to creatively participate in the night's entertainment. Poetry and personal reflections were shared, Dante was read, jokes were told and translated into rapid-fired Italian, a satirical parody ignited us into explosions of laughter. Our youngest pilgrim played haunting tunes on his wooden flute. In the end, with our eyes closed, we stood and wove our voices together into spontaneous song, each individual following the deeper resonances of his or her soul to form, in the end, a synthesis of one holy sound.

In their preliminary email, *Gruppo Alle Fonti* assured us that "Inspiration and creativity are a characteristic of Casa Assagioli and we can draw on these gifts as a source of enrichment." I can assure you that these gifts are alive and well. They may take you by surprise, and they may make your life uncomfortable. They may bring you to a place where the door has been shut or creaky for a long time. But, if you dare to open that door, the gifts will inevitably help you soar. In the end, *Gruppo Alle Fonti* invited me to become an active member. Mysteriously, my loneliness was transformed into belonging, my isolation into community membership. Now I just have to start improving my Italian! ■



The author (right) toasting with Paola Marinelli, member of *Gruppo Alle Fonti*

References

- Assagioli, Roberto, (N.D.) From the Couple to Community. Downloaded from: <http://www.psykosyntese.dk/a-150/>
- Assagioli, Roberto, (July 1934). Loving Understanding. *The Beacon*. Downloaded from <http://www.psykosyntese.dk/a-179/>
- Lombard, C.A. (2012). [Meeting at the Well Spring](#), *Psychosynthesis Quarterly*, Vol 1:3, pp. 35-43.
- Lombard, C. A. (2012). Incontro alle "Well Spring," *Psicosintesi*, Ottobre, 2012, No. 18, pp. 38-41.
- Lombard, C.A. (September 2015). Tasty Bites of Wisdom. Published by Love and Will at <http://loveandwill.com/2015/10/05/tasty-bites-of-wisdom/>

(Continued on [page 17](#))

(Continued from [page 16](#))

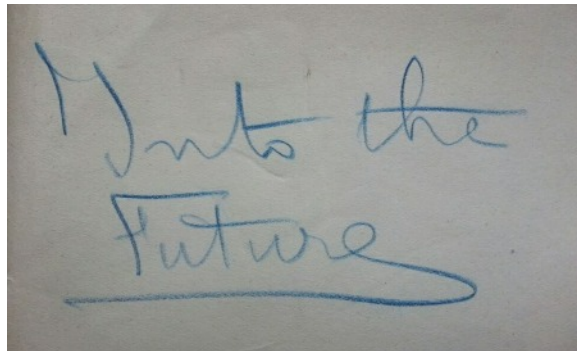
Acknowledgments

Many thanks to all who shared this event with me, and especially to *Gruppo Alle Fonti* for hosting this encounter.

Catherine Ann Lombard, MA has been counseling clients since 2008. She is a workshop facilitator and published writer, including numerous articles on psychosynthesis. She specializes in multiculturalism as described in her book [From Culture Shock to Personal Transformation: Studying Abroad and the Search for Meaning](#). You can follow Catherine's blog at [LoveAndWill.com](#). Catherine and her husband Kees offer meditative, small-scale psychosynthesis and Dante trips in Tuscany and elsewhere in Italy. For more information and to contact them, see [PoeticPlaces.org](#).

From the Sources, Into the Future

Firenze, 6-7 June 2016



You too can experience Assagioli's Archives and help co-create an international psychosynthesis community at Casa Assagioli in Florence June 6-7, 2016.

The meeting is open to everyone, and will directly follow the International Conference of Psychosynthesis in Taormina (June 2-5, 2016).

This is a unique opportunity to connect with the roots of psychosynthesis, study materials available only in the archives, and co-build the future of the field:

- Learn about the sources that inspired Assagioli's life, work and vision
- Study the original handwritten materials in the Archive
- Explore the Library, including rare and out-of-print volumes, and Assagioli's drafts
- Meditate and meet others in the garden and office
- Share impressions with peers from all over the world

REGISTRATION FEES, including vegetarian lunch, refreshments and snacks:

Standard (by 30 April): € 240

Late (by 31 May): € 300

Under 30 and Low Income: € 150

To receive an application form and to register for this special weekend, contact *Gruppo Alle Fonti* at ps.events@psicosintesi.it



The Synthesis Center
413-256-0772

Dear Psychosynthesis Colleagues,

It's time to organize **The Synthesis Center's 10th Presenters' Conference**
(Next Generation: Spiritual Psychology & the Wholeness of Life)
to be held on **Saturday May 7, 2016, in Brattleboro, VT**, and we need your help!

We invite you to submit a proposal to present a workshop for this year's conference!

This is an opportunity to present ideas that are meaningful and important to you in a supportive and friendly environment. It is a day to share your unique perspective, to reconnect with others, and to reinvigorate the core psychosynthesis vision of **personal and planetary wholeness**. It is a day to try out and fine-tune **emerging ideas**, to be supported, to support your peers, to enrich and enliven The Synthesis Center and the psychosynthesis community. We'll get together to learn, network, eat, have fun, and more.

Please submit your proposal for a 1.25 hour workshop to the Conference Committee

- *We encourage experiential workshops drawing on all the psychological functions. The Conference Committee will choose 9 or so presentations to create a balanced and stimulating conference.*
- *To submit a proposal please send us your name and psychosynthesis experience, the title, a brief description, and whether the workshop is oriented towards psychosynthesis practitioners or the general public (or both!).*
- *If you have questions about the conference, email: Jon Schottland at jon@synthesiscenter.org or leave a message at The Synthesis Center at 413-256-0772.*
- *Please email your proposals with the subject heading "Proposals 2016" to didi@synthesiscenter.org.*

DEADLINE for proposals is March 10, 2016

The Conference Committee Jon, Didi & Amy Finlay will select the presentations and notify all presenters by the end of March. We hope all will come and invite others for whom psychosynthesis may be a good fit!

- **This is a fundraising event:** a donation of \$175-80.00 sliding scale gets you in and covers the cost of lunch, snacks, and evening events. *Everyone who can (including presenters) pays as much as they can!* Some work study positions are available if you need one.

Sincerely,

Amy, Didi and Jon

PS. To register to attend, contact Didi and to pay (at whatever rate you can) send a check to the Center at 285 Pomeroy Lane, Amherst, MA, or by credit card via PayPal at: psychosynthesiscoach.org



The Synthesis Center

Amherst, MA

www.synthesiscenter.org & www.psychosynthesiscoach.org

413-256-0772

2016 Spring Presenters' Conference

"Next Generation: Spiritual Psychology and the Wholeness of Life"

Join us for a day of learning, exploring, and conversation about the role of Spiritual psychology in moving us towards wholeness, as individuals, in our relationships, and in the larger world. All are welcome, from those with no psychosynthesis experience to long time practitioners! There will be ongoing consecutive workshops on a number of themes, a shared lunch, whole group events, a wine and cheese gathering, and more.

WHEN: Saturday, May 7, 2016, 8:30-6:00, with optional evening activity and a Sunday post-conference workshop, topic, TBA. Note: Sunday May 8th is Mother's Day! We hope that you will join us for this family-friendly day devoted to inner and planetary wholeness. We can think of no greater gift, for ourselves, our planet, our children, and our mothers!

WHERE: Brattleboro, VT (School for International Training)

WHAT: This long-standing conference brings together people interested in the practice of psychosynthesis, as it relates to a variety of fields and life experiences. Workshops will be experiential, practical and applicable to work as helping professionals and to personal and spiritual growth. Many workshops will be available for BCC ceu's.

WHO: The Synthesis Center, now in its 38th year, is a leading institution for psychosynthesis training in North America. The Center's Life Coaching Training offers national life coach certification. The Center is a non-profit educational organization.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Contact Jon Schottland at jon@synthesiscenter.org

TO REGISTER: The conference is offered on a sliding scale from \$175.00 - \$80.00 for the day. This cost includes snacks, lunch and the after gatherings. This event supports TSC scholarship fund. Sunday's workshop will have an additional fee. Some work-study scholarships are available. To register, send your name, address, email and phone to didi@synthesiscenter.org with the subject heading "conference". Payment can be made by check (to the Synthesis Center, 285 Pomeroy Lane, Amherst, MA 01002), or credit card via PayPal at psychosynthesiscoach.org. *Join us for a celebration of Wholeness!*

This is a lovely opportunity to continue to build our community, to participate in wonderful workshops and to join together in celebration. We are very happy to announce that we will offer a plenary session that will hold both the the power and experience of the wise elders and the joy and motivation of the next generation. Tom Yeomans and Angel Santiago will be presenting, holding the continuum of psychosynthesis from Tom's 45 years in the field to Angel's 2 and counting!

We are also excited to have an evening event of high energy activity: a salsa dancing night! Yep, get your dancing shoes on! Our hope is that the day will include a wide range of workshops, gatherings, art, poetry, community building and our continued love of psychosynthesis training!

