

Psychosynthesis Quarterly

The digital magazine of the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis
June 2021 Volume 9 Number 2

This is issue's theme: Psychosynthesis and Creativity.

Photo a water fountain in the garden at Charleston, which was associated with the Bloomsbury group

AAP provides resources for people to cultivate peace and purpose.

Our mission is to advance the theory and practice of psychosynthesis to benefit individuals and society.

The Psychosynthesis Quarterly is published by The Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis (AAP) four times a year in March, June, September and December. The AAP provides resources for people to cultivate peace and purpose. Our mission is to advance the theory and practice of psychosynthesis to benefit individuals and society.

The AAP was founded in 1995 and is a Massachusetts nonprofit corporation with tax exemption in the United States. AAP membership supports this publication and the other educational activities of AAP, including scholarships. Membership and donations are tax deductible in the United States.

The Psychosynthesis Quarterly accepts 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.

We hope our suggestion of from 250 to 1500 words may serve as a guideline that helps your writing. We prefer that you use the APA style guide when possible, for things like punctuation and references.

Announcements, book reviews, and upcoming events are also welcome, with a request that nonmembers who wish to submit **advertising** make a donation to AAP. To donate, [click here](#).

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Special thanks to our copy editors:
Ann McLaughlin, Eve Sicurella & Peter Stewart

Desktop Publishing: Marjorie Hope Gross

*Note: We receive submissions from all over the world. You will see the authors "native" spelling in their articles.

Letter from our Guest Editor Peter Stewart

I am delighted and honored to be guest editor for the June 2021 edition of the AAP Psychosynthesis Quarterly on the theme of Psychosynthesis and Creativity.

Many thanks to all of you who submitted articles, poems, photographs, paintings and stories, all so original, different and engaging. I found them touching, profound, instructive, thought-provoking, mystical, warm, light-hearted and radiant. I've tried to synthesize these into a whole that allows the different colors, shades and textures to shine through.

Special thanks to Marjorie Hope Gross who has been such a warm and generous person to work with throughout. I was delighted to find that I am not the only creative with a love of spreadsheets. Many thanks also to the copy editors, Eve Sicurella and Ann McLaughlin, to the members of the AAP Steering Committee, and to Richard Lamb who shared so much time discussing how we can do the seminar.

I am so glad to have had the privilege of exploring such a diversity of perspectives on creativity, as it has helped me clarify some aspects of my own creative work, especially how creative energy relates to its various manifestations in writing and poetry, the visual arts, music and movement, as well as fields not always associated with creativity such as science, technology and business.

I was personally struck by Dr Richard Schaub's piece on how creative individuals can be Seekers. When I assembled all the pieces contributed for the AAP quarterly in a sequence, they formed a kind of Tarot, an ancient pack of cards that is believed to symbolize the journey of personal growth and individuation.

The Tarot journey begins (and ends) with the creative individual, the Seeker, pursuing a butterfly, knapsack slung over shoulders, ready for the road. My belief is that the cards symbolize the hero's journey through an alchemical transformation, culminating in the psychosynthesis of the personal self and transpersonal will.

Roberto Assagioli said in his book Psychosynthesis: "Man's spiritual development is a long and arduous journey, an adventure through strange lands full of surprises, difficulties and even dangers. It involves a drastic transmutation of the normal elements of the personality, an awakening of potentialities hitherto dormant, a raising of consciousness to new realms and a functioning along a new inner dimension."

I am happy to have been able to share your creative journeys for the current issue.

Peter Stewart

Peter trained as a psychosynthesis coach on the PGCPLC program run by Middlesex University and the Institute of Psychosynthesis. He worked for more than 30 years as a journalist, consultant and analyst, mainly in the field of energy, before making the transition to becoming a creativity coach and part-time potter. He runs several websites dedicated to his interests in poetry, travel, the energy transition and creativity. You can connect with Peter through his website <https://coachcreates.com> which has links to his various social media or by email to peter@coachcreates.com.

Peter also runs the website <https://psychosynthesis.community> which he hopes will become a focal point for discussion about the contemporary relevance of psychosynthesis.



LONGING

By Richard Schaub, Ph.D.

In forty years as a health professional, I have met many people who are seekers. They ask for help with anxiety or stomach problems or an unhappy relationship but, underneath their symptoms, something else is going on. They show up for work and relationships, they know how to function in the world, but they can't shake a longing that *there must be more to life*.

This longing motivates them to become creative and question how they are living. Their question is a quest. They feel they are not living the life they are supposed to even though they don't know what that would be. They are seeking a way to satisfy their longing.

Loss is of particular significance to them. They sense it in everything, even if everything is presently okay. They know it won't last. They know that change is up ahead and that loss is up ahead. It's a matter of time, and the time will come.

Loss is, of course, inherent in life itself. It is the guarantee that comes with being born into this world. The seeker feels this just under the surface of whatever is going on in their life. Whatever is going on will one day not be going on anymore. The sweet summer evening will turn cooler soon, and the days will get shorter. The brilliant and wise little children playing in the yard will get older, lose their innocence, and get neurotic like the rest of the adults in the world. These perceptions of change and loss are not depression. There is a sadness in them, but not a heavy one. It's the sadness of a deep sigh, a slight pain, the edge of tears. *There must be more to life*.

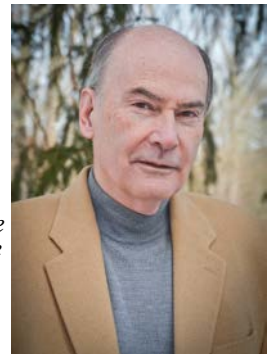
This longing can translate into a frustration with other people, blaming them as if they are preventing the search from being satisfied. The effects of longing may also make them want to move to another location, change their work, and/or leave relationships. And it contributes to a feeling of aloneness, even isolation. Even though they are not alone in sensing that there is *more to life*, their reticence about expressing this keeps them isolated from other people who feel the same way. The longing was expressed to me at a major Wall Street financial firm. I gave a talk on meditation as part of a "wellness week." The event planners made it clear that I should focus the talk on the benefits of meditation for workplace effectiveness. They set up a room anticipating that thirty-five people would attend. One week before the meditation talk, they had over a thousand people signed up, and the presentation was shifted to the main auditorium with a telecast and telephone link-up.

I included three short psychosynthesis-based meditations. Afterwards, the employees who approached me did not once mention workplace effectiveness. They wanted to know more about experiences they'd had during the meditations and guidance on how to go further. The firm's medical director, listening in on the questions, leaned over to me and asked, "What the hell are they looking for?"

The latest brain research speaks to this longing. Andrew Newberg, M.D., reports that there is a higher region of the brain which is a center of oneness, of "absolute unitary being." When this center is activated through meditation, our separateness falls away, and we are in union with everything. He and other researchers speculate that this brain region of oneness exists for evolutionary reasons, and that each person instinctively senses the possibility of this oneness in their lives.

It is startling to consider that the emotion of longing may turn out to be evolution itself pushing at us to discover oneness. If that is so, then fully honoring and engaging with our longing would be a profound body-mind-spirit practice.

Richard Schaub, PhD, & Bonney Gulino Schaub, MS, RN, are directors of the Huntington Meditation and Imagery Center and original co-founders of the New York Psychosynthesis Institute. They are the authors of five books and many professional articles on the applications of psychosynthesis. They are now dedicating their work to transpersonal development training for health professionals and the general public. He can be reached at drichardschaub@gmail.com



The Potent Creative

By Cliff Ishigaki

The Potent Creative

By Cliff Ishigaki

'It is the creative potential itself in human beings that is the image of God.' -- Mary Daly

The acts of creativity in Psychosynthesis are rampant. From our first understanding of the 'egg diagram' we are drawn into the field of awareness, choices and new outcomes that arise from coordinating the dimensions of our total Self.

Each time we worked with the world of the 'will' we were asked to claim the features of thought, intuition, imagination, feeling, impulse/desire and sensation. Just working with this concept led one to understand that the coordinating of these inner abilities meant we were acting creatively.

We were exercising the potency of the personal self. We cannot ignore that when we consider the creative process, we are also claiming the natural realm of power. The French language helped us to understand that 'pouvoir' -- 'power' -- was associated with abilities rather than just force. It is this understanding that Assagioli seemed so clear with in his ideas and concepts of the human will.

In the world of business we often see another synonym for creativity. In business, great praise is heaped on 'innovation.' It strikes one that 'innovation' seems to represent some new thinking that hadn't been thought previously.

In Psychosynthesis, our creativity embraces the eternal principles of love, intelligence and power that represent the Higher Self. Assagioli's interest with Alice Bailey and the Tibetans gives a holistic view of what the Higher Self can provide for our individual works of becoming a personal self.

Perhaps our understanding of creativity is best served when we consider that it is an expression of our potential. And yes, those difficult sub-personalities that sometimes teamed together to form burdensome 'complexes' were also the result of expressing our 'survival' potentials.

Not long ago I viewed a wonderful ten-episode BBC documentary 'The Voyage of the Continents.' As a viewer it took me back 4.3 billion years ago and illustrated how our land masses were once joined together in giant unified blocks that carried the names of Gondwanaland, Laurentia and Pangea. Today we think of the global map as an identity the world has always carried. We may miss the fact that it is in a CURRENT position and not its potential. It is not finished.

The earth has formed and reformed, towering mountain ranges taller than the Himalayas were the features of the original Appalachian range. How is it possible to imagine this kind of change taking place? The earth uses time and erosion over millions of years to effect change regardless of how resistant its features appear to be.

In the study of ourselves, some patterns that originated in the family or culture seem to mimic those resistant earth features. Are we to conclude that crystallized subpersonalities and complexes are only subject to time and erosion over many generations to see a less dominant pattern? This indeed has happened to many of us and our clients.

The appearance of the 'Egg' is an opportune microcosm of what our world could become without time and erosion. Our knowledge of needs becomes central to unlocking our potentials (creativity). Becoming awakened to our needs and understanding that we have the rights and means to influence and manage our needs is very potent indeed.

Our own version of 'The Journey of the Continents' can become more 'Self'-directed than the movement of tectonic plates that join and then splinter entire land masses. Our journey involves the movement towards personal synthesis and then towards spiritual synthesis.

The ability each person possesses to release the energy of the Self into this world was a profound view that Roberto Assagioli had in his definition of Synthesis. He understood that our potential was potent; that we could respect the needs of survival and begin to work for its stabilization; that we could strive for self-esteem and find being loveable and capable a possibility; that we might welcome intimacy in our relationships and generate the idea of providing service for missions greater than ourselves. This is the unfolding of the creative/potent.

Psychosynthesis has built in its very principles the dimensions that none of us can avoid. We must deal with all the functions that were designed around our dependent consciousness. The 'inner child' is an accurate symbol of this function in us that must learn to find success in being dependent. When we understand the cost of unsuccessful dependence on others, we see the stiffened and rigid forms of subpersonalities caught in survival patterns.

Our abilities to bring change in the form of healing and re-parenting is a potent and profound work that requires time, patience, tools and practice that embody this act of creativity and restoration.

The domain of independent consciousness is just as necessary to our development. Our preparation and practice in creating a consciousness that allows for the use of the will to experience the self and our identity is a key component of developing an essential dimension of our potential.

The possibility then exists of using our healthy experiences of dependence and independence to move towards becoming interdependent. This integration of dependence and independence is a feature deeply embedded in Psychosynthesis. The movement towards interdependence is the basis for spiritual Psychosynthesis.

As Assagioli wrote in the Act of Will, if we have been sensitive to our development of the personal self and its qualities of dependence and independence, then we would be prepared to become an instrument of the Transpersonal Will -- a truly interdependent reality.

Our view of creativity and potential could be transformed to levels beyond our self-potential. Our identity would exist simultaneously as personal and impersonal in this world. How amazing this possibility is if we begin the Journey of the Self.