A New Year—An Arduous New Start, or Stymied?

Abigail DeSoto

A new year brings up hope for new beginnings and new opportunities, but what do you do when you *know* you can't go on the way you have been...you're "done" ...the spark is gone...you're bored—but nothing presents itself or works to start afresh? You've gone back to the proverbial drawing board several times, and tried a number of new options that haven't panned out... or you've put a lot of effort into things that just fizzle out and don't take. What to do? *How do you move forward?*

Life is change... you accept this, but somehow seem doomed to stay where you are, doing what you're tired of, maybe trying again what *succeeded* in the past, but getting results that show that past is well and truly *past*. No matter how hard you try, things don't take and you are unable to find your new start. Then fear steps in with that heavy doomsday voice, "*What if I'm washed up (you wonder), at the age of....? What if nothing ever changes? What if the losses and sadness I feel at opportunities drying up, people leaving (or dying) and life feeling heavy, a drudge...what if that's the way it is now?*" How do you manage to move forward with that going on in your head?

This is where we need to keep faith and feed hope. Henry Ford said, "*Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal.*" No matter what response we're getting, we want to keep hold of the dream, the change, or new goals we desire. We need to adapt to what is happening. I recently came upon a symbol of hope that reminds us to do what we can but to take it easy, for at times there isn't much we *can* do other than adapt to what we are receiving and surrender to 'what is.' Surrender doesn't mean resign, and it also doesn't mean stop making efforts. This lovely African symbol of hope, called "Denkyen," reminds us it's OK to pace ourselves and move when we're ready.

Denkyen means turtle or crocodile, animals that live in the water yet breathe air, demonstrating the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. As we are called upon to thrive in a challenging time, the turtle teaches us: **breathe, swim, rest, wait** . . . *Breathe, swim, rest, wait*. Climb into your shell to recuperate when needed, poke your head out when able to and extend all four legs to walk away or move forward. Take the time it takes to adapt and move forward with the currents of change (that you do not control). *Breathe, swim, rest, wait*.

Taking time to rest helps us relax, focus, and release the struggle in working toward new goals, but what about the fear?...the fear things will never get better? Fear keeps us wanting to cower and hide in the protective shell of waiting. Pema Chödrön, an insightful, gentle Buddhist, teaches, "*Fear is the vanguard of courage and wisdom.*" What we need when we're afraid is the courage and wisdom to know how to proceed, how to face our fears and move through them instead of withdrawing into our shell and hiding out. Pema Chödrön gently instructs us to "*place your fearful mind in the cradle of loving kindness.*" Fear is a mind game, fed by thoughts and beliefs we "do" to ourselves. *A Course in Miracles* (ACIM) writes: "*It is your thoughts alone that cause you pain. Nothing external to your mind can hurt or injure you in any way...No one but yourself affects you*" (ACIM Workbook, lesson 190).



Denkyen
African symbol of hope

(Continued on [page 21](#))

(Continued from [page 20](#))

When we are immobilized with fear these words may not be enough to reassure us, but in applying Pema Chödrön's teaching we can stop blaming ourselves for feeling fearful, and instead use fear as a vanguard to wisdom and courage. We can offer ourselves an atmosphere of warmth and acceptance of thoughts that *seem* real and true. We can surrender to what we're feeling and cradle our fear in loving kindness. Instead of berating ourselves for feeling fearful, we can nurse and cradle our feelings, allowing ourselves to *be* where we are at this moment—in fear. And that allowing offers the possibility for change and a shift.

Fear—like all emotions—arises, lives, subsides, and passes. Notice the next time you're sad and want to cry. Go ahead if it feels safe to let go, and notice that without fighting against the sadness, squashing or repressing it with guilt-laden diatribes like: “*men don't cry*”... “*I'm too big for this*”... “*stop being a sissy or a wuss*”... “*grow up*”..., without fearing overwhelm and domination by grief... the emotion lives its time and *subsides*. Then something new comes... an idea, a possible step, a feeling of relief, perhaps a sense of being washed clean... for now. When we feel we can't go on the way we have, but don't know what to do, it is important to cultivate unconditional friendship and acceptance of ourselves, compassion for our fear, frustration, and grief. We must learn to surrender... “*se rendre*” in French... give up, ‘turn yourself in.’ ***Stop doing what you've been doing!*** This means stop relating to yourself the way you have for years with judgment, criticism, self-hatred, belittlement, and blame.

ACIM reminds us in lesson 192: “*Release instead of bind, for thus are you free... Every time you feel a stab of anger (criticism, blame, or hate are different expressions of anger), realize you hold a sword above your head. And it will fall or be averted as you choose to be condemned or free.*”

Which would you choose for yourself as you move towards the goals and dreams you want in 2016? Do you want to feel condemned or free? As Victor Frankl learned in his arduous, seemingly never-ending trial in a WW II German concentration camp, there are things you cannot change or control. What you *can* change is your attitude. Why not choose a surrendered, loving attitude to yourself, while maintaining your focus and will to move forward, change and grow?

As we advance in life, we learn that process is more important than outcome. It's not where we get, but *how* we get there, and how we treat others and ourselves along our journey. Will we hate ourselves for our “failings,” or learn to rest and take stock before sticking out little legs and moving on, remembering, “*Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.*” (James Baldwin)

Best wishes for a growth-filled, loving new year! Take advantage of my ***New Year/New Start*** promotional coaching offers. Feel free to move towards your dreams and important goals, supported and encouraged! For more information on my coaching approach and offerings visit: <http://abigaildesoto.com/s-e-l-f-s-toolbox/coaching/> 📌

Abigail DeSoto

S.E.L.F. System for Embodied Living and Freedom

<http://www.abigaildesoto.com>



Abigail De Soto, MA, is a psychosynthesis practitioner/transformational coach, and certified Kripalu yoga teacher. After training in psychosynthesis at the Psychosynthesis and Education Trust (PET) - London and with Molly Y. Brown, she developed a therapeutic process named **S.E.L.F. — System for Embodied Living and Freedom**. She brings 25 years' global corporate learning and development training and transformational coaching experience to her worldwide coaching and personal growth work. Abigail offers online and in person coaching and personal development workshops worldwide for people ready to choose lives of fulfillment, passion, and happiness. For information on her work visit www.abigaildesoto.com.

CONTINUING ASSAGIOLI'S EAST-WEST SYNTHESIS

Richard Schaub, PhD and Bonney Gulino Schaub, RN, MS

With the scientific acceptance of meditation and the popularity of yoga, Eastern practices are entering the Western mainstream. To increase acceptance, these practices are presented without their original spiritual context and are made over into pragmatic health techniques. For example, Buddhist mindfulness meditation is part of the Buddhist religious path with religious goals (liberation from this plane of existence), but is presented in our culture as stress reduction, pain management and a way to enhance the neurons in our brain (see, for example, Hoelzel et al, 2011). While such East-West mixtures are very beneficial, we must consider that in ignoring the spiritual context behind the techniques, we may be throwing away an even larger benefit: an East-West map of new human development.

This article offers a preliminary map of a new East-West synthesis of human development based in psychosynthesis and Kiology (the study of Ki rooted in Taoism) of Dr. Ching-Tse Lee (Lee, 2000a).

East meets West in Psychosynthesis

For anyone like the authors, who studied psychosynthesis after first training in Eastern meditation (Zen), it was obvious that Roberto Assagioli was integrating Eastern ideas and practices into his formation of psychosynthesis. The emphasis on the observing self (the I-space), the confidence in innate higher states of consciousness, the vision of transpersonal development dormant in each person, the inner skill of defeating negative mental-emotional patterns by disidentifying (withdrawing energy) from them rather than analyzing them, the centrality of the Self, and many more features in psychosynthesis have roots in Eastern approaches. We know biographically that an earlier form of East-West synthesis, theosophy, was taught to Assagioli by his mother, but his influences reach further back into Indian Vedanta, Buddhist vipassana (insight meditation), and other traditions.

Assagioli's genius was to grasp the essential insights of these Eastern traditions and convert them into techniques to be used in the clinic and office to help patients and clients. He also respected the techniques' greater potential for generating new transpersonal/spiritual development and wrote about such development in *Transpersonal Development: The Dimension Beyond Psychosynthesis* (Assagioli, 1991). It has taken later geniuses, such as Ken Wilber (see, for example, Wilber, Engler & Brown, 1986), to meticulously delineate transpersonal/spiritual development in steps and stages.

Though often presented in a linear fashion, development is not a smooth linear process. The infant tries to stand, falls down, gets up again and again, falls less often, and eventually begins to unsteadily walk. As bumpy and uncertain as it goes, we know there is an innate plan we can depend upon—the child is driven to become mobile and independent. In a similar way, we can be confident that we are trying to go somewhere when we practice meditation, psychosynthesis and other techniques—and a good map helps.