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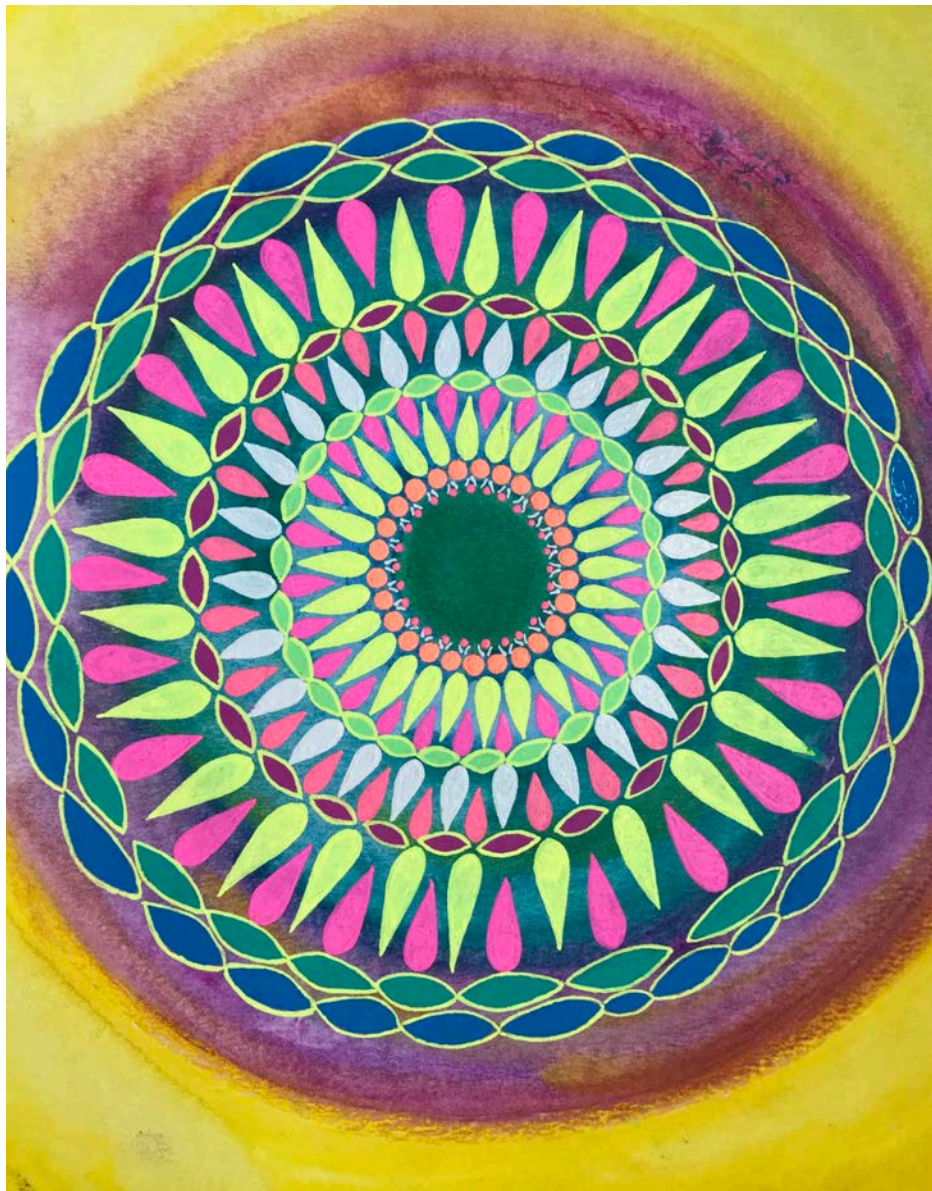
Cliff Ishigaki is a trauma/addictions recovery specialist in Orange County, California. After co-directing the Psychosynthesis Center in Pasadena California he trained in trauma recovery and attended seminary and was ordained in 1996. Cliff served as a Captain in the US Marine Corps during the Vietnam war in 1970. His recovery from the war and PTSD served as a basis for studying Psychosynthesis. He has also taught the martial art of Aikido for 42 years using it to illustrate Psychosynthesis principles during trainings. Currently he serves clients and is also called upon by government and non-handmade mandalas profit agencies for training in trauma recovery. He can be reached at cliffishigaki@gmail.com

Handmade Mandalas

By Bryony Smith

These are some of my handmade mandalas that I started making at the beginning of the pandemic. I have probably made over 50 mandalas in the last year.

I start with a watercolor base and then add spontaneous gel pen marks to create the mandalas. The process has been helpful to calm my mind. I never know what colors or patterns will evolve. In September 2020 I started Psychosynthesis (Northeast) training and created a mandala (attached) after the first training weekend and noticed it was the most balanced (synthesis) mandala I had ever made. The process of making them has been healing for me. I tape them to my wall and look at them while I work with clients (as a mental health counselor, offering telehealth during the pandemic) and find they are soothing to my nervous system. I have given several of them away to friends and find that sharing them is also healing while utilizing transpersonal qualities (creativity, generosity, love). The Psychosynthesis training has grounded this mandala-making practice as a form of art therapy and important self-care during this time.







Bryony (born in 1969) is a second-generation Psychosynthesis practitioner and student. Having grown up in Southern California with two loving Transpersonal Psychotherapist parents, Bryony has been studying psychology all of her adult life. Her mother trained in Psychosynthesis in the late 70's and used Jungian dreamwork, imagery, and transpersonal psychology in her work with clients and herself. Bryony is a mental health counselor near Amherst, MA (with ServiceNet) and will be completing her Psychosynthesis Coaching training in December 2021. She is an avid swimmer, mandala-maker, and life-long student of the Dharma.

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The Growing Crisis of Polarisation in Society Today

By Aubyn Howard, April 2021 (extract from chapter for a forthcoming book)

Same Ol' or Something Different?

Nearly every generation (as expressed by its thinkers, leaders, artists etc.), would seem to perceive an existential crisis, which is unique and critical, to be taking place in their society. It is interesting to read Assagioli's perception of the growing challenges facing humanity in his later years and to compare this to our own experience of collective crisis today. Many of the themes Assagioli wrote about (in "The Act of Will" or his many papers) are the same as those with which we are engaging now such as growing complexity in people's lives, alienation of the young, the impact of new technology, increasing polarisation between groups or nations, the shadow of scientific materialism, etc. It is commonly argued that the difference in the crises we face today is twofold: (i) a matter of degree due to the exponential nature of change and (ii) that with the climate, ecological and environmental crises we are truly facing an imminent threat to humanity's existence on the planet.

At the same time, in the 1960's and 70's, many people felt the same about the threat of nuclear weapons proliferation. The other countervailing argument to include is that, in aggregate, life on our planet can be seen to be getting better (increase in lifetime expectations; decrease of death from war, disease and poverty; more education available for girls, etc). I don't want to expand these arguments here, and instead propose it is useful to assume the time we have to sort out the current mess may be limited. Personally, I have a growing sense we are living through the most important few years (maybe decades) in humanity's history. The rapidity and turbulence of change being created by the confluence of (i) the global health pandemic and how quickly accepted norms have changed in response, (ii) various socio-techno-political seismic shifts and (iii) what is happening at the level of our individual and collective psyche, is qualitatively unprecedented. At the same time, we keep rediscovering and being surprised by humanity's capacity to adapt and respond to disaster, adversity and disruption.

The other differentiating characteristic of the challenge we face today is the multiplicity and connectedness of the various crises. Alongside climate, ecological and environmental crises, there are global socio-economic and biological-health crises (i.e. pandemics, increasing inequality, mass movements of populations), as well as psycho-socio-cultural crises of rising populism, intolerance and tribal factionalism. These can all be seen as functions or expressions of ideological polarisation. I have written elsewhere (see my blog post series on social transformation) about the systemic interconnectedness of all these as well as the need to take a bio-psycho-socio-cultural-historical perspective on what is going on if we are to understand how to address it.

Inner and Outer, Individual and Collective

The above is a backdrop to what I want to focus on in this article, which is how we might work with the apparent growing challenge of polarisation at all levels. The thread running through that I want to emphasise here is the relationship between the inner and outer crises in the world at both individual and collective levels. Creative work offers a modality, certainly not the only one, to build bridges between these realms. As a psychosynthesis psychologist I am interested in working with the inner dimensions but it is important to keep in mind the way the inner and outer worlds are reflections of each other. Not least of all because of the possibility that finding new ways to resolve our inner collective challenges may help transform the outer global picture. There is an interesting discussion taking place on this theme at present, namely how the *biological coronavirus* is mirrored by *self-replicating memetic thought-viruses* in our collective consciousness (using Paul Levy's language¹, more on this below). The hypothesis I want to loosely propose here is, at the heart of the interconnected global crises described above is a profound and growing crisis of collective consciousness, which can be viewed and approached in a number of interconnected ways; one of which is in terms of polarisation, but also in terms of neo-tribal identifications and the above mentioned notion of memetic mind-viruses or collective psychopathology.

¹ I first heard Paul Levy on a podcast with Jessica Ann at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AxIKqRlGXzY>

Of course, any crisis of collective consciousness is also a crisis or function of individual consciousnesses – the two are always related. Strong polarisations, identifications and hallucinations are always a function of the interaction of the personal and the archetypal within individual consciousnesses which, in turn, are never separate from the collective even if they are experienced as such. These individual-collective psychological phenomena are also taking place within the context of socio-cultural systems and, as such, I describe them as psycho-systemic complexes as a shorthand. My view is that the practical application of psychosynthesis has remained too much in the realm of working with individuals (e.g. the processes of personal and transpersonal psychosynthesis) in isolation from collective consciousness. We need to both include the wider systems (e.g. family, organisational and societal) we are all part of in the work we do at an individual level and, I suggest, we can bring psychosynthesis much more directly into working with the collective in new ways.

We can also recognise external forces that are driving and feeding this inner crisis of collective consciousness, for example the influences of technology², globalisation and identity politics within our VUCA³ (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity) world. Quite topical at the time of writing is the apparent sudden realisation that our societies have allowed the tech companies free reign to operate to their own commercial agendas in ways that have radically altered our lives and collective consciousness over the last 20 years, not always for the best. New mediums such as the internet in general and social media in particular act as accelerators, accentuators and accumulators of mind-viruses, tribal identifications and ideological polarisations. Perhaps the tide is just beginning to turn in terms of how societies, through their governments, can recognise the need to influence and shape the impacts of new science and technology. However, most of the genie is already out of the bottle and we need to think imaginatively now about how to support people as they navigate the evolving VUCA nature of the world rather than attempt to reverse it or return to a place that no longer exists.

Memetic Thought-Viruses

I want to briefly touch upon the two other ways of exploring the crisis of collective consciousness and associated psycho-systemic complexes – specifically neo-tribal identifications and memetic thought-viruses. I have written elsewhere (Howard, 2020b) about the emergence of new tribal identifications involving powerful narratives that induce strong emotional bonding which are enabled, shaped and magnified by catalysts such as social media within the new digital global environment. We can all observe how collective identity is reforming, morphing and magnifying in significant ways in the maelstrom of today's societal turbulence. With the systemic loss of many traditional identities or tribes, the collective psyche finds ways to create and shape new ones. The concept of neotribalism suggests that human beings naturally form into social networks (whether consciously or unconsciously) as opposed to remaining in a large undifferentiated mass of society. We can also observe increasing polarisation and tensions between these tribal identities⁴, a malleability in the forming and reforming of tribes from old tribes, and multiple overlapping tribal identifications at the individual level (just ask yourself which tribes you belong to and notice how your answers may or may not have changed over time).

Alongside tribal identifications and their associated polarisations, I also want to explore how the notion of memetic thought-viruses helps us make sense of what we are observing in society today. I believe we need such a notion that is related to, but distinct from, the idea of more explicit or tangible emotionally-charged narratives. Here I will pick up on Paul Levy's description of a *psychospiritual disease of the soul* involving self-replicating memetic mind-viruses, which he refers to using the Native American Indian concept of *wetiko* (Levy, 2013). He describes how this 'bug in the system' induces negative hallucinations (brainwashing) and hence an inability to recognise the truth of our directly experienced reality and, in particular, how this perpetuates the illusion of separation from others. Drawing frequently upon Jung, he

² I recommend watching "The Social Dilemma" (Netflix, 2020) for an insight into how this works.

³ I recommend Keith Silvester and Helen Wignall's 2018 Symposium paper that can be found on our PCL website for an explanation and psychological treatment of VUCA.

⁴ For an example of Britain's new tribes, e.g. liberal remainers, active multiculturalists, anti-establishment pessimists, hostile brexiters, etc, see: <https://www.hopenothate.org.uk/introducing-the-new-tribes/>

describes how such mind-viruses come into existence in the human shadow through individual-collective repression, denial or splitting of parts of ourselves, then projecting these out onto individual or collective 'others' or something else outside of ourselves, such as 'the establishment' or a secret conspiracy.