Assagioli and Energy

A little-known observation from Assagioli has great implications: “In India, God was consciousness. In Christianity, love is emphasized. But God is energy, and the religion of the next century will be the study of energy” (Assagioli Archives, undated notes).

His writings return to energy over and over again. As only one example, he describes his hope to one day see “...a science of the Self, of its energies...of how these energies can be released, how they can be contacted, how they

(Continued on [page 23](#))

(Continued from [page 22](#))

can be utilized for constructive and therapeutic work” (Assagioli, 1965, p. 194). In fact, this is what kiology-based practice is about as well (see Lee, 2000b, *The Psychology of the Energy Self*).

Despite the centrality of energy in his thinking, Assagioli did not offer specific energy practices. Most of his techniques are cognitive, meditative and imaginative. The goal of our new map is to add time-tested energy practices to psychosynthesis.

Kiology

Kiology (Lee, 2000a) is the modern study of human energy with traditional roots in Taoism. The term *Ki* is here used interchangeably with *Chi* and *Qi*. The various Ki-based energy practices that have entered into the Western mainstream include Tai Chi, acupuncture, acupressure, Reiki, energy healing, Aikido and other external and internal martial arts. Kiology itself can be seen as an internal martial arts practice. Kiology-based practice can be seen as an integration of internal and external martial arts practice.

The pioneer of Kiology is the research psychologist and QiGong master, Dr. Ching-Tse Lee (Lee and Lei, 1999). As chairperson of the psychology department at Brooklyn College, Dr. Lee specialized in brain-wave biofeedback research (Norris, Lee, Burshteyn and Cea-Aravena, 2000) among others, and was himself the subject of studies of healing energy abilities at the Menninger Foundation. Since retirement from the university, he has been devoting himself to teaching Kiology, including Ki practices for self-care, healing and personal growth. His true passion is transpersonal discoveries through Ki practices.

We had the good fortune of meeting Dr. Lee many years ago. It turned out that we and he had a mutual colleague in Dr. Elmer Green, the pioneer of biofeedback and an admirer of Assagioli’s work, and this increased our bond. Dr. Green and his colleagues, including Dr. Patricia Norris and Dr. Steve Fahrion, were working with the view of biofeedback as a training to utilize “subtle energy” for therapeutic purposes, and they were conferring with Dr. Lee on the scientific measurement of human energy. We trained in Dr. Lee’s form of QiGong and began to more experientially understand Assagioli’s energy references.

Our training and collaboration with Dr. Lee has recently been renewed and has resulted in a dialogue that is synthesizing Kiology and psychosynthesis. A contribution to this psychosynthesis/Kiology dialogue was made by Dr. Massimo Rosselli, past president of the Italian Society for Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy in Florence, who visited with us and Dr. Lee in New York in August, 2015.

A Map of the Territory

“Self-Realization is the direct experience of the part of your nature which is identical to the great energy pervading the universe.” —Assagioli

Especially in *Transpersonal Development: The Dimension Beyond Psychosynthesis*, Assagioli (1991) described many states of consciousness beyond the ego. He famously said that psychosynthesis brings us “to the door” of these transpersonal states, implying that other work is needed to go beyond the door.

In Kiology, four developmental discoveries beyond the door are explored. These discoveries are Life Force (Ki), Sheng, Void, and Tao [*Chinese characters have been omitted due to a limitation in software—ed.*]. Because these are natural energy states available to each person, they require no particular belief system. They can be verified through direct personal experience. This map of the four developments is a starting point, a broad outline: there are of course many nuances within each discovery.

(Continued on [page 24](#))

(Continued from [page 23](#))

Life Force (Ki, Chi, or Qi) refers to the felt energy of life itself which we all participate in and which animates our existence. The *Star Wars* films have done a service in making famous this life energy through its depiction of “The Force.” The Force is not created by us, but we can learn how to cooperate with it. Simple Ki-based practices can help us to directly enter into the energy aspect of our nature.

Sheng refers to spirit or soul in the sense that a part of our nature is both within us and beyond us. Sheng is the extension of the individual self to, in Assagioli’s language, the universal Self. Jung made a similar formulation. We can simply say that sheng is our spiritual self, not as a belief system, but as a felt experience of freedom from our separate personality self. Sheng has a deeper intelligence about actual reality rather than the constructed stories our thinking mind creates.



Ching-Tse Lee, Massimo Rosselli, Richard Schaub

Void is dynamic emptiness, the state of pure potential. It is before form. When the 14th Century Florentine mystic poet Dante (Assagioli’s hero) went into the Void, he described it as “my mind went beyond its limits, and what became of it, it does not know.” Entering the Void is not entering nothingness: in fact, there is no such thing as nothingness. The Void is illuminative. Assagioli called it “consciousness without content.” Non-dual consciousness is another term for this experience.

Tao is the ceaseless rising and falling and coming and going of Creation, even though these words don’t really describe it. In the West, we tend to call it God, but we go on to attribute human qualities to God and then try to get God to do things for us. The attitude about Tao is different. It requires no belief system. It is always happening, it is always available, and we are always part of it. Its effects can be felt and seen everywhere if we are attuned to it. Assagioli’s words, “the great energy pervading the universe,” are an attempt to give language to Tao, but it is not a thing or a process. It just is. It is reality.

The ultimate purpose of Ki-based energy practices is to know reality beyond the normal human conditioning of mind and body (ordinary sensory-cognitive perspective). It is this direct knowing (extra-ordinary perspective) that made the Buddha smile, and that gave Assagioli the serenity he experienced while meditating while imprisoned in solitary confinement in a Roman jail in 1940: “A sense of boundlessness, of no separation from all that is. A sense of universal love. A wonderful merging. No separation—only differing aspects of wonder... Essential Reality is so far above all mental conceptions. It is inexpressible. It has to be lived. Joy inherent in Life Itself, in the very Substance of Reality. The realization of the Self, resting and standing in itself. The selfless Self...merged into God...the realization of our true self.” (Schaub & Schaub, 2013, p. 40).

References

- Assagioli, R. (undated notes). Assagioli Archives, Istituto di Psicosintesi, Florence.
Assagioli, R. (1965). *Psychosynthesis*. New York: Penguin Books.
Assagioli, R. (1991). *Transpersonal development: The dimension beyond psychosynthesis*. London: Grafton Books.
Hoelzel, B.K., Carmody, J., Vangel, M., Congleton, C., Yerramsetti, S.M., Gard, T., & Lazar, S.W. (2011). Mindfulness practice leads to increases in regional brain gray matter density. *Psychiatry Research: Neuroimaging*, 191, 36-43.

(Continued on [page 25](#))

(Continued from [page 24](#))

Lee, Ching-Tse. (2000a). *Kiology*, in Chingtselee.wordpress.com (in Chinese).

Lee, Ching-Tse. (2000b). *The psychology of the energy self*, in Chingtselee.wordpress.com (in Chinese).

Lee, Ching-Tse and Lei, T. (1999). Qigong. In *Essentials of Complementary and Alternative Medicine*, Jonas WB & Levin JS (eds). Baltimore: Lippincott

Norris, S. L., Lee, C-T., Burshteyn, D., Cea-Aravena, J. (2000). The effects of performance enhancement training on hypertension, human attention, stress and brain wave patterns. *Journal of Neurotherapy*, 29-44.

Schaub, R. & Schaub, B. (2013). *Transpersonal development: Cultivating the human resources of peace, wisdom, purpose and oneness*. Huntington NY: Florence Press.

Wilber, K., Engler, J., & Brown, D. (1986). *Transformations of consciousness*. Boston: New Science Library.



Richard Schaub, PhD, has been a mental health professional for 35 years, applying psychosynthesis in hospitals, clinics, drug rehab, adolescent day hospital, private practice and international training of health professionals. He is co-founder of the New York Psychosynthesis Institute.



Bonney Gulino Schaub, MS, RN, is a co-founder of the New York Psychosynthesis Institute and co-director of the Huntington Meditation and Imagery Center. She has trained hundreds of professionals internationally, is a guest faculty member of Assagioli's original institute in Florence, and is co-author of five books on transpersonal development.

Psychosynthesis and Nonviolent Communication: Frameworks for Transformation

Jean McElhaney

The same things that excited me about psychosynthesis are what excite me about Nonviolent Communication: the sense of wholeness, acceptance, and transformation possible when we bring presence, love, and nonjudgmental acceptance to what is, in service of what is becoming, and in service of peace and life. These two frameworks have been compatible and mutually supportive in my life, each more powerful because of the other, for which I am very grateful. My intention here is to share some of what I see as the connections and similarities between them.