Of course this is nothing new, but perhaps what makes Levy's retelling of this analysis timely is his combining of Jung's concept of shadow with the current vernacular of meme theory within the context of the digital age. Levy explores how *wetiko* holds in place the illusion of our separation, but I also find this useful in making sense of the current shifting landscape of societal consciousness and our increasing polarisations and strong tribal identifications: Democrats and Republicans in the US, Remainers and Leavers in Brexit Britain; the growth of conspiracy thinking; the perpetuation of big lies (e.g. Trump's big lie - among others) that he won the 2020 US election; the growing popularity of alternative realities in a so-called post-truth world.

Levy offers a 'cure' or way out of the collective psychic disease that points each of us towards inquiring directly into the nature of our present-moment experience, rather than trusting received wisdom from the past, i.e. introjected limiting beliefs. In psychosynthesis terms, this starts with the process of identification and disidentification, the development of our individual free will, as well as owning and developing our capacity for critical and independent thought.

In *The Quantum Revelation*, Levy (2018) draws upon insights from quantum physics to prescribe a paradigm shift in our worldview from *either/or* thinking to *both/and*. The nub of his argument is that we can hold the simultaneous multiplicity of possibility in any given moment, so for example, a specific polarisation issue can represent both dangers of increased splitting and opportunities for transcendent growth. He emphasises the evolutionary importance of the clash of ideas, and quoting John Archibald Wheeler, who in turn cites Niels Bohr: "*There is no hope of making any progress... unless one is confronted with a difficulty or paradox. This is one of our most valuable spiritual possessions – out of this creative tension one can play off one against the other and begin to move ahead.*"

I only recently came across Levy's work and refer to it here because he uses language which helps describe the nature of the emergent problems of societal consciousness we are experiencing today, although I am not sure yet to what extent to take his ideas literally or metaphorically. I suggest there is need for further research and dialogue about how this work can help psychosynthesis engage with the immediate and pressing crises of collective consciousness and I would welcome any potential collaborations in this direction.

Aubyn Howard is the author *Psychosynthesis Leadership Coaching*, published by Routledge in December 2020. He is the co-founder (with Paul Elliott) of *Psychosynthesis Coaching Limited* and holds an MA in Psychosynthesis Psychology with the London Institute of Psychosynthesis and an MSc in Change Agent Skills and Strategies with the HPRG at Surrey University. He draws upon more than 30 years' experience as an organisational consultant, facilitator, educator and coach, supporting transformational change and leadership development within all sizes of organisation, across many different sectors and national cultures. Certified Spiral Dynamics and NLP practitioner, APECS Accredited Executive Coach and a Psychosynthesis Coaching Supervisor. Aubyn lives in France with his wife Diana. He can be reached at aubyn@psychosynthesiscoaching.co.uk



Us

By Antje McClellen

See me
See you
Qualities we share
Reality that keeps us apart
See my shadows and my light
See your shadows and your light
We are separate
and we are one.



This painting was created with colored pencil. It was part of ideal model work during a Psychosynthesis Coach training class I am currently assisting for at the Synthesis Center of San Francisco.

Antje is a Psychosynthesis Life Coach and intern at the Synthesis Center San Francisco. She holds a bachelor in Psychology and is currently teaching as paraprofessional at a Language Immersion school in Wisconsin. She is a certified Evolutionary Astrologer. Originally from Hamburg/Germany, she immigrated to the US in 2001. She lives with her daughter and fiancé in Milwaukee Wisconsin.



Automatic Drawing

By Will Parfitt

Automatic drawing is a method of art making in which the artist suppresses conscious control over the process, usually through moving towards inner silence, then allowing the unconscious mind to do the drawing whilst the conscious choosing 'artist' subpersonality is out of the way. The most famous artists using such techniques include Salvador Dali, Henri Masson, Joan Miro and Henri Cartier-Bresson, artists mostly associated with Surrealism, but the methods go back at least as far as Leonardo da Vinci.

The artist Austin Osman Spare (1977) described effective methods for creating automatic drawings which he regarded as manifestations of the unconscious, like dreams. He quoted da Vinci to explain his method. "If you look at some old stone wall covered with dirt, or the odd appearance of some streaked stones, you may discover several things like landscapes, battles, clouds, draperies, etc."

Who has not seen faces, animals, chariots and so on in clouds, and not only as a child? But such 'vision' tends to get lost as we grow up, so part of Spare's technique is to help you return to that 'pre-conditioned' childhood state, even to before language formed your reality. This is achieved through what Spare described as a state of total inwardness and quiescence. He suggested starting by creating a sigil or symbol as an abstract representation of a gateway to inner inquiry. After shutting off the internal dialogue, the practitioner holds the sigil in mind and it sinks into the lower unconscious where it can work its 'magic' unimpeded by the conscious will. The idea is, the less you push for success consciously and the more you leave it to the subconscious, the more effective it will be.

A drawing is then done, allowing the pen to move automatically as if directed by the unconscious. Once completed it is studied for information about the current state of the practitioner's unconscious world. Piero Ferrucci (1982) usefully recommends that we "greet our drawing as if it were a person coming from a distant land ... instead of judging it in an intellectual manner, we should listen to the drawing's story." Reflect on its style – is it crowded, sparse, light, dark, freeing, oppressive, impersonal, regular, static or dynamic? What is the general atmosphere of the drawing like? Are figures, images, people emerging that mean something, that may represent different subpersonalities, for instance? Try free association, welcome intuitive flashes, be open to memories of past events that may be represented therein. Then leave your drawing aside, let it sink into your unconscious and, if you want, after a few days, look at it again, inquire into its meaning for you, then let it go again. Ferrucci (1982) expresses it clearly: "... in this way we become conscious of the unbelievable variety of energies within us, each of them can be regarded as a real psychic entity with a life of its own." What might have seemed no more than random lines has been transformed into much more. Then – put it away! Leave it several days before you come back to it to see how it now looks and what it may show you.

It's at this stage I take it further and start to fill in the gaps, as it were, to create an integrated drawing that more resembles a work of art, as in the examples here. But the technique works well even if you don't take it to this next stage. What an opportunity, though, it presents, as often the drawing reveals something specific – maybe a subpersonality, a relationship issue, the interface between the personal and transpersonal, and so on.

Creating automatic drawings in this way is not only a matter of seeing something as something else but also the opposite, experiencing unity through diversity, ultimately the attainment of at-one-ness. Dali (2017) understood this well, describing how "the magic power of transforming the world beyond the limit of visual images burst through, so I became master of that magical faculty of being able at any moment

and in any circumstance always, always, to see something else” – he then continues: “or on the other hand – what amounts to the same thing – always to see the identical thing in things that were different.”

Here’s a useful exercise to try out this technique for yourself – at the very least you can enjoy the sense of letting go and having something deeper inside yourself speak, as it were, for itself. Have fun!

Before beginning, have a sheet of paper and a pencil or pen at hand. Take time to relax, and just be calm and aware ...

Now let your hand do the drawing, don’t think about it, or try and control it, just let the direction of the pen go wherever it does ... straight bits, looping, curling, perhaps going into what seem like little drawings – even then, don’t get caught up, just let it flow ...

Don’t censor, or judge or try to understand anything, let it come ... quick, flowing, twisty, straight, slow ... until you sense it is done.

When you’ve finished, study the drawing and consider if there is anything you want to add to complete it, now more consciously – for instance, a certain shape might suggest a face and that part of the image might be ‘cemented’ by drawing in an eye; or perhaps the addition of some shading might suggest a landscape, and so on. Trust in your own perception here, but don’t start interpreting your automatic drawing.

Step back, and look again for anything else you may wish to add. If appropriate, add colour and shading as you wish.

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Spare, Austin Osman (1977) *Automatic Drawings*, 93 Publishing

*Some parts of this article are taken from this book.

*Will Parfitt has explored personal and spiritual growth for more than fifty years. Trained in Psychosynthesis and a Kabbalah Teacher, Will lives in Glastonbury, England. His most recent book is *The Magic of Psychosynthesis*. He can be contacted via his website: www.willparfitt.com*





Dancers by Will Parfitt



Gardener by Will Parfitt



Headhitter by Will Parfitt

Grounding Exercise for Artists and Creatives

By Val Gilman, MFA

Psychosynthesis Coach for Artists and Creatives

Artists and creatives often struggle with three related issues: procrastination, self-doubt and lack of focus. It can be very hard to show up for your creative work and to make the time and keep the date if you are unclear about what of the various ideas you have are worth following or you doubt whether what you could come up with would have any merit.

With a deep understanding that when you show up and stay true to what you find compelling as you develop and refine your work, you are accessing both the creative unconscious and the collective unconscious. This is a tool of personal and collective growth, healing and awareness, and thus of great value. The trick is to get out of your own way so you can do the vulnerable work of exploring and bringing into focus that which is at the edge of your own understanding and discomfort.

One of the tools I find helpful is to lead a co-working session with a grounding exercise at the beginning that is very informed by psychosynthesis principles.

Accountability is one of the basic tenants of coaching around procrastination. I find that the co-working is a very supportive form of accountability. It helps clients trust their own impulse and direction, feel held in an energetic community of creativity, and witness their own progress.

The guided grounding meditation that I lead has three parts; grounding visualization, awareness and intentions. It is followed by a chance for participants to voice their intentions.

The first part, the grounding, is a breathing exercise connected to a visualization. There are many good ways to do this and my own is slightly different each time as I trust my impulse and intuition.

As an example, I often invite an image of a tree. Starting with the exhale and connecting with gravity, then sending a root down from the base of the spine, each breath taking it a little further. This helps the energy of the body settle and focus. Once there is a sense of connection to the earth and a slowing of the rhythms of the body, I encourage an awareness of the inhale drawing the energy up from the earth and into the core of the body. Ask what they notice about how it feels, or what they see or sense in movement and color. I encourage physical movement to go along with this, trusting what comes. Lastly, I invite a sense of expansion and awareness of the spaciousness around us, also inviting a physical movement of reaching and openness - like branches.

Once I have the full tree and we are in a rhythm of exhaling down into the root and earth, then inhaling all the way up through the tree into the branches and sky, I invoke some of the metaphors that are useful to artists and creatives.

- Exhale - you are in a place of release and safety, being held by gravity;
Inhale - feeling the expansion and risk, engaging the conscious world and illuminated space.
- Exhale - you settle into the unilluminated space of the preconscious, a well of source material;
Inhale - you activate expression, seeing and being seen.
- Exhale - you merge with all things;
Inhale - feeling yourself as a separate person able to engage with all the other separate beings.

The breath is such a great anchor to understanding the natural flow of *both/and*. We can trust and lean into this flow.

Visualizing the Self as a tree that channels energy allows the artist or creative to get out of their own way. It is a way of invoking the concept that your creative expression, though very individual, is also emerging from something much larger than you. Your job is to allow it, and to revel in it; to be true to your vision, what is compelling to you, and to trust that when you fall in love with your work - really take it to a level where you are moved deeply by it, others who need it will also be moved.

In this way you can let go of that self-doubt. Make it worth while to you by engaging fully, and it will naturally be useful to others because we are not isolated individuals. We are part of a collective and what comes through us is related to the whole and what others are experiencing.

The second part of the grounding is awareness, invoking the pure awareness of the Self with reference to some of the psychological functions.

Slowly and with space between each question, I invite people to notice how they are feeling physically, how they are feeling emotionally. I say, “Just notice what you notice, no need to fix or change anything.” I go on to ask about the conscious or thinking mind, the sense of energy, the imagination, and the sense of connection.

The third part pulls it all together by setting intentions and referencing the remaining two psychological functions, impulse/desire and intuition.

I ask “the three questions” and suggest they take a moment to jot down their answers.

- First, “In a word or two, how are you feeling?”
- Second, “What are you going to do with this time?” Here I intentionally invoke Impulse, Desire as well as Intuition by saying, “What is bubbling up as the thing you want to work on right now? Let yourself be surprised. It may or may not be what you had intended originally.”
- And the third question invokes the transpersonal, “What quality of being do you want to bring to your work? What would be helpful to you?”

As we go around the virtual circle sharing the answers to the three questions, we witness each other with compassion, openness and non-judgment. We hold each other in unconditional high esteem and in this way support each other in holding ourselves in high esteem.

It always amazes me how much this container of support helps in making the clear decision of what to do while staying focused during the time: the Will of the Self is engaged, Good Will makes space for integrity of expression, Skillful Will collects support around us, and with Strong Will - we show up.