A few assumptions behind Nonviolent Communication (also known as Compassionate Communication) provide a foundation: ¹

1. We all have the same universal needs (e.g. physical survival, safety, community, freedom, and meaning). This is where we find commonality and connection.
2. Our feelings point to these needs, and our actions are attempts to meet or nourish these needs. Here is one of many examples of feelings and needs lists:
http://www.nonviolentcommunication.com/aboutnvc/feelings_needs.htm
3. Human beings enjoy giving to one another. In recognizing our interdependence and creating a quality of connection that inspires mutual giving, life is more wonderful.

(Continued on [page 26](#))

(Continued from [page 25](#))

4. The world offers abundant resources for meeting our needs. By prioritizing connection and care for everyone, we can find new, collaborative strategies for meeting our basic needs.

This form of communication emphasizes personal responsibility for our own behaviors and feelings, liberating us from the idea that other people or situations make us do or feel things. Our perceptions of whether our needs are met or unmet, rather than other people's actions, lead to our feelings. For example, if there are clothes, papers, and dishes all over the floor, I may feel unhappy; I want order. This does not mean my unhappiness is anyone else's fault. This viewpoint is deeply empowering and transformative. It can shift us from blame, attack, judgment, and diagnosis to empathy, understanding, and compassionate connection from the heart. It also allows us to be clear about asking for what we want and to be more effective in contributing to others. To carry my example further, I may decide to nourish my need for order by making a request. If the response to my request is no, then more dialogue may yield insights and solutions that would work even better! For example, maybe my partner and I clean together to our favorite music, meeting needs for fun and companionship as well as for order.

Marshall Rosenberg, developer of non-violent communication (NVC), acknowledged that its principles are not new. He drew from psychology (having studied with Carl Rogers and become a psychologist himself) as well as world religions. He recounted that representatives of many different religious traditions have told him it is in keeping with their own tradition. It gives us specific tools to help us remember and act out of our true nature, which is love.

These tools include four practical skills:

1. Observing behaviors and conditions without judging or evaluating
2. Distinguishing feelings from thoughts (judgments)
3. Tapping into the universal needs (or values) involved in a situation and separating them from how they will be addressed
4. Requesting what we would like in specific, clear, and concrete terms, free of demands, judgments, threats, or blame.

We use these three practices:

1. Self-empathy: being with our feelings and needs
2. Empathy for others: checking in with others' feelings and needs
3. Expressing our observations, feelings, needs, and requests with honesty and vulnerability

A few similarities to psychosynthesis (PS) come to mind fairly quickly:

1. Both offer specific tools as well as an underlying framework of awareness and unity.

“Nonviolent Communication. . . involves both communication skills that foster compassionate relating and consciousness of the interdependence of our well being and using power with others to work together to meet the needs of all concerned” (from www.cnvc.org, adapted from *The Language of Life*). By connecting with the needs we both have, we rediscover our common humanity, our sense of oneness. I see psychosynthesis also as having one layer of specific tools, e.g. the “Identification/Disidentification” exercise, and another deeper layer of an awareness of our unity and diversity.

2. Both recognize the importance of will and love.

(Continued on [page 27](#))

(Continued from [page 26](#))

In NVC, we ask people if they are willing to do something, bringing that aspect much more into conscious awareness. We value making requests rather than demands. A key point is that if the answer is “no,” it doesn’t mean the other person is wrong or bad. We can then look for the “yes behind the no” with curiosity: What needs might the person imagine would be met by saying no, needs we both have? This principle recognizes the fundamental freedom we have and to exercise it with greater consciousness and will. In doing so and in recognizing the choice of others, we can live in a more loving, compassionate way, with shared power and collaboration.

3. Both acknowledge different parts of ourselves.

Marshall used the metaphors of “jackals” to represent the language of judgment and blame and “giraffes” to represent the language of nonviolence and compassion. When I saw him demonstrating with jackal and giraffe puppets, I thought of the psychosynthesis model of sub-personalities. They can appear to be in conflict, although they are all part of our one Self. NVC teaches that needs are never in conflict; conflict occurs at the level of strategies. Listening for the feelings and needs of my sub-personalities has allowed me to experience more inner harmony and more compassion for the different parts of myself. In some ways each sub-personality can bring a different universal need to our awareness. Surprisingly often, I discover that actually they want the same thing but have very different notions of how to get it! For example, one sub-personality might want to spend time answering emails that have piled up, while another one wants to go to the beach with a friend. Both of them might actually long for peace or connection but have very different ideas about what would contribute to that. In both NVC and PS we value the perspective of all the parts, all different manifestations of beautiful life energy. Rather than eliminating any of them, we want to hear what they have to say. At the same time, we try to make conscious choices about how to communicate and behave, rather than letting our sub-personalities (or our “jackals”) run the show and impair our relationships.

4. Both can take us to a level beyond the individual separate personality.

I see a connection between the universal needs of the NVC model and some of the transpersonal qualities we speak of in PS: love, joy, beauty, compassion, peace, etc. On a deep level, NVC and PS offer ways to tap into the life energy of these needs regardless of what our outer circumstances are. It has seemed to me that when I follow the trail of my needs to the core of the issue, they lead me to life and love itself. Starting from feelings of fear and scarcity that can arise when a strategy is unavailable (e.g. a certain job) and pursuing it to the needs underneath it, and then the needs underneath those, etc., I’ve experienced a shift to the celebration of the energy of life itself. This spiritual dimension offers tremendous power, liberation, and new ways of relating to ourselves and each other. It allows us to go forward with more confidence and joy.

5. Both apply to intrapersonal, interpersonal, and international conflicts and issues.

We can learn to bring empathic presence to the different parts of ourselves, unearthing what really matters underneath all the thoughts and stories. In the spaciousness of holding our different parts with warmth, we can transform conflicts and habitual patterns. We can learn to nurture the wounded child and hear her longing for safety and love while also recognizing the love behind the critical voice that is trying to help us. By bringing warmth and care to these parts, we find it in our parts, and our body, mind, and spirit are bathed in this healing energy.

Applying these same principles, I listened to someone who was in conflict with a co-worker. They had been struggling for months and were bringing in a mediator. At the outset, she said, “I could kill her!” (She didn’t mean it literally.) Within half an hour of empathically tuning in to her own needs, she was able to soften and cry.

(Continued on [page 28](#))

(Continued from [page 27](#))

By the end of an hour, she had begun to identify that both she and her co-worker may have had the exact same needs for respect, support, and understanding. From a PS perspective, a sub-personality in this worker was angry and wanted revenge for a perceived slight. Other sub-personalities were holding more of the hurt of a child, wanting protection from harm. Listening with presence enabled her to tap into deeper levels of what was important to her and to access new solutions.

NVC has been used in high conflict areas around the world to bring people together. When I was in Israel last October, I was profoundly moved to witness Israeli Jews and Palestinian Muslims come together in an NVC practice group. As they shared their feelings and needs, one woman said, “We’re all humans here!” Both NVC and PS reveal that conflicts can be transformed into opportunities; we can use them to discover qualities that can lead to a new level of understanding when they are expressed and integrated. My impression is that both models have tended to be used largely at the intrapersonal or interpersonal levels but are intended to be part of bringing about a change in human consciousness and behavior on a much broader scale.

6. Both emphasize understanding and empathy rather than judgment.

In my experience empathy and understanding are at the heart of both NVC and PS. As we learn to listen, with presence, to ourselves and each other, we can transform old habits, heal divisions, and discover new possibilities for a more satisfying life. They deeply honor the wisdom we all have, rather than judging and moralizing.

Of course there is much more to both PS and NVC than this. My hope is that I will have sparked curiosity and perhaps a desire to learn more. If anyone would like to share comments or questions, you can reach me at jean.mcelhaney@gmail.com.

If you are interested in learning more about NVC, here are a few resources: Check out web sites:

www.cnvc.org The Center for Nonviolent Communication

www.baynvc.org Bay Area Nonviolent Communication

www.puddledancerpress.com sells NVC resources

www.nvctraining.com NVC Academy: Offers tele-classes, online training videos, etc.

<http://radicalcompassion.squarespace.com/what-is-radical-compassion/> more tools for learning and integrating NVC

Read books about NVC, especially: Marshall Rosenberg, *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*
Lucy Leu, *Nonviolent Communication: Companion Workbook*

Join a practice group or form a new one with your friends or colleagues.

Invite someone to do an introductory workshop for your organization or group.

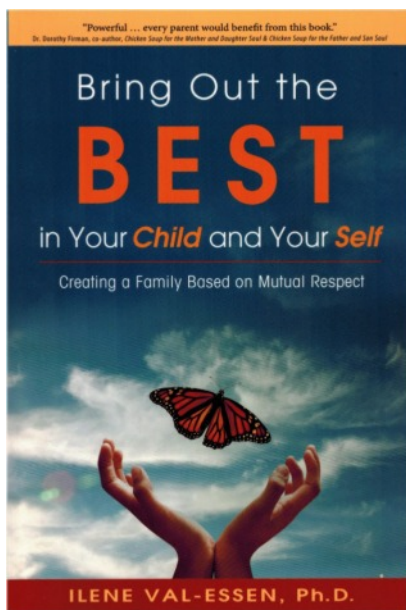
Attend a workshop with a certified trainer.



Jean McElhaney is a licensed clinical social worker and professional counselor, CNVC-certified Nonviolent Communication trainer, ordained interfaith minister, and mentored Dances of Universal Peace leader. She remains grateful for the privilege of experiencing and learning psychosynthesis through Hedwig Weiler's 3-year course, group for therapists, and more. Jean moved from Wisconsin to New Zealand in 2012 for love.

¹ More assumptions and intentions at <http://baynvc.org/key-assumptions-and-intentions-of-nvc/>

THE BEST IN PARENTING Two Books by Ilene Val-Essen, PhD *Review by Jan Kuniholm*

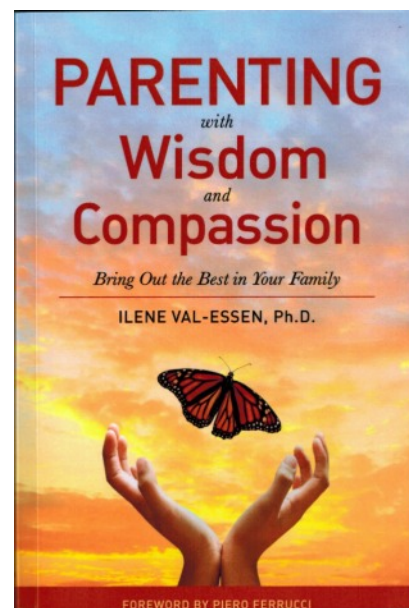


Ilene Val-Essen, PhD, has written two books which, together, provide a valuable roadmap for parents to overcome a host of challenges in bringing up children, from toddlers to teens. Her first book, *Bring Out the Best in Your Child and Your Self—Creating a Family Based on Mutual Respect*, was published in 2010, and the second, *Parenting With Wisdom and Compassion—Bring Out the Best in Your Family*, is being published this month, March 2016. Together they form a complete program to help parents bring out their own best selves and tap into practices that enable them to bring out the best in their children—and to navigate through the stormy and demanding times that every parent lives through, sooner or later.

We know that creating good relationships is work—every guide to couples acknowledges that good relationships do not “happen by themselves.” Val-Essen takes us to the next logical step in showing us that good parent-child relationships do not “happen by themselves” either. But so few of us who have brought up children have had good models or good guidance, and so many of us grow older with misgivings or regrets over how our parent-child lives went. Val-Essen tackles the core issues of parenting without offering “cookie-cutter” solutions.

Over many years of hands-on workshops—and feedback—with parents in her *Quality Parenting* program, Val-Essen developed some straightforward steps by which most anyone can tap into practices that bring the parent-child relationship through tough times, misunderstandings, opposition, tantrums, sincere disagreements, and a host of possibilities that every parent will recognize. Each book can be read as a separate work, but I see these two books as a unity which will work best when used together. Her first book presents a deep understanding of the dynamics of parent-child relationships along with a three-step process for helping parents move from problems or chaos to harmony and well-being. The second book builds on this foundation by presenting three additional steps to help a parent go beyond—or to provide a way forward during times “of extraordinary stress,” when the first three steps are not sufficient.

As a reviewer, I found myself wishing I had had these books 30 years ago, when my kids were at home. I recognize some of the steps she presents, because they are practices that work for anyone at any time, even though they are tailored for parents, with specific insights that particularly help with the seemingly impossible situations that parents often feel they are facing.



(Continued on [page 30](#))

(Continued from [page 29](#))

Her practices bring both parent and child from the chaos and difficulties of “lower self” attitudes and behaviors to being “centered” in ways that allow resolution of problems without creating the kinds of emotional or spiritual wounding that so many parents inflict unknowingly and unwillingly and that children carry with them for life. And particularly in her second book, we find practices to bring us beyond being “centered” when that position is not enough, to genuinely “higher self” attitudes and behaviors that allow resolution of even intractable issues and situations.

Ilene Val-Essen presents all of this with humor, clarity and an oft-illustrated first-hand understanding of what she is presenting. Her books are realistic and practical, and best used as handbooks for a practical program of “becoming all you can be” as a parent—the exercises that fill these books are simple and straightforward, yet as she says more than once, they require practice, as does any goal worth accomplishing.

Becoming a “good-enough parent” and bringing up children in an atmosphere of mutual respect are worthwhile goals. *Bring Out the Best in Your Child and Your Self—Creating a Family Based on Mutual Respect* and *Parenting With Wisdom and Compassion—Bring Out the Best in Your Family* can help most parents get there, with terrific results for the whole family.

Highly recommended! ■



**AAP is pleased to announce
A new program of Grants and Scholarships
to support Psychosynthesis—**

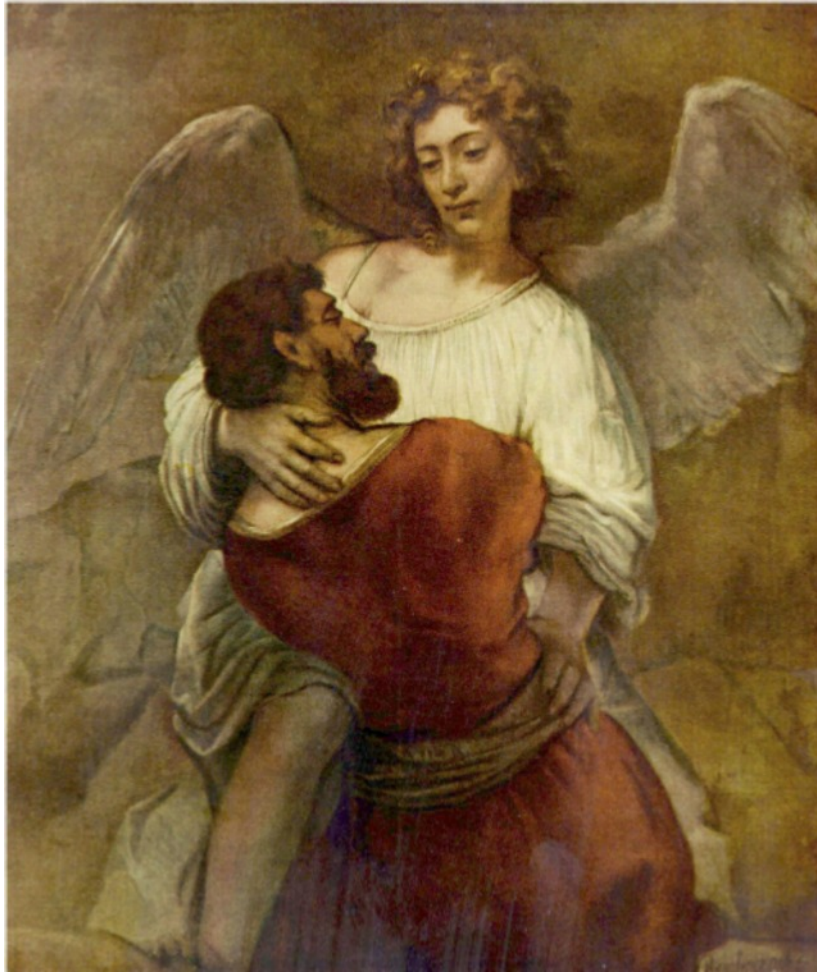
Up to Five (5) Mini-grants are available in 2016
to support projects and initiatives in psychosynthesis

Up to ten (10) Scholarships are available in 2016
to support training in psychosynthesis

See details and application at the AAP website:

<http://aap-psychosynthesis.org/2016-psychosynthesis-scholarship-program/>

<http://aap-psychosynthesis.org/2016-aap-mini-grant-program/>



Jacob's dreamy fight/encounter with the angel.
Rembrandt, 1660. Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen, Berlin

THE THREE STAGES OF IMAGERY

Imagination & Consciousness

Jan Taal

[This is an expanded English version of an article published in Dutch
in the Dutch magazine *Mantra*, autumn 2015]

Imagining is the core-function of the psyche. Every action, each new step in our development is generated by our image of it. The inner world of our imagination forms the central arena within which we become who we are and explore our possibilities.

‘Have you put something in my tea?’ asks Sylvia in astonishment. She has just returned from an imaginative journey to a wonderful garden and she is feeling euphoric. I hadn’t put anything in her tea, of course; I had simply helped her to open herself to her own inner world and then to enter into concentrated contact with what she discovered there.

Days later Sylvia is still feeling the physical effects of her experience. That’s how strong imagery¹ can be—it can bring us into contact with a whole other dimension where unprecedented forces have their being, a dimension which exists beyond the bounds of time and space. It is, however, a dimension which has its own pitfalls; particularly if we do not have the necessary strength to cope with the immeasurable forces which dwell there.