Finally, we set the timer to meet at the end of the practice, turn off the Zoom meeting and get to work! At the end we come back together and celebrate our successes.

If you would like to join us, you are welcome! This is the [link to register](#)



Val Gilman is a coach for artists and creatives and owner of [Taproot Arts and Insight](#). With a background in teaching art at the academic level, and a long a career as a sculptor, she studied Psychosynthesis coaching at the Synthesis Center in Amherst MA, and has been in private practice since 2016. She works with individual clients and small groups supporting creatives in making work that matters and getting out where it can do its work. Currently she is running a series of workshops relating the creative practice to the seasons and has been having a lot of fun creating short inspirational videos for artists and creatives around both making work that is true to your heart and also getting your work out into the world. You can find these on [youtube](#) or on her [blog](#), or you can get them delivered to your inbox by joining her [mailing list](#) where you will also hear about upcoming programs and events.

Virtual co-working for Artists and Creatives-[Virtual Co-Working for Artists and Creatives - Taproot Arts and Insight: Val Gilman- Life and Business Coach for Artists and Creatives \(taprootartsinsight.com\)](#)

Web site [Taproot Arts and Insight: Val Gilman- Life and Business Coach for Artists and Creatives - Life and Business Coach for Artists and Creatives \(taprootartsinsight.com\)](#)

Youtube- <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVm4zeolNS0XVQw66sWj61g>

Blog- <https://www.taprootartsinsight.com/blog-at-taproot-arts-and-insight.html>

Mailing list- <https://taprootartsinsight.us11.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=351479d1d32cb72514515292d&id=3a94bdf680>

The Creative Process Expressed as Photographs

Zachary Rapport

The day is February 4, 2021. I am in Rockridge, California. I am waiting for a train at the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station.

I want to know when the next train to San Francisco will arrive. The station has several electronic signs that show the arrival times for upcoming trains. So, I turn my body toward one of those signs and look up at it.

As I look up, I see the residue of a sunset in the sky. Although the sunset has almost disappeared, the sky is still filled with cool and warm colors.

I feel inspired to take a photograph:



The day is January 20, 2021. I am enjoying an early evening stroll at Alameda Beach in Alameda, California.

As the sun lowers closer to the horizon, it appears to grow larger and its light intensifies.

It's as if the sun were saying, *notice me* or *Good night everyone—we will see one another tomorrow*.

The increase in size and intensity gets my attention.

I feel inspired.

I take a photograph:



The day is February 28, 2021. I am outside walking in the high hills of San Francisco, California. As I approach the expressway, I see the moon and its brilliant light. Underneath it, I see lights and water. They look like jewels on a king's crown.

I feel inspired and take a photograph:



Every aspect of these photos involves a creative process—from recognizing a suitable object/subject, to framing it and determining when to press the button.

I trust my inner creative process to guide my decisions on photos.



I was trained in Psychosynthesis by Dr. Molly Brown. Thanks to my good friend Edwin Gomez, I started taking photographs during our hiking adventures around the United States. Now I take photographs anytime I feel inspired by the scenery.

Psychosynthesis and My Creative Life

By Ewa Danuta Bialek

When I was 16 years old, I started writing a romantic novel. The writing process was very slow, because I was at high school and the number of classes didn't allow me to dedicate myself fully to the writing. The book was never finished because my mother discovered the manuscript when she was looking for a fire lighter and she burnt my book. The memory has stayed with me throughout my adult life. It was many years before I attempted to write another book.

In the mid-1990s, when I was attending a course for managers, I became involved with managerial and organizational psychosynthesis. With the help of my teachers, John Cullen and Vivian King, I learned how to 'manage myself' over a period of nine months. This was an intense time: I was 'sorting myself out,' discovering and seeking to heal traumatic experiences dating back to my childhood but also silencing numerous health issues.

I became aware of what it means to do internal cleansing after more outwardly-directed work, and I went through a process of self-alignment during which I experienced from an inner perspective both the horizontal, as well as the vertical dimensions of myself. This reminded me of tree rings, which surrounded the centre - the essence of me. This was an extraordinary experience, which endured for several years.

This centering allowed me to access spaces within myself that I had not known before. At first these chambers seemed empty, but then they began to fill and revealed what was held inside. I descended into a cellar that held all the painful things in my existence that had been forgotten. These created a concentric order, which revealed the sense of all these experiences. In contrast, the space within the attic had opened up a sense of universal possibility.

When I started to teach psychosynthesis, I was able to create exercises spontaneously during the workshops, on the spot, almost out of thin air. I experienced a similar feeling whenever I was walking down the street and looking at people, especially children and their parents. One of my first students, after attending several workshops that I was running, said that psychosynthesis allowed her to build using 'the smoke from the chimney'.

At this point, I had the idea of creating self-help books for self-education. I had in mind a series of books focusing on upbringing, educational models for the future, women and the development of the feminine, how to support health at all stages of life, business with soul and preparing the 'leaders of tomorrow.'

I already had 23 years of experience in academic work related to medicine and disease. Now, when I probed deeply into the origins of various diseases, I saw both their roots but also the possibilities for healing. These were related both to physiology and to childhood experiences. The books that were created within me seemed to spring up like mushrooms. Some of the books took only two weeks to write, others took no longer than a month. Sometimes the idea landed in the middle of the night, so I always had a notebook and a pen next to my bed. Other books were crafted on buses or trams, or in the park, in nature. I was able to switch off my mind and listen to what was coming from the depths inside me.

I felt a need to understand my creative process, and where it came from. From which level of the self?

In mid 2014, I took part in a course called 'In the footsteps of the Impressionists,' during which I visited an exhibition in Düsseldorf on 'Art and Alchemy.' This was the 'Philosopher's Stone,' that I was seeking. I had stumbled on the opportunity purely by accident, but it was exactly what I had been looking for at that particular moment of my life. This peculiar coincidence was actually no coincidence at all, but what is known in Jungian psychology as a 'synchronicity.' On my way back, I found much more explanation about alchemy in the catalog issued by the museum in Düsseldorf. I understood that the philosophy of alchemy was what I had witnessed in my own life, as well as throughout my creative work, and that it is shared by all creators.

There have been several cornerstones to my creative journey. My chemistry course at university was one of them; I felt a particular passion for the course on the organic chemistry of medications. I found the chemical formulae, especially the spatial ones, were stimulating, and I had a strong response to the laboratory equipment, mainly the glassware, as it allowed me to observe how something visible was created from something invisible, and how something was changing from one thing into another. Through all the years of studying psychosynthesis, working on myself and with other people, I was able to see that this was an alchemical process that was taking place.

After reading a book by Caroline Myss⁵, I discovered that the Alchemist was one of my archetypes and it is one that I am currently exploring. Other archetypes that I have identified have had an influence on my life and activities, and some are still active, but it is the Alchemist that is important for me now, in order for me to materialize my dreams.

I have found many answers to the questions I have been asking myself in the museum catalog mentioned above. The author cites Jung's book 'Psychology and Alchemy' where he compares the alchemical process to the transformation that occurs in the process of a person's individuation. Each of us can experience this process, if only we are aware of it. I have also read that alchemical concepts have had an immense influence on the humanities, art and literature, as every work of art is, in some sense, an alchemical product.

The following sentence is a metaphor of spiritual transformation, and it left a lasting impression on me: 'Dreams and understanding the matter along with controlling its transformation stands as the creation of something new, more splendid and valuable.' This allows us to reach a fuller understanding of the world, to create a more comprehensive image of the world and to express it more subtly. The author of the catalog emphasizes that this is how alchemists have tried to depict the world and man.

Jung says that alchemy signifies the unconscious activity that leads to the psychical transformation of the practitioner. My life practice and my practice related to psychosynthesis have shown me that we can make this a conscious process, something I am doing when I work with other people, and that we can take an active part in this process by being constantly 'hungry' to move on and to know more.

I also learned from the catalog that the deeply desired and sought-after Philosopher's Stone is nothing more than the triumph of the human imagination over matter. This also relates to the power of the feminine part of our nature, similar to the connection between microcosm and macrocosm, along with energy vibrations.

The catalog explained that modern art increasingly reflects the alchemical transformation of a human being as an auto-transformation (according to Jäger⁶ the self-transcendence), and simultaneously as something determined by the catalytic function of society, which stimulates others to undertake their development and to express themselves. The catalog mentions the modern artist Rebecca Horn who believes that alchemy is a continuous visualization, which raises awareness to a higher level. I believe that this is the key underlying the whole developmental spiral and the transformation of self.

In a work by the artist Robert Rotar entitled 'Das Chaos shrie: Form me' – the whole process of human growth is based on two spirals, aligned in opposite directions (just like the double helix structure of the DNA molecule). They are a symbolic representation of both the creative process, as well as the process of introspection. I believe that these two processes are invaluable for one's personal sense of inner harmony as well as a sense of harmony with the surrounding environment.

⁵ Caroline Myss: *Życie jako Święty Kontrakt. Zrozumieć życiowe doświadczenia, by uzdrowić duszę i ciało* (Sacred Contracts), Wydawnictwo Medium 2001

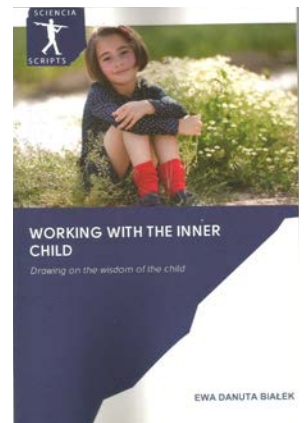
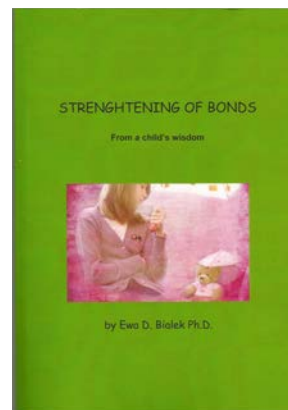
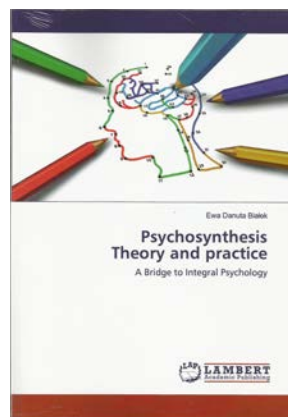
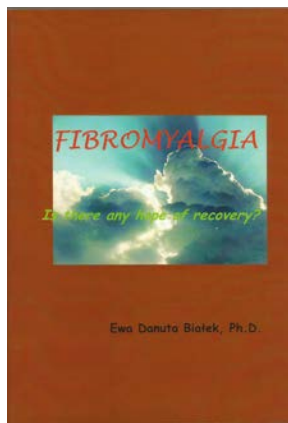
⁶ Willigis Jäger: *Rozmowy o mistyce* (Die Welle Ist Das Meer: Mystische Spiritualität), Wydawnictwo Jacek Santorski, Warszawa 2000

My journey in the footsteps of the Impressionists made me aware that internal and external harmony can be achieved through art and writing, by reflecting and then offering what we have found to other people. The process forces me to introspect, to understand my individual reactions, so that I can then take advantage of my conclusions and apply them when working with other people, to help them in their own process. Without this introspection, the leader may experience 'burnout' and those he or she is working with will sense this energetically.

Sadly, this dimension is not discussed at all in the field of contemporary medicine and education. These two fields are supposed to heal and to teach, leading to harmony, supporting and promoting health, as well as sustainable development and self-expression.

If this knowledge on harmonizing oneself were introduced into education from the early years, it would free people from much suffering of the soul, and as a consequence of the body, especially the psychosomatic disorders that result from blocked self-expression.

In my case the contact with psychosynthesis has enabled me to open myself to immeasurable areas of creativity, allowing me to write up until now 52 books and nearly 100 papers focusing on various aspects of life.



Ewa Danuta Bialek Ph.D is a scientist in the field of medicine (doctoral dissertation in immunology, specialization in clinical diagnosis). She completed postgraduate studies in psychology (Summit University, USA) and a number of courses in Psychosynthesis (J. W. Cullen, V. King, J. Truch, M. Petersen, R. Kea, Psychosynthesis Coach Training and Coaching for Personal Well-Being - D. Firman). In 1997 she founded the Association 'Education for the Future' and in 2004 – the Institute of Psychosynthesis in Warsaw, Poland.