(Continued on [page 32](#))

(Continued from [page 31](#))

A distinguishing feature of imagery is that it can take us into a deeper state of consciousness. As we become more involved in our inner imagery, we can enter a kind of natural trance-like state, in very much the same way that, when we are gripped by a film, a book or a piece of music, we can completely enter into and lose all sense of time. Carl Jung said that as we make full contact with an image, it's as if it becomes *pregnant*. The image unfolds and reveals the energy contained within it, much as a window opens on our computer screen when we click on it.

Within the bounds of 'ordinary' consciousness, time and space are representative of the well-known four dimensions. Imagery opens us up to a fifth dimension, where time and space appear to be relative and where in principle, everything is possible. It is in this dimension that we can be fully free; it is here that we can create our own reality.

The defining features of the fifth dimension are:

- intense consciousness;
- a trance-like, dream-like state; visions;
- the experience of timelessness and a dissolving of spatial boundaries;
- images which are charged with symbolic psychic energy;
- experience of a subtle body or energy field;
- contact with sources of revitalizing energy as well as with unassimilated elements in the psyche.

A Powerful Psychological Resource

We speak, think and feel in images, and act according to those images. Who we really are is reflected in our conscious and unconscious inner imagery. Our imagination is probably the most powerful psychological resource we possess. It is in this domain that we can be influenced the most, psychologically, physically and behaviourally. Small wonder that demagogues, politicians and advertising campaigns make extensive use of imagery. Assagioli calls imagination the core-function of the psyche. It forms an essential phase which precedes and prompts all action.²Neurologist Ramachandran puts it like this: the imaginative faculty is part of what makes us essentially human, and it colours and gives form to our experience of ourselves and of the world.³

Just how important imagery is for us is evident in the fact that we constantly use images to describe our experience: 'I was really down in the dumps,' 'I was walking on air,' 'My heart sang,' 'We ran like the wind,' 'This business stinks,' 'They all want a piece of the cake,' 'That was a sour look!' 'She spoke in honeyed tones,' etc. Of the spontaneous functions of the psyche, imagination is probably the most influential in that it gives us access to creativity, the place where we are at our most free.



Figure 1: Cave painting at Chauvet, 34,000 years old.

As Old as Humanity.

As far as we know, images, visions, daydreams, stories, myths and symbols have always played a vital social, political and therapeutic role in every era and in all cultures. Reaching far back into prehistory and in every corner of the globe we find symbols in caves and graves, on bones and fragments of pottery, in sculpted objects and figures as well as in myths, stories and folk-tales.⁴ Fascinating forms of expression are to be found all

(Continued on [page 33](#))

(Continued from {Ref})



Figure 2: Painting of 'Meeting between bird-man and bison', in the shaft of the Lascaux cave, 17,000 years old.

over the world; in Europe some of the most extraordinary examples can be seen in the caves of Chauvet (35,000 years old: Figure 1) and Lascaux (17,000 years old: Figure 2) For many years it was thought that these paintings were intended to depict scenes from daily life (hunting, for example), but in recent times this theory has proved to be scientifically unviable as far as most prehistoric art is concerned. Most archaeologists are now convinced that the caves in Spain and France are 'sacred sites,' where art served spiritual and ritual purposes. But what were these? In the last twenty years the 'shamanic' theory has gained increasing support within the scientific community. According to this theory, in prehistoric times the paintings served as a medium for making contact with the 'other world,' the inner world of the spirit. The animals represented there are not meant to show the 'ordinary' reality of space and time, but are intended as a representation of a fifth dimensional realm.

The Mythology of Indigenous Peoples and Modern Physics

Anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss made some very interesting discoveries during his studies of indigenous peoples. He found such a striking similarity between their ancient myths and the language and concepts of modern physics that he described the discoveries of quantum mechanics as our modern myth. Reality ('out there') is not a 'fixed' one, as we in our ordinary consciousness perceive, but is more like a field of possibilities which depends entirely on the way we measure (perceive) it.

By means of ever farther-reaching calculations, scientists have gained insights into micro- and macro-realities which far exceed our 'normal' consciousness. Big bang theory, expanding and contracting universes, particles that can be at various positions simultaneously or communicate beyond time and space—these are all concepts of mythic proportions. Modern physics appears reluctantly but unmistakably to have entered into the domain of the mystical.

String theory, for instance, already provides us with at least 11 dimensions of reality. Lévi-Strauss speaks of the return of the mythic in modern physics.⁵ According to Lévi-Strauss, myths give us a valuable indication of the way in which the human psyche works, and they represent transcendent knowledge about fundamental human issues such as life and death, social relationships, our sense of meaning and our place in the cosmos. Christian mythology in the western culture is also full of fifth dimensional imagery, starting with the miracle of the Immaculate Conception and ending with Christ's resurrection (See Figures 3 & 4).



Figure 3: The veneration of Mary and child; the miracle of the Immaculate Conception. Geertgen tot Sint Jans, circa 1495, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam.

(Continued on [page 34](#))

(Continued from [page 33](#))

Imagination, Medicine and Neuropsychology

In the history of medicine, imagery is probably the oldest diagnostic and curative tool, forming the basis for the healing rites which have existed since time immemorial.⁶ Through their research, modern neuropsychologists have rediscovered the central role which the imagination plays in learning processes and in the development of new behaviours. Since the discovery in 1996 of the phenomenon of mirror neurons, a fast-growing number of findings serve to indicate just how significant a part imagination plays in the ability to change behaviour.⁷ Mirror neurons are brain cells which are activated by what we perceive as well as by what we imagine. Imagining an action creates almost as much brain activity (90%) as the perceiving or performing of a similar action.⁸

When we imagine, new neural pathways (chemical connections and electrical impulses) are formed and the behaviour which corresponds with what we are imagining is stimulated.⁹ Every new development starts with our image of it. In the field of physical rehabilitation, after injury, and in the sports world, motor imagery is now widely applied. It is proven that motor imagery, observation and execution rely on the same neural processes.¹⁰



Figure 4: Resurrection of Christ. Giovanni Canavesio, 1491, Notre-Dame des Fontaines Chapel, La Brigue.

The Placebo Effect

Probably the biggest mystery in the whole of modern medicine is the fact that taking a pill which contains no active ingredient whatsoever can nevertheless produce a healing effect. The same applies to a ‘pretend’ injection or a ‘pretend’ operation.¹¹ The factors which evoke the expectation (imagination) of cure or relief are notably the size, price and colour of the placebo-pill, the conviction and enthusiasm of the doctor (the doctor as a walking placebo) and the novelty of the medication. It appears that a placebo by means of our expectations and imagination can awaken an ‘inner therapist’ or ‘inner pharmacy’. The placebo uses the power of our imaginative faculty to stimulate our capacity for self-reinforcement.¹²

The Three Stages of Imagery

If we wish to enter the realm of the fifth dimension and benefit from it, skill and strength is necessary and the technical term for this is ‘ego-strength’. Can I find my way in the wondrous inner world and can I maintain my autonomy, or will I be taken over by the forces which reside in that immense realm? The mastery of the skills we need can be divided into three stages.

The first stage

The process of imagery begins with the discovery that inner images have great impact. Our unconscious self-images and our perception of the world constantly influence our feelings, thoughts and behaviour. Becoming aware of the images that influence us can be a huge and often confronting revelation, and this experience forms the first step in the process.

(Continued on [page 35](#))

(Continued from [page 34](#))

At first the images may be observed like scenes in a theatre and one may leave it at that, Carl Jung wrote. But if the observer understands that his own drama is being performed on this inner stage, he cannot remain indifferent, and he will notice that he is being addressed by the unconscious, that the images have a purposeful relationship to his conscious situation. By engaging with our images we get to know aspects of our nature which we would not allow anybody else to show us and which we ourselves would never have admitted.¹³

The second stage.

In the next stage we discover that we can exert influence upon our images and that within this inner world of images we can take action, make adjustments and even effect transformation. This is the area in which most therapy and coaching work is done, where we learn to navigate in the enormous arena of conscious and unconscious self-images, drives and potential talents and where true autonomy can be developed. Imagery has many techniques to offer for this.¹⁴

The cases of Liesbeth and Clara at the end of this article provide examples of the second stage.

The third stage

It is a well-kept secret that we are quite possibly the creators of our own inner world and thereby of our own feelings, our own behaviour and our own lives. It is an ancient secret which in the present day is being embraced by some neuropsychologists; for instance, Ramachandran proposed that we are constantly hallucinating when we look at the world.¹⁵

In the third stage we come to the realization that 'our inner world' of feelings, convictions, complexes and self-images in fact determines our experience of the world 'out there.' In becoming conscious of this, we can become capable of owning all aspects of our psyche, energies, emotions, tendencies and convictions which we find within us. We can learn to cope with them and discover the creative capacity by which life in all its many facets is brought into being.