Serving as a consultant and mentor for life and health (well-being), Eva guides people through problems related to their personal life and health issues. She helps to discover and establish a deeper level of trust, balance and peace, where a pattern of health exists, opening the space for joy, rejuvenation and the meaning of life.



Creativity: An Inborn Gift

By Monika Antonia Kuitert

A couple of weeks ago, I went to a supermarket to do shopping.

Walking up to the entrance area, I crossed the path of an older woman, pushing her empty shopping cart back to where the carts are locked up in line, waiting to be freed for use by inserting a Euro or a token.

She looked at me and said: Would you like to take my cart?

I was tired. Shopping is not my favorite thing. Not now and even less in these times.

Her offer put a smile in my heart.

I replied: What about the Euro for the cart?

She replied: Oh, it's only a token.

An unusual response.

It put a smile on my face – my heart's yearnings unexpectedly fulfilled.

I thanked her, surprised and en-lightened... and took the cart through the store, filling it up.

When I had unloaded my shopping into the car, a young man walked by.

I spontaneously asked: Would you like to take my cart?

He was somewhat surprised and responded: Ah, stuck token?

I said: No. Just to give you pleasure.

His child was trailing behind.

Maybe, all of us listened.

Creativity – being present – using what comes up to us – being present – and being spontaneous.

Allgäuer Heilkräuterkerzen - Ein besonderes Licht mit einem feinen Duft.

Reinigung, Hausfrieden, Zuversicht, Trost, Loslassen, Reinigung, Vision, Innerer Reichtum, Harmonie und Liebe, Wandlung, uvm. Brenndauer: 40 Std.

Beim Abbrennen bleibt ein zart durchbrochener Rand stehen – einfach zauberhaft.



Monika Kuitert
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Monika Antonia Kuiter : Born in a small town in northern Germany in 1960. Educated in Germany-> Living, studying, and working in UK, US and Sardinia, Italy.

Formal training: Master's Degree in Translation (Italian, English), Johannes-Gutenberg University, Germany. MA in Italian Literature, Indiana University, Bloomington US (fellowship, University Assistant Teacher)

Return to Germany in the 90s: Translator of films, books etc. Education in medicine, energy healing (INEH), and psychosynthesis. Librarian and translator in a Southern Bavaria hospital.

Free-lance activities:

Translation of various articles by Roberto Assagioli and his book "L'armonia della vita" into German.

2-year basic training in psychosynthesis (Psychosynthese-Haus Bodensee-Überlingen)

2-year advanced training in psychosynthesis (Psychosynthese-Haus Bodensee-Überlingen)

Psychosynthesist in private practice, courses in meditation and psychosynthesis.

Publication of a book review on "Seelen-Kost" (Soul-food) by Gertraud Reichert in the bi-annual

"Psychosynthese" – psychosynthesis - journal for psychosynthesis and related areas",

Upcoming: Article on the "pearls" of "Holy Fire" by Tom Yeomans and its translation – in "Psychosynthese"

May 11, 2021

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Where is Creativity Found in a Self-psychosynthesis Practice?

By Sam Pope

Roberto Assagioli, founder of Psychosynthesis, declared that 'personal will' is at the centre of choice, and the capacity for transformation starts when you move from unconscious to conscious behaviours⁷.

Characteristics of our 'personal will' develop throughout childhood as semi-autonomous 'sub-personalities'⁸. With survival in mind, but often in conflict, they create an emotional, inner drama. To overcome and transcend this inner turmoil, Assagioli encouraged a practice of self-awareness. Through a practice of identifying with our emotions, and then disidentifying from them, the ego is no longer "continuously identified with the 'contents' of consciousness which come either from external stimuli or from unconscious drives...", but now recognises itself as "a pure centre of self-awareness, free from any particular content"⁹. Into this space the will of our Higher Self, or soul, can drop in. In other words, a transformational aspect of psychosynthesis is the practice of synthesising 'personal will' with the will of the soul/spirit (psyche-synthesis) through cultivating a centre of self-awareness.

Assagioli described 'identification' as a passive state, an "invasion into the field of consciousness, including the ego, of energies, of functions that come from various parts of the unconscious... the ego passively giving in to this emotional colouring"³. By identifying - and then disidentifying - we move from an unconscious (passive) to a conscious state. In a meeting about applied psychosynthesis with doctors and psychologists, Assagioli described the benefits of this practice, "As long as the patient is identified with his complex he remains blind; the day the complex is emptied of its emotional charge, and the patient can objectify it, the symptom disappears. He has disidentified himself from the complex"³.

⁷ Assagioli, R. *The Act of Will*, Viking Press, 1973

⁸ Assagioli, R. *Life as a Game and Stage Performance: (Role Playing)*, Psychosynthesis Research Foundation, 1973

⁹ Assagioli, R. *Meeting with Doctors*, Archivio Assagioli, 1963 (retrieved from: <https://kennethsorensen.dk/en/category/roberto-assagioli-interviews-en/>)

As a newly qualified psychosynthesis life coach, I am curious to investigate how I practice my own self-psychosynthesis in day-to-day life so that it may give me some insight into the support practices required for my clients' personal transformations. In particular I am interested in investigating where creativity sits within the practice as I have been hosting workshops using techniques from Julia Cameron's "The Artist's Way – A Spiritual Way to Higher Creativity"⁴ in order to bypass the conscious mind to reveal aspects of the unconscious.

A Self-psychosynthesis Practice:

Underpinning the 'identification and disidentification practice' is personal and physical self-care along with a good community and support network. Included here is physical exercise, play, being in nature and being creative.

"What did you do as a child that made the hours pass like minutes? Herein lies the key to your earthly pursuits."--Carl Jung

Possibly what Jung was referring to here is what we would now define as being 'in flow'. Resting in the 'being' without applied thinking (being creatively 'in flow') is a way to recuperate and replenish. Rest is necessary after periods of spiritual work, allowing a period of 'psychic gestation'³. A lack of physical contact makes intimacy important during pandemic times. N.B. 'Numbing out' (for example scrolling through social media) is not self-care but a starting point for a disidentification.

Identification (being identified with an emotion) is experienced as: 'acting out' of fear, excitement, confusion, control. It is possible to be in an identified place for hours, days, months and even years because the sub-personality strategies were developed for survival. Therefore, hold things lightly, with curiosity and a "spirit of adventure"³ to prevent resistance or a fear of failure.

Get clear (bring into consciousness):

- Behaviour: Notice, with curiosity. Become aware of body-felt sensations. Discover 'what is' using mindfulness meditation. Cultivate self-compassion and forgiveness. Patience allows time for things to land and 'a-ha!' moments to come. The practice of being (and not doing) requires faith in the Higher Self and a Higher Power, otherwise the tendency to take action from fear in order to 'survive' becomes too strong, particularly during times of uncertainty.
- Tools: Use free-flow writing exercises such as Morning Pages (from Julia Cameron's 'The Artist's Way'¹⁰) or journaling. Notice what emerges from a creative exercise. Pull a card from an oracle deck, analyse dreams, do a guided visualisation.

Disidentification: pure self-awareness

The practice of 'getting clear' allows for insights to drop in and an experience of letting go. Making conscious that which was previously unconscious is a state of disidentification. It is experienced as a grounded, centred, calm place where the inner voice of knowing is found and can only be experienced after a period of identification.

¹⁰ Cameron, Julia. *The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity*. Penguin, 2016.

Find and deepen the connection to Higher Self (the inner, calm voice of knowing) and a Higher Power.

- Create rituals around faith, practice mindfulness. Use meditation and prayer to start to discern and invite in the voice of the Higher Self. This process naturally raises consciousness to include an experience of our true nature, that we are part of a greater whole and a sense of a Higher Power greater than ourselves.
- Note: It is easy to repress the voice of the Higher Self if it is asking for a change that seems impossible/difficult and we can get stuck in an identification under the illusion that it will keep us safe ('Repression of the Sublime')¹¹.

Effect meaningful change through action (including inaction) :

- Develop an inner authority.
- Actively work on self-limiting beliefs, making choices to facilitate growth in these areas. Keep it simple. Notice the indulgent places of ego then actively choose not to 'act out' from these places. "Follow what lights me up". With practice, the inner voice of knowing becomes louder and clearer and choices are made more in alignment with a Higher Self and not from fear.
- Energetically, move away from fear (attempting to control) and towards love (having faith and letting go) to create a space for the emergent to 'drop in' as intuition and guidance. This is supported by the psychological 'Law of Attraction'¹ and the external reality becomes a reflection of the internal.
- In relationships, practice 'detaching with love', not with control, and without blame and shame. Make amends – personally and to others (if safe to do so).

Regarding faith - the very process of connecting to a Higher Self makes *faith an explicit part of psychosynthesis*. Not to be confused with the dogma of a religion, the concept of faith is personal and can mean anything, including the power of change. A client who wishes to engage in a process of psychosynthesis must develop a faith (and spiritual practice) of their own. It's likely this is what Julia Cameron was implying with the tagline to her book, "(a) *Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity*". Connecting to your own creativity can be a spiritual journey with a faith in your Creative Self as connected not only to the past (in the lower unconscious), but also to the higher unconscious, the Divine or creative source energy.

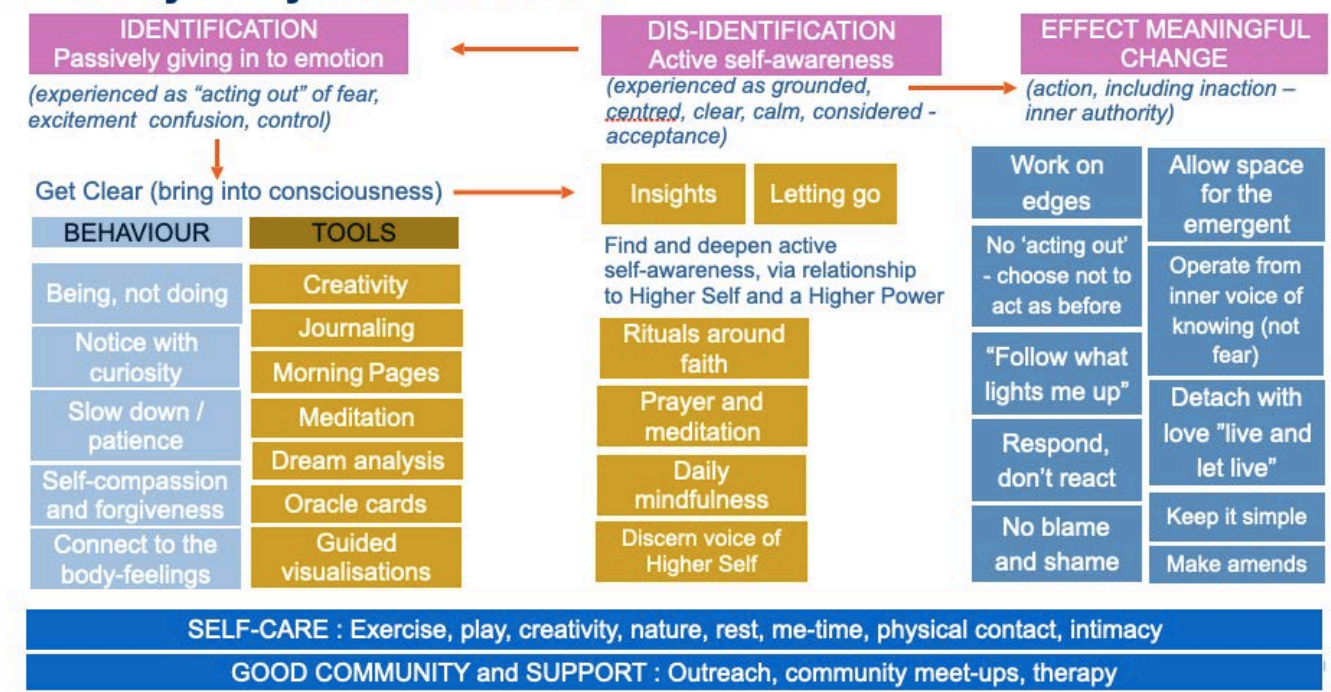
On a personal note, the opportunities to effect meaningful change in my life have increased the more I have practiced self-psychosynthesis. At first, my personal will was stuck in toxic relationships. The practice first supported me to un-enmesh from my sub-personalities enough to be able to effect positive change in my relationships and support network. This is a crucial point to remember when working with clients. Each individual will be unique with their own story and self-care routine and some will need more groundwork than others. Some may be familiar with a mindfulness practice that makes the identification/disidentification process easier to bring into daily life, whereas others may not. Some may have a natural

¹¹ Haronian, F., *The Repression of the Sublime*, 1967, (retrieved from : <http://www.synthesiscenter.org/articles/0130.pdf>)

talent for art or music, others may consider themselves totally uncreative. The practice builds up a resistance to the invasion of the field of consciousness, "...before demolishing this defense system you need to have something to replace it with... a new form, a new healthy personality, or at least a healthier one, to gradually replace the neurotic one"⁷³.

As creative beings, a creative practice keeps us connected to our inner world, increases our self-awareness and strengthens the connection to our Higher Self. It is both a way to develop insights and a place to rest 'in flow'. Given that the practice of identification and disidentification is a practice of identity, and that as individuals we all have the capacity to create something unique and individual, I would say that creativity is a very useful tool within this process. When we cultivate self-awareness through the practice of disidentification we court the sacred in pursuit of meaning by getting to know our Higher Self and the gateway it opens to our true nature and a sense of wholeness. We gain the choice of transcending ego and aligning with Universal Will. Therefore psychosynthesis is not an 'end goal', but a daily dance with the many possible individual outcomes as we engage our personal will, align it more consciously and create new ways of being in the world.

Self-Psychosynthesis Practice



Sam Pope is a newly-qualified psychosynthesis life coach and is currently writing a thesis for her M.A. in Psychosynthesis Psychology entitled : "Facilitating psychosynthesis: creating a new deck of oracle cards". Her background is as a female founder in an award-winning transport business and she has always had a personal meditation practice, studying under many spiritual teachers from India to California. Sam now hosts workshops to help busy business owners re-connect to their creative spark and inner guidance using meditation and creative exercises. Sam lives in North London with her two teenagers and a tortoiseshell cat, Ethel. Sam runs a weekly meditation circle : <https://spope.eventbrite.co.uk>
[Sam Pope Coaching and Mindfulness sam@sampope.co.uk](mailto:sam@sampope.co.uk)

Stirring the Pot: Using Creativity to Explore Sub-personalities

By Peter Stewart

The mobsters sit around the banqueting table under a blue fug of cigarette smoke, discussing the good old days, scores that have been settled and how they might work together in future. Their faces are variously chiselled and worn, some scarred, others cross-hatched with wrinkles. But it is the shoes that are most revealing: dust-covered Cowboy boots next to the slick Italian brogues, Hush Puppy tan desert boots, leisurely loafers and espadrilles interspersed by gleamingly polished black Oxfords, a pair of monk's sandals alongside the sheer arch of shiny red stilettos.

This could be a scene from the *GoodFellas* movie, but actually it popped up from my unconscious imagination during a series of creative coaching sessions with Heather Mullin, who has trained as a psychosynthesis coach and runs Connect Coaching UK <http://www.connectcoachinguk.com>. We have been using creativity to explore sub-personalities and how they might be helpful in developing my own creative coaching work.

Creativity has allowed me to drop into the deep ravines of my subconscious, and to explore the murky depths with a feeling of safety and humour. This took the form of an imagined dinner party attended by a motley crew of mobsters and gang-members, which took shape initially in a short-story but that continues to evolve. Some aspects of the story feel more like a co-creation with the coach, especially the image of a cauldron bubbling with all sorts of odd ingredients, but I have also been astonished by the accuracy and relevance of the subconscious associations in the characters that I cooked up.

I should state, for the record, that I do not have any criminal ambitions and have done nothing in my past that would disqualify me from entering the United States or any other country! If anything, I am law-abiding to a fault. But I have really enjoyed the humour of the story that emerged – despite worries that my coach might be alarmed by the sometimes grotesque, dangerous imagery of the mafia dinner!

Roberto Assagioli often mentions the value of creativity in personal and transpersonal development in his books “The Act of Will” and “Psychosynthesis”, and he wrote more extensively about it in his essay “The Superconscious and Artistic Creation”. This explores creativity through the extended metaphor of fertilization, conception, gestation and child-birth. The essay, based on a 1969 lecture by Assagioli, is contained in “Transpersonal Development: The Dimension Beyond Psychosynthesis”*.

I was struck by several aspects of Assagioli's writings on creativity. The first is his distinction between inspiration and creation. Inspiration often comes unexpectedly, “like a mild electric shock”, welling up or descending from outside the realm of ordinary consciousness. Assagioli cites various examples of spontaneous inspirational creative work that comes unexpectedly from the transpersonal realm even while sleeping. He cites a series of examples ranging from the work of young musical prodigies to the poems and paintings of Maria Gallotti.

In the Spring AAP Quarterly, I wrote about the personal relevance of the archetypal symbol of the labyrinth, and I also had the privilege of copy-editing a piece on labyrinths by Paola Zanelli. The labyrinth is a metaphor for self-actualization and individuation, and is a correlative of the pilgrimage: you always reach the center by following your true path, unlike in a maze where you can easily get lost.

My own spiritual journey began in earnest when I suffered an illness in 2013, and since early last year, I have been seeking new outlets for my creative energies. I have also felt a growing urge to travel as the UK lockdown droned on and I am hoping to do the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. But I have a tendency to lose focus, and I can be easily bored. For a while, these disparate drives left me feeling rather unfocussed and confused, as if my energy was being dissipated by the lack of a single guiding direction or “unitary path”.

The coaching sessions have given me the opportunity to explore these divergent paths through a psychosynthesis lens, and to find ways to integrate them more effectively.

During the coaching, something emerged which is still a work in progress. The mafia dinner was presided over by a mystic or shamanic figure who had little in common with the other characters. When I sketched

the various characters, I disliked the lurid colours that I had used to portray the mystic. Indeed, of all the low-life characters that had popped up, this high and mighty being was the only sketch that I really did not like.

Perhaps my creative urges (the mobsters) had become detached from my spiritual aspirations (the mystic) ?

I feel that this narrative mirrored my own ambivalence about psychosynthesis. I have always felt myself to be a spiritual person, but as a journalist “gritty reality” has been my guiding light.

I gravitated to journalism as a way of using my writing skills while remaining practical and grounded by facts, but this always felt at odds with my creative work in poetry and story-writing that I feel have been directed by my spiritual side. Indeed, I often felt that the creative work which I had craved to have more time for whilst I was commuting had become draining and tedious, and sapped my energy. Often a surge of self-doubt and a sudden loss of confidence would kill the creative urge.

Psychosynthesis has appealed to me more because of Assagioli’s down-to-earth and often humorous prose than the transpersonal and noetic qualities with which he is often associated. And as a coach, I’ve been most flattered by the comment that I had “bags of common sense” and I have been wary of introducing any psycho-spiritual dimension to my work.

The creative coaching with Heather has helped me to link my creativity with the various other sides of my personality, including the spiritual -- which I feel has guided me throughout, even when I was least in touch with it.

The mafia dinner gathered all the characters at the same table, and the mystic is emerging as a host that I am gradually warming towards.

As my story develops, the shamanic figure is becoming more protective of the more reprobate members of the cast, quietly and with good humour smoothing their frictions and conflicts and gaining their loyalty. I feel this is an emerging healer and I have recently resumed my interest to do mediation work. I don’t pretend it is a calling, but I do feel it reflects that my creativity is becoming more aligned with my spiritual purpose, and that the coaching has facilitated this.

By “stirring the pot” I have allowed the ingredients to settle down in new combinations and the flavours are blending in interesting ways. What I thought was a grotesque and somewhat silly story is turning out to be a vehicle for change and part of a “heroic journey”, more Don Quixote than Dante to be sure.

To conclude, I am motivated to quote a section from Assagioli’s essay, where he describes what he calls the acts of “mutilation” that can infect the creative will.

“Everyone must come to realize that criticism, disparagement, pessimism and predictions of failure are nothing less than poisons, whereas loving understanding, appreciation, encouragement and a healthy optimism are life-giving: they awaken dormant energies and can lead to a wonderful inner blossoming and precious works.”

*Smiling Wisdom, 2007; first published in Italy as *Lo Sviluppo Transpersonale* by Casa Editrice Astrolabio, 1988 (© Istituto di Psicosintesi, Florence).



Peter trained as a psychosynthesis coach on the PG CPLC program run by Middlesex University and the Institute of Psychosynthesis. He worked for more than 30 years as a journalist, consultant and analyst, mainly in the field of energy, before making the transition to becoming a creativity coach and part-time potter. He runs several websites dedicated to his interests in poetry, travel, the energy transition and creativity. You can connect with Peter through his website <https://coachcreates.com> which has links to his various social media or by email to peter@coachcreates.com.

Peter also runs the website <https://psychosynthesis.community> which he hopes will become a focal point for discussion about the contemporary relevance of psychosynthesis.

Dust devil

By Jeri Brown [Halifax, Nova Scotia]

Tale spinner,
intent to ensnare
my fluff, humoring,
agitating and vexing me.
You get to me, visible,
without relief.

Common, maddened attraction,
I abhor your invasion to my senses
as you unload powdery earth
sweeping tattered remnants wiping.
You are still there hiding.

Scram!

Hurled and thrown down stairs,
tucked in corners in sly cryptic places,
languished in door-way crevices of cunning sinister scheme,
I scoff as your poorly concealed presence unfolds each day,
frying my brain.

Wandering vagrant,
wreaking havoc through recurring sequences,
your woven fuzzy image cycles morality
of stunning lasting-stamina,
offending and condescending.

Camouflaged,
you boldly prance through my abode at will,
an invader leaving your trail of disgust-dust,
making your unwelcomed presence in unforeseen places,
uninvited.

Have you no voice?
If only you could utter your disdain,
your scorn.
Dust bunnies,
my foot!

Cowardly and cunningly,
you appear when least expected
from gusty skyward wind bursts of cross and upward flows,
to increase my instinctive sense of guilt;
poor housekeeping.

Dishes rattle as I spot you reposed in unforeseen places,
affronting my awareness.

“I just swept there.”

Deft, jeering silent taunts of stunning, coy, corroded caresses,
covert furry physics particles that pester your presence,
with be-devilled heightened enkindle
to jar my teetering flask as it spews forth,
then abruptly shatters.

Stomped, ripped, plugged in and turned on,
alas, I Hoover.
Farewell!
Eureka!
Gone.

Jeri Brown is Professor Emeritus of Concordia University (Montreal). Having led the vocal studies area from 1990 to 2016 Brown now resides in Halifax as an arts contributor for <http://allaboutjazz> and a consultant and producer of various performance projects.

7 Virtual Jazz Club Judge <https://7virtualjazzclub.net> • Celebrity Cabinet Member, Dalhousie Performing Arts Campaign • <https://alumni.dal.ca/giving/current-campaigns/dalhousie-arts-centre-expansion/performing-artists-supporting/> Founder & President, Jongleur Production • jongleur@eastlink.ca • [jeribrownofficial.wordpress.com](http://www.jeribrownofficial.wordpress.com) Vocal Artist, Jeri Brown • <http://www.jeribrown.com> • www.facebook.com/Jeri-Brown • www.instagram.com/jeri_brown • <https://soundcloud.com/jeri-brown> • www.youtube.com/user/Spiritical123 • toddBookings@eastlink.ca Professor Emerita, Voice • Concordia University • Department of Music, Theatre & Contemporary Dance • Montreal QC CANADA • j.brown.johnston@gmail.com > jeri.brownjohnston@concordia.ca



“When I sing, trouble can sit right on my shoulder and I don’t even notice.” Sarah Vaughan

“Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.” Harriet Tubman

I am that which I was

By Shamaï Currim

I look at a word
And wonder how it got there
And what it truly, authentically means
And I ponder
And I dream on it
And in the morning
Or in the night
I allow the self/Self to meet
In partnership
With
The unknown
And I ponder
And I wonder
And
I truly try
To understand
The word
And
The word is
God
And the word was
God
And I am truly
All
That was



Photo by Marc-Olivier Jodoin called Hope
Rue Bellerive, Montréal, Canada



Shamaï Currim, PhD, lives in Montreal, Quebec, Canada with her children, grandchildren, dogs, and grandkitties. She is a graduate of Psychosynthesis Pathways of Montreal and has served for many years, in many varied positions, on the Steering Committee of the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis. She is a retired psychotherapist, educator, and educational consultant and has done volunteer work in hospice and home care services, prisons, and senior's residences. She continues to support the community of people who have lived through extreme abuse.