Carl Jung in his last major publication postulated that both the observer and connected phenomenon ultimately stem from an underlying unified transcendental reality from which everything emerges and to which everything returns, the *Unus Mundus*.¹⁶ The third stage culminates in a state of consciousness in which 'owner' and 'creator' become one, in which the inner and the outer world spring from the same source and where the barriers of time and space prove to be an illusion. Subject (I) and object (the world) merge in an experience of complete non-duality. Rumi¹⁷ puts this mystical truth into words in this beautiful story:

A man knocked on his friend's door. From within he heard his friend's voice: 'Who's there? Is it you?' 'Yes', said the man, 'It's me!' 'Oh it's you, is it?' said the voice from within. 'Well you can go away again, there's no place for you here.' Deeply disappointed, the man turned and walked away. For many long years he wandered the world in disillusionment. It was years before he dared to go to his friend's house again. With his heart in his mouth he knocked on the door. 'Who's there?' came the voice from within. 'Is it you?' 'No', replied the man, 'It's not me, it's you!' 'Oh', cried the friend, opening the door, 'then come inside quickly, my beloved friend, for there is no place for two here.'

Hadewijch,¹⁸ also in the thirteenth century, expresses in her seventh vision the experience of mystical unity in yet another way:

(Continued on [page 36](#))

(Continued from [page 35](#))

I saw a great eagle flying from the altar straight towards me and he said to me: If thou wilt become one, prepare then thyself for this.

I fell to my knees and my heart beat wildly in the fervour and longing of my prayer. And the eagle spoke thus: ‘Show now thy power so that thou art in state to join in unity and to surrender thy separateness.’

After this He (Christ) descended from the altar. As a child did He appear before me. And from the chalice he took his body and it was the body of a man, soft and pure, so beautiful to me.

And He came to me and He gave himself to me. He took me wholly and utterly in his arms and pressed me to him and all of my body felt all of his body, to my whole heart’s desire and longing and to my complete satiation.

After this I lost that beautiful outer Man. He melted away in oneness with me and he was within me and could not be separated from me. We were One. So entirely One with my Beloved was I, that nothing else of me was left.

In the third stage self and universe become one; this is a universal theme in all world religions. In the Upanishads (India), the union is compared with two birds in the tree of life. The one bird is endlessly ‘doing’; locked in her ego, she is busy eating fruit, either enjoying it or sickened by it, whilst the other bird, eternal and ego-less, leaves the fruit for what it is, keeping himself available to be present to the ‘ego-bird’ and to give her his loving support as soon as she notices him.



Two birds. *Mundaka Upanishads*.
Painting by Caroline Willebrands.



The return of the prodigal son.
Rembrandt (1636),
Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam.

This universal theme of union is also beautifully represented in Rembrandt’s etching of the return of the prodigal son—for me this is about the surrender to our Greater Self, the pure source of life and of all our qualities and possibilities which has always been there waiting patiently to welcome us home.

(Continued on [page 37](#))

(Continued from [page 36](#))

Case Study I. LIESBETH

Heroic Struggle

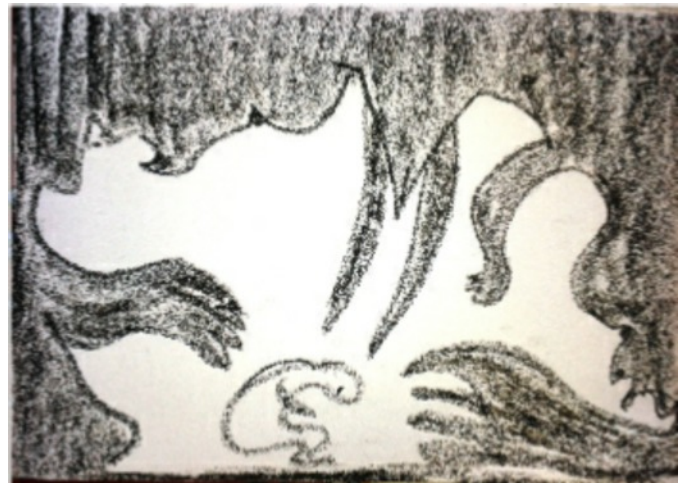
After suffering a series of blows in her life, Liesbeth (54 years) has fallen prey to deep depression. She realizes that she has tried all her life to 'get it right', but she feels that she has failed completely. Gradually, over a number of years, the depression has tightened its hold on her.

This series of drawings shows how she is confronted with demonic powers and how she eventually succeeds in being healed. This is a truly heroic struggle.



Rage towards the child who is a failure. Liesbeth has been deeply depressed for several years and thinks that everything she does is wrong. In the image which she receives, there are judgmental, deadly eyes which bore into her as she lies as a child on the ground, utterly brought down and powerless.

I am beset by monsters who want to beat me down



I connect with something larger... I can straighten up and I find the light, the other dimension.

(Continued on [page 38](#))

(Continued from [page 37](#))



I am trapped but I see that I can go either of two ways. One way is dark and destructive, it will break me. The other way is wild, hopeful and powerful.

Imprisoned in a dark cocoon.



I go towards the light and help comes. It is soft and it cleanses and heals me. I saw snakes.

(Continued on [page 39](#))

(Continued from [page 38](#))

Besieged by an evil wave and tar which is thrown over me. I run towards the light but it is very hard because of the negative energies which keep hounding me.



Healing hands.

After all the struggling I feel as free as a bird, filled with amazement but also with fear because finally I can do what I want to do but the world is very big and I don't yet know how to sing and how to fly.



(Continued on [page 40](#))

(Continued from [page 39](#))

Case Study II. CLARA

Becoming a Capable Owner of Yourself

Clara is caught in a conflict between her head and her gut feelings. She has a responsible leadership role at work and a large family as well. Her head is always racing and filled with crackle. In her gut there is pain and tears (drawing 1.)



Drawing 1



Drawing 2

As she looks inside, Clara realizes that there are four parts of her personality which are at war with each other. Each part represents an important quality (drawing 2.)

Hammer: The hammer is the driving power in her. ‘Keep going, don’t stop’ is what this part says. This is a quality which she makes good use of in her busy life.

Cigar: The cigar stands for taking on a challenging project and then afterwards, if it was successful, enjoying the satisfaction with a good cigar.

Child: The child is her playfulness, the part which wants to be spontaneous and carefree.

Earth mother: The earth mother is the one who cares about everybody and who wants to look after the whole world.

In drawings 3 and 4 (page 41) we can see how Clara is getting better at coordinating the four parts. To begin with they all go on the bike with her but she notices that it’s a very bumpy and difficult road. She decides to create a car and all the parts now have a comfortable place to sit and there is even room for a fifth part which turns up. This image is of huge help to Clara in managing her daily life. She succeeds in giving more time and room to each of the parts. Each one has its own value and she is now a capable coordinator.

(Continued on [page 41](#))

(Continued from [page 40](#))



Drawing 3



Drawing 4



Jan Taal Drs (1949) is trainer-director of the School for Imagery in Amsterdam in the Netherlands and health care psychologist BIG NIP NVPO. Contact: JanTaal@imaginatie.nl; www.imaginatie.nl

Other readings in English by the author:

Coping with cancer through imagery and artistic expression. download: <http://imaginatie.nl/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Coping-with-cancer-through-imagery-and-artistic-expression.-J.Taal-12.11.2015-150dpi1.pdf>

Imagery in the treatment of trauma. with co-author Joop Krop, published in A.A. Sheikh (Ed.). *Healing Images: The Role of Imagination in Health*. 2003. download: <http://imaginatie.nl/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Imagery-in-the-treatment-of-trauma.pdf>

¹ Imagery is the term I use for the conscious use of the imagination. It is used in many therapy, *counseling*, coaching and training methods, including hypnotherapy, EMDR, mindfulness and cognitive behavioural therapy, although usually in a limited way. There are many imagery techniques and various ways in which imagery can be guided- it can be done with eyes open or closed, in silence, actively, in dialogue, in movement or via an art form. There are always as many 'inner senses' involved as possible – seeing, hearing, touching, feeling, smelling, etcetera.

² Assagioli, R. 1965. *Psychosynthesis: a manual of principles and techniques*.

³ Ramachandran, V.S. 2000. Mirror Neurons and Imitation Learning as the Driving Force behind "The Great Leap Forward" in Human Evolution. *Edge*, 69.