Now in her senior years, Shamaï has immersed herself in the arts and has had her work displayed in many local shows. She is a professional member of her local art association and encourages her children and grandchildren to be their most creative selves. Shamaï has presented at numerous conferences, has been published in many peer review journals, and is the author of Meaghan's Story.

CREATIVE IMAGE-MAKING IN PSYCHOSYNTHESIS

By Doris Dittmer

Roberto Assagioli noted the great importance of "artistic, scientific or technical" creativity, and it is true that human beings have always found meaning in their lives through the arts. I will here relate some of my experiences in the use of the arts and psychosynthesis.

The creative arts (art, music, drama, poetry/literature, dance, film) bypass the thinking function of "talk therapy" as the primary way of resolving issues, relying instead on the other five functions: *feeling, sensation, imagination/image, impulse/desire* and *intuition*. People who "think too much" can drive themselves to distraction. They can also consciously mislead a therapist who only wants to help. While talking therapy definitely has its place, when used exclusively, clients can filter out what they do not wish to admit to or share, but the other functions compensate for that.

BELLIES AND PUPPIES



I have used the arts in my counseling and coaching work with diverse populations for many years. For example, with my group of homeless pregnant teens we took field trips to various parks. Their main subjects were each others' growing bellies, and dogs in the local dog park. With the prints they created collages or shadow boxes of their safe spaces where they could feel the comfort and unconditional love they expected from their babies, and from "their" dogs.

Another of my groups comprised young men returning from prison without job skills, an education or a home. They were angry, depressed, and hopeless in their expectation, per statistics, to return to prison within a few years. As their art specialist, I guided them to develop social skills such as how to share materials or how to disagree without fighting -- skills they had never been taught as children. Clearly, several of them also accessed their untapped spirituality through their creations, as indicated by their comments, or the reverence towards their materials and finished products -- dream catchers from wire coat hangers, stained glass "windows" from corn syrup, origami from their own decorated paper, and many other projects. They took pride in their work, showing them off to staff, other program participants and their girlfriends. The highlight however came whenever I brought my camera and created portraits. ("Hey, Miss D! Your boy is lookin' especially fly today and is ready for a picture now.") They loved choosing

their "sets" and poses. It was a time of fun, relaxation, and self-expression. The agency printed, framed and displayed the photos in prominent spaces throughout the building. These were young men who had transformed from destructive street-fighting gang members with little to no chance at success to productive, contributing citizens with a future, and the portraits reflected their new self-confidence and pride.

Photography is my own go-to form of creative, technical, and emotional expression. All the psychological functions come into play at the moment of pressing the shutter (*sensation*). I explore this in detail elsewhere, but it must at least be mentioned here.

Not only does photography afford me the chance to put my technical and artistic skills to work, but it also motivates me to get out into the fresh air, get some exercise and to record the things that attract me.

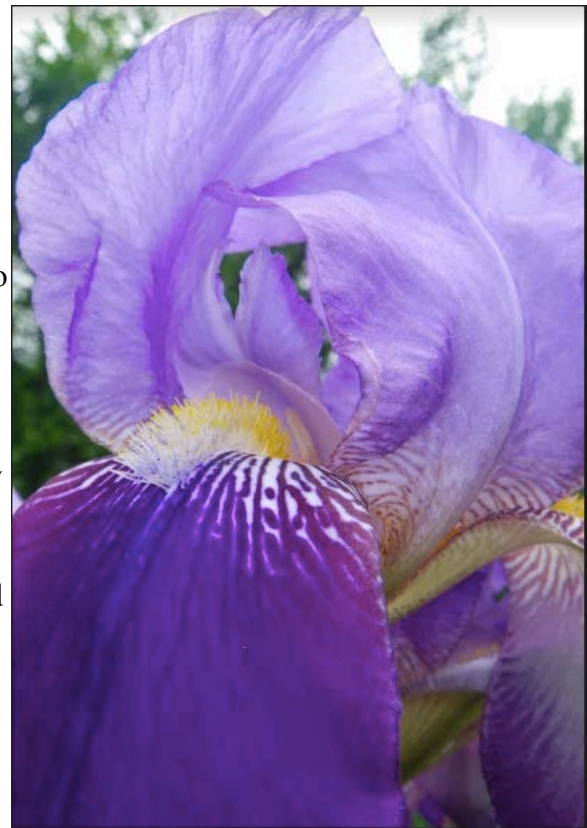


RESTING DRAGONFLY



It also lets me share my vision with others. One of my slide shows, for my local Naturalists Club, was called *The Art of Nature*. I emphasized that I can find art already made in nature right in front of me. All I have to do is put the frame in the right place, often using my *intuition* for the best choice. Oh, yes -- and what lens to use, and what exposure to use. There are many technical decisions to make (*thinking*) in order to recreate the *image* I had in my mind, and to reproduce the *feeling* I had when I first saw my subject.

IRIS CENTER



Photography is also my outlet and guide for the grief process. I created a slide show to honor the life of my beloved aunt who was 98 years old when she passed. I included photos from her albums in the presentation, which ran during the memorial her many friends held for her. Spending time choosing special images from the album gave me the chance to deeply join with her. Only when I remembered her strength, determination and independence when she sued her boss (and won!) for sexual harassment forty years before the Me Too movement did I realize how important she had been to me throughout my life.



Conversation with Dr. Seuss and the Cat in the Hat



I produced another presentation for family and friends as a celebration of my father's life. It included photos of his childhood, his contribution to the environment by working in a team to keep a favorite park from being developed into yet another golf course, and his later-life love of cloud-watching. Again I was able to join with my father, to think about what his life was like for him, surviving his WWII POW camp, organizing the *Big Move* from Germany to the US, his contribution to saving his local park from development into yet another golf course, and all the grief I probably gave him as a teenager.

Creating these presentations helped me to mourn, to honor, to remember, to learn about my lost loved ones, and to carry a legacy forward to my descendants

Camping with the Family



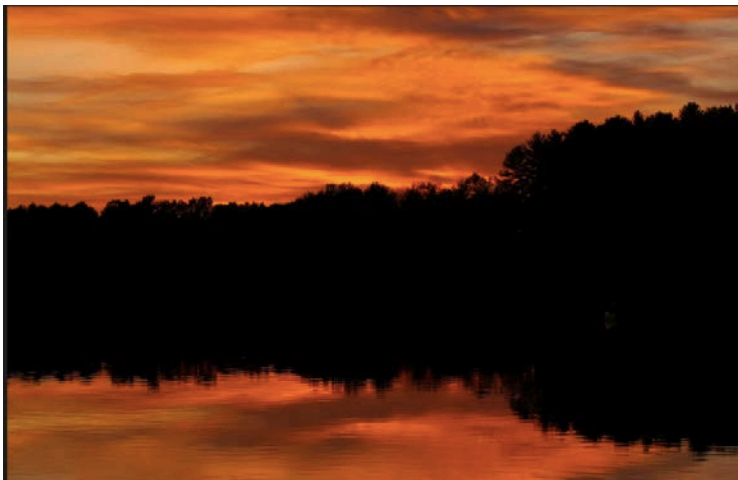
Photography also serves as a form of meditation for me. I am always relaxed and calm (*sensation*) and I take slow deep breaths to avoid camera shake. I am laser-focused on only the task in front of me. It is a very intimate thing. When I look through the lens, what is there is all there is in the universe. Nothing else matters at that moment. I have chosen to frame the image in a certain way, and nothing exists beyond that frame. I've left things out, and I may have had to move my physical location to get the exact right composition.

For example, I wished to capture a certain hill with a large cactus in the foreground. I felt reverence for its unwavering presence and hoped to pass this *emotion* on to others. Words would simply not do. I backed up step by step until the image was in the frame the way I envisioned it in my mind (*imagination*). I took several different exposures to make sure I had at least one good photo, i.e. quality of composition, focus, color, lighting, lead lines, shapes, etc, all coming together correctly to fulfill the purpose of the photo (psychological function: *thinking*). Then I stepped forward to collect my belongings, and, checking behind me, realized that my back foot had been exactly on the edge of a 50-foot cliff. (Talk about *sensation*! Stomach in my throat!) I recalled my professor's voice "Do whatever it takes to get that picture -- hang from the

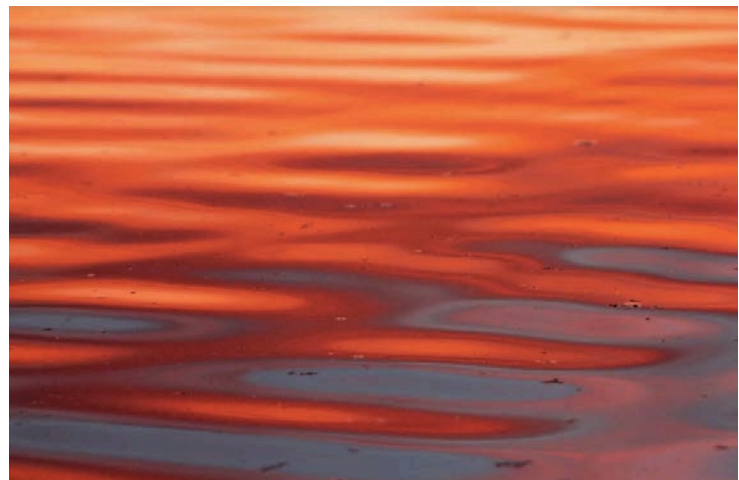
chandelier if you have to." But hanging from a cliff is another matter. Having been completely absorbed in getting the image I was determined to capture (psychological function: *desire*), I had forgotten to attend to my immediate surroundings. Had I moved back *one* step more, no one would ever have seen me again -- I was in an isolated area and no one knew where I had gone except "into the desert."

Photography taps into *emotions* on two levels: images are created by the feelings of the creator, and they evoke feelings in the viewer. This was the case one day at sunset on a lakeshore. Several people stood still as the sky evolved into an amazing sunset. We looked at each other speechlessly, sensing the spiritual reverence of the moment. I *impulsively* took as many photos as I could -- sunsets only last around 10 minutes. When the magic began to fade, we returned to our normal day-to-day awareness levels, gathered our belongings and started leaving. As I approached my car, a woman was just arriving. I commented to her that she had just missed a beyond-belief vision, and she regretted that she was too late. I showed her the photos in my camera's playback, and even from these tiny thumbnail images, she was able to experience some of the emotion the sunset had elicited in me.

POWERFUL SUNSET



SUNSET RIPPLES



There is so much more to say, such as how photography allows me to access my higher, spiritual, Self, but sadly I must end here.

Doris Dittmer was born in Germany and raised in Massachusetts from age 8. She has been involved with the arts since 3rd grade, studying drawing, painting, ceramics, poetry, and dance. At age 17 she discovered photography and was hooked. As an adult she lived and studied in Nevada, California, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and New York City.

She has been director of and clinician for a treatment home for court-ordered children, a creative arts therapist in various settings, a mental health clinician for at-risk youth and disadvantaged families, and a telephonic counselor for an employee assistance program. She is currently a psychosynthesis life coach and guide for an online meditation group.

She holds an MA in Forensic Psychology, a BA in German Languages and Literature, and certificates in Art Therapy, Creative Art Therapies in the Treatment of Trauma, and Psychosynthesis Life Coaching. She also studied at the International Center for Photography and the Nikon School of Photography in New York.

Doris also finds great satisfaction as a troupe member of Small Planet Dancers, which performs cultural and historical dances for the mostly ignored elders residing in assisted living and nursing homes, and Veterans.

Doris notes that the arts communicate across all language and cultural barriers. As a photographer she makes a statement, and the viewer makes an interpretation. Each photograph is a self-portrait of the creator or the viewer more than an objective view of the subject. She says "Once I process a picture, I see more in it than I did when I was first attracted to the subject. It reveals itself to me in surprising ways -- it reveals myself to me."



My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies By Resmaa Menakem

Book Review by David Stark

Note: This book is a fine example of the creativity and overarching kindness imparted in psychosynthesis. The map it offers is highly creative and powerfully respectful. Menakem advocates first of all settling our traumatized bodies. Then we can revamp or re-create our differing cultures, particularly white, black, and blue/police cultures. He foresees that we can then weave the new, settled cultural strands into an exciting whole. It's a way for us all to participate effectively in our shared assignment: creative, worldwide synthesis.