⁴ Eliade, M. (1952). *Images et symboles*;

Campbell, J. (1949). *The hero with a thousand faces*;

Campbell, J. (1983). *Historical atlas of world mythology, Vol. I: The way of the animal powers*;

(Continued on [page 42](#))

(Continued from [page 41](#))

- Jung, C.G. (1964). *Man and his Symbols*;
Walsh, R. (2007). *The World of Shamanism: New Views of an Ancient Tradition*;
Clottes, J. & Lewis-Williams, D. (1996). *Les Chamanes de la Préhistoire*.
⁵ Claude Lévi-Strauss. 1991. Retour des Mythes, in: *Histoire de Lynx*.
⁶ Achterberg, J. (1985). *Imagery in healing: shamanism and modern medicine*.
⁷ Rizzolatti G, Fadiga L, Gallese V, Fogassi L. (1996). Premotor cortex and the recognition of motor actions. *Brain Res Cogn Brain Res*. 3, 131–141.
⁸ Kosslyn, S.M. & Moulthou, S.T. Mental Imagery and Implicit Memory. In: Markman, K.D., Klein, W.M.P. & Suhr, J.A. 2009. *Handbook of Imagination and Mental Simulation*. 35-51.
⁹ Iacoboni, I. 2008. *Mirrorig People – The new science of how we connect with others*;
Markman, K.D., Klein, W.M.P. & Suhr, J.A. 2009. *Handbook of Imagination and Mental Simulation*.
¹⁰ Vries, S. de, Mulder, T. 2007. Motor imagery and stroke rehabilitation: A critical discussion. *Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine*. 39: 5–13
¹¹ Nanninga, R. (2002). Schijn doet wonderen. *Skepter*, 15, nr. 4.
¹² Brody, H. (1997). The Doctor as a Therapeutic Agent. In: A. Harrington (ed). *The Placebo Effect. An Interdisciplinary Exploration*;
Mittendorff, C. (2009). *Dromen of tranen. Wat coaches kunnen leren van de resultaten uit psychotherapeutisch onderzoek*.
Taal, J. (2012). *Het placebo mysterie ontrafeld*. www.imaginatie.nl
¹³ Jung, C.G. *Mysterium Coniunctionis: An Inquiry into the Separation and Synthesis of Psychic Opposites in Alchemy*, p. 496. London: Routledge.
¹⁴ Taal, J. (1994). Imaginatie-therapie. *Tijdschrift voor Psychotherapie*, 4, 227-246;
Taal, J. (2015). *Coping with cancer through imagery and artistic expression*. www.imaginatie.nl.
Taal, J (2012). Verbeeldingstoolkit. *Psychosociale Oncologie*, 20, 2. p. 22;
Taal, J. & en Krop, J. (2003). Imagery in the treatment of trauma. In A.A. Sheikh (Ed.), *Healing Images: The Role of Imagination in Health*.
¹⁵ Ramachandran, V.S. 2010. *The Tell-Tale Brain: A Neuroscientist's Quest for What Makes Us Human*, p. 229.
¹⁶ Jung, C.G. *Mysterium Coniunctionis: An Inquiry into the Separation and Synthesis of Psychic Opposites in Alchemy*. London: Routledge.
¹⁷ Perzisch dichter Jala al-Din Rumi was born in 1207 in Balkh in present-day Afghanistan and died in 1273 in Konya in Turkey.
¹⁸ Hadewijch was a 13th-century Flemish Beguine, poet and mystic poet and mystic. Most of her extant writings are in a Brabantian form of Middle Dutch.
-

**IF YOU READ
PSYCHOSYNTHESIS QUARTERLY,
WE'D LIKE TO KNOW!
(We don't know who reads us,
because PQ is offered as a free download)
Please drop us an email
at Newsletter@aap-psychoanalysis.org
—tell us where you live,
and what you think of it.
Thanks!**

New Arenas for Psychosynthesis

INTRODUCING THE BULGARIAN PSYCHOSYNTHESIS ASSOCIATION *Martin Kolev*

The Bulgarian Psychosynthesis Association (BPsA) was officially founded in December 2012, after almost five years of personal interest in the matter. Because I'm writing this text I should introduce myself: My name is Martin Kolev. My role in founding the BPsA actually came about as the result of some professional communication between my own mother and father years ago.

So, let's switch to this more personal topic, with a pinch of humor. My mother and father were developing young professionals in the fields of psychology and arts, respectively—one grounded more in the Western ideas, and the other adding his interest in the Eastern knowledge to the mixture. Their bond let them exchange ideas in the form of questions arising from their professional interests. Discussions between them during the years resulted in a keen interest taken by my father, who one day asked my mother honestly “So, if there is psycho-analysis as a form of theoretical thinking, isn't it natural to have the counterpart—psycho-synthesis?” The first time the question arose they laughed it away as something completely logical, but lacking any conscious knowledge in that particular moment. This story was told to me by them many years later after a “discovery” I made as a young psychologist—one day I was reading Freud's “Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious.” The book fascinated me with its clarity about the basic mechanisms of subliminal sense of humor and jokes as part the working of the personality. Despite my fascination, I had an uninvited thought saying firmly, “This is the way you take jokes apart, but they won't be funny if you don't put them back together into real life, right?” So one night I spoke casually with my parents about this idea, and they responded to me with the story above... “If analysis exists, then synthesis must exist!”

After this “prelude to psychosynthesis,” I started searching, reading, promoting and thinking about how I could find my place in psychosynthesis and its community. The first thing I did was to try to contact someone from neighboring countries, but—no success. So the focus returned back to Bulgaria, as I tried to find people who have at least heard of Roberto Assagioli. And I found them—four people in all had mentioned psychosynthesis in the past, and I found three sentences written in a book. No translations, no knowledge, almost nothing... I started to feel desperate, so a decision had to be made: I had to develop the connections, framework and community setting for psychosynthesis to develop in Bulgaria.

Next, I researched online about where, how and when I could find a mentoring teacher who could lead me along the way of discovering this vision coming from deep within my existence (something I was searching for at that time). In this way I met Will Parfitt in the UK, with whom I began a very rich and friendly mentor-mentee working relationship, and this relationship resulted subsequently in the founding of the BPsA. We regard Will Parfitt as co-founder of the BPsA. Will is one of the two honorary members and founders of the BPsA (the other is Yoav Dattilo from Italy) and to this day he is supervising our work on the subject, thus supporting the expansion and fruition of psychosynthesis in Bulgaria. Thank you, Will!

What we are doing:

Right now the framework in Bulgaria consists of two wings working collaboratively—one driven by the idea of development and psychotherapeutic/counseling work (which I represent), and the other which aims to popularize psychosynthesis overall (which I do not represent).

(Continued on [page 44](#))

(Continued from [page 43](#))

Our aim is to gather around the idea of development throughout life and provide support for people needing it, to the best of our capabilities. The team consists of three psychotherapists, four counselors, one psychiatrist and two health-psychology professionals. After establishing the BPsA we (members of the team) found that we each work or have worked either in cognitive-behavioral, Jungian, systemic, or psychoanalytical frameworks, but we all agreed when one of our members said, “I have been a psychosynthesis practitioner all my life without knowing it!” This genuine idea unites and puts us on the path of expansion and development.

We have now established psychosynthesis connections with people in Russia, Italy, the United States (California), and especially the United Kingdom. I want to thank the representatives of all the trusts, associations and institutes for the warm welcome! So now I am returning the favor of welcoming people to collaborate with us and establish more connections for the sake of Community.▣



Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria


International Conference

psychosynthesis for the future

Taormina, June 2-5, 2016



*From the Eternal
Out of the past
In the present
For the future*
Roberto Assagioli

 ISTITUTO DI PSICOSINTESI



Società Italiana di Psicossintesi Terapeutica

The Institute of Psychosynthesis of Italy, together with the Italian Society for Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy in Florence (S.I.P.T. - Società Italiana di Psicossintesi Terapeutica), is happy to announce the International Congress of Psychosynthesis that will be held from the 2nd to 5th June 2016 in the splendid setting of Taormina, Sicily.

Participants will be welcomed by truly mythical surroundings, immersed in the light of the Mediterranean and cradled in the glory of a culture reaching back over thousands of years. The sea and the ancient rock, with one of the most famous amphitheatres in the world, complete this setting, perfect for merging with the beauty of nature and continuing that dialogue of human creativity begun at our international congress of 2012 in Rome, at Rocca di Papa.

There, in fact, as many of you will remember, the psychosynthesis community felt the urge to re-unite and recognize itself, and we witnessed this through the astonishing number of different contributions from so many psychosynthesists that came from all over the world. On that occasion "World" was precisely the word we questioned. It stimulated us in a congress that sowed many seeds for study and work together, even though they were scattered across immense geographical distances. Today, along with our call to this congress, we want to launch that invitation again and observe with what new vision and renewed instruments we have worked, both in the single national psychosynthesis communities as well as in the worldwide psychosynthesis realities.

Many links were created between centers of psychosynthesis in different countries and continents and we feel that the time has come to taste the fruits from the first crop harvested after the germination of the seeds that were sown, and to reflect upon the paths of the goals along the evolution of Humanity. We shall question ourselves on the contribution that psychosynthesis can offer those goals, with its transpersonal vision that integrates and goes beyond the conscience of nations, to the level of international attitudes and even further, within a planetary network.

For more information see <http://www.psicossintesi.it/book/export/html/5615>