Resmaa Menakem's book meets a vast need we all have for education, change, and progress. It teaches using a rather basic, easy model. Rarely in the discussions in our Psychosynthesis book group did I hear people complain that the book was confusing, and never that it was too complex, or overwhelming in its process or methods. To the contrary, we were able to discuss it effectively, at times concisely and at other times more elaborately.

While the exercises could at first appear to be a distraction or inconvenience, in the end they accomplished what they needed (and were intended) to do. They helped us to learn and accomplish what we ourselves had hoped (and intended) to do. We learned to return to the body, even while feeling conflicted about matters which often came disguised as nonphysical matters, such as issues of culture, history, or race.

The overall system of the book, as well as its specific techniques, surprised us at times but didn't disconcert or dishearten us. The book invited us to reconsider what we thought we already knew about history, culture, race, and ourselves.

We as psychosynthesists have traditionally been interested in matters of the self, and so this book fell within our defined purview. Yet it offered us many ways to expand our vision. We were able to look forward in time with hope by looking back at history, and to see others differently by first looking directly

at ourselves. And we could link our internal experiences to an outer world, to the culture we share with others.

A better, more complete, more inclusive truth emerged. It was not a theoretical novelty but a discernible form, a truth we had already known but which needed to be revealed in a new way. This book enabled our group to meet around a shared task and project and to help each other with the work of finding the truths among us and within us.



David Stark, MS
Peer Counselor / Peer Educator

David earned a Bachelor's from Princeton University in Psychology/ Linguistics in 1987 and an M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Southern New Hampshire University in 2018. He also has certificates/licenses in Psychosynthesis, WRAP, Peer Advocacy, and from the Boston University Recovery Workshop. David has been on the Board at Windhorse since September 1997 and Peer Educator since 2014. David was Windhorse Associate's first client. He wrote "Sanity Recovered" in House Calls and "The Will To Recover" in the Psychosynthesis Quarterly. He has worked at a warmline, facilitates the Windhorse Writing Group and Peer Social Hour, was a DMH consumer initiative grant recipient, trains peer counselors, and is completing Shambhala graduate level training.

Celebrate Early! **By Catherine Ann Lombard**

I paint in a sea of Spanish. Five years ago when I was living in Germany, every Wednesday morning I entered the inspiring atelier of my teacher [Luz Jiménez Díaz](#). She is from Colombia and has lived in The Netherlands for the past 20 years. Most of my fellow students were also Spanish speaking, coming from Mexico, Columbia, and Argentina. As we painted side-by-side, they would easily slide into Spanish, often laughing and chatting as they would paint.

The large room was full of light, and outside a flower garden, vibrant and bursting with color. You entered the garden by way of a large mosaic terrace that Luz had designed based on Egyptian images and gods.

A small group of us would attempt to bring our imagination to life under Luz's patient and encouraging eye. When I first started, Luz would often appear before my atrocious splashes of color and say, "Your work is full of feeling." She would then take a brush and tenderly demonstrate a technique that she wanted me to learn. "Why don't you try this?" she would ask, and I was completely swept away. Only later did I realize that when she said, "Your work is full of feeling," that it probably needed a lot more technique!

One week I decided to bring German cake to share with my fellow aspiring artists. We would usually stop mid-way for rich Colombian coffee or herbal tea, accompanied this time with slices of raspberry cream tart, thickly-layered and smelling sweet.

"What are we celebrating?" everyone asked.

"I don't know yet," I answered. "It hasn't happened yet."

Everyone laughed.

"We'll have to wait and see," I said. "Something is bound to happen now that we are celebrating it!"

There have been hundreds of scientific articles documenting the success of those who use their imagination to realize their goal. From Olympic athletes to students taking exams, they have all shown the power of the imagination to create a desired reality. But this idea is not new. During ancient times, Greek women who were pregnant were encouraged to gaze upon works of art. The idea was that looking upon beautiful items would help them create beautiful children.

There is the story of a little girl who always wanted a bicycle, but her parents could not afford to buy her one. She never stopped wanting a bicycle and finally, one day, her parents were able to afford one. The little girl was naturally delighted, and to their amazement, she immediately got on the bike and rode around the neighborhood. When she came back, quite pleased with her new bike, they asked her, “You ride so well! Where did you learn to ride a bike like that?” The little girl looked at them surprised. “Why in my head!”

Assagioli writes about seven psychological laws that have a practical bearing on the use of one’s will. Over time, I hope to touch on all seven laws, but these stories of the little girl on the bicycle, Greek pregnant women, and me enjoying pre-celebratory cake illustrates Law I:

Images or mental pictures and ideas tend to produce the physical conditions and the external acts that correspond to them.

Assagioli (2000) writes that this law is what accounts for “mass suggestion [that is] so cleverly and successfully exploited by advertisers and political leaders” (p. 52). We must understand that our thoughts are energy and energy always seeks matter. By mobilizing the energies of imagination and thought, you then use this energy to carry out your desires.

Like the little girl, we must learn to purposefully and consciously choose, evoke, and concentrate on the images and ideas that will help us to produce the actions we desire. The higher qualities of trust and surrender also come into play here, as they are vital for us to wholeheartedly engage with our imagination in this way. These qualities as well as the power of your imagination are also the fundamental elements of prayer. As Jesus said, “Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours” (Mark 11:24).

So why not galvanize this Law and use it consciously and positively in our lives (skillful will) to create what we want to happen? Like something to celebrate! This week, start small. With a light heart, celebrate what is to come. Trust that it will. Imagine what it might be. Stay open, look carefully, and joyfully accept its beautiful appearance.

Reference

Assagioli, Roberto (2002), *The Act of Will*, The Psychosynthesis & Education Trust, London

Catherine Ann Lombard, M.A. is a psychosynthesis psychologist, practitioner and researcher. She has had numerous scientific articles published on psychosynthesis and is currently exploring the relationship between Roberto Assagioli and Rabindranath Tagore, the Bengali poet and Nobel Prize winner of Literature. She writes a bimonthly blog on psychosynthesis at LoveAndWill.com.





RESURRECTION BY CATHERINE ANN LOMBARD

A collection of Poems

By Siomar Ballan

Holy Alone *By Siomar Ballan*

When life appears to take all
from you but the North Star,

Go into nocturnal woods
where there is a society unmarked.
Go into the night, travel alone
with the porous dark, where curious
uncharted eyes may return life
to the felled wilderness in you.

Find repose where your mind
can search the curved dome
of spiralling ethereal flecks
with fair notion of its limits,
where there is no kindred
to reflect back in crude
unforgiving forms,
and a strange new language
may begin to find its voice.

When life appears to take all
from you but the North Star,

Go beyond the fringes of civility
where lonely expands
and breaches
its own boundaries
becoming aloneness,
and suddenly, all
is permitted
to be holy.

Pilgrim in the Night

By Siomar Ballan

Pilgrim,
rest your weary limbs a moment here
below the tender vaulted night,
upon this bed of midnight moss.

Let your story trickle
from your battle scars in beads
of midnight dew, leaving moonlit trails
from you to the breathing earth
that welcomes them.

Arch your weary head up
to the watching skies, and be
quite still and listen:

There is a bliss
beyond the serrated edges
of your soul-ache, there is
a sidereal rapture in your tired veins.

Rest here awhile,
pilgrim, and Be,
feel the gods smile
serene upon you
in the tethering darkness.

The moment before speaking (group therapy series)

By Siomar Ballan

The mouth of the void
can open in even the safest space,
gaping, hungry, awaiting; there is always the risk
of falling forever into a nameless place,
sound and light consumed without murmur.

I tremble on the precipice of becoming,
shed skin and offer penitence for the knowing
that rebirth is first a form of death;

There is always a death in renewal,
and I have known before the foul face
of oblivion wrapped in false shades of grace.

I succumb, all at once on a whim of faith
and hope this time I'll arise with fresh purpose
and it will be shame,
and not I,
that disintegrates.



Siomar Ballan works as a Psychosynthesis therapist, with a private practice in London, UK. She has a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and is on the cusp of graduating with a Master's degree in Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy. She has a background in teaching meditation and yoga, with a focus on recovery from trauma and addictions.

sio.ballan@gmail.com

The Possible Perils of Creativity and the Necessity for Courage

By Daniel A. Anderson, Ph.D

For a few years now I have been in the process of writing a book on Psychosynthesis. While the groundwork for this book as been in development for over 20 years, the groundwork for my own creativity has been in development since I began graduate school in clinical psychology in the fall of 1976. At that time, though, I did not know I was free to have much original thought. By then I had developed a strong Student subpersonality that had learned to pass tests and classes merely by repeating the thoughts of others. I remember in my first psychotherapy course I received a mediocre grade on a term paper that I wrote about Reality Therapy. The professor's comment that he wrote on the paper that he returned to me was that he would've liked to have seen more original thought.

It's not that I didn't have the original thoughts, it's just that I had learned that the academic assessment of my having learned something was mostly based on my regurgitating the thoughts of others. Only when I was giving writing assignments that were more along the lines of "reaction papers," would I would share my original thoughts about what I was studying. Sometime in the mid-1980s when I was working at my first professional position as a clinical psychologist at Morehead State University's Counseling Center I remember cutting out a cartoon from the APA Monitor on Psychology. The cartoon had a drawing of a man who was following a path of footprints. The caption was that this man was so busy following the footprints of others, that he forgot to leave any of his own. This struck me for some reason and I cut this cartoon out and I still have it somewhere.

In September, 1986, I began and eventually completed 476 hours of training at the Kentucky Center of Psychosynthesis. I followed this with a total of 145 hours of training at The Concorde Institute between June, 1989 and June, 1990. My understanding of Psychosynthesis was and continues to be based on my study of Psychoanalytic, Neo-Psychoanalytic, and Jungian theory; along with the study of Ken Wilber's writings. It was through Wilber's writings that I was introduced to the perennial philosophy. During this process, I discovered that I tend to be alert to patterns in different approaches, and I am pre-disposed to integrating these patterns. As a result, I am often "thinking outside the box" of any one theoretical approach. This may be one of the primary manners in which my creativity manifests and therein lies the peril.

As I note in the Introduction to my book: The development of Psychosynthesis as a psychological school of thought and practice in North America has progressed primarily outside of academic psychology. As a result, the developments in Psychosynthesis and those in academic psychology programs seldom cross-pollinate and, instead, for a large part develop independently without the fertilization of thought from the other. This is partly a function of the absence of a Psychosynthesis presence in academic programs, but also partly a function of the tendency for individuals within any particular school of thought to limit their focus of study, investigation, and inquire to the worlds of their own theoretical realms, seldom venturing outside of their own theoretical orientation to interact with individuals holding other orientations (cognitive-behaviorists tend to interact with fellow cognitive-behaviorists, psychoanalysts tend to interact with fellow psychoanalysts, etc). As Daniel Goleman (1980) states, "within science in general each branch and specialty represents an even finer focus, and is to some degree a self-contained subculture with its own language and special view of the world" (p. 29).

This lack of cross-pollination between Psychosynthesis and academic psychology has probably been more restricted in the academic realm than in the numerous Psychosynthesis centers across the world, but its effects likely exist there as well. As the trainers and trainees in Psychosynthesis come to their various centers mostly with academic mental health degrees, they bring to their respective centers the theoretical influences from their academic training. Those Psychosynthesis practitioners that view Psychosynthesis

as a specialization within their psychological training will integrate it with their other psychological knowledge and draw upon both to refine their practice of Psychosynthesis and psychology. But the theoretical blinders that can exist in an academic program tend to also exist, to at least some extent, in all groups of individuals who come together under a particular theoretical orientation. As Goleman (1980) states, "Professional training is a secondary socialization whereby the fledgling scientists acquires a role-specific paradigm" (p. 30).

As we know, one area of content within a subpersonality with which people tend to become identified are the thoughts of that subpersonality. Most Psychosynthesists have a Psychosynthesist subpersonality that they are strongly attached to and there is often a strong belief that the ideas held within this Psychosynthesist subpersonality are the correct or "right" ideas. And woe to any person who threatens these "right" ideas by suggesting that there might be another way to understand something.

Researching for my book by reading the writings of "first-generation" Psychosynthesists, I became aware that the writings of two well-known individuals in the Psychosynthesis field had written materials that didn't agree with the long standing concepts of the perennial philosophy. This originally gave me a little pause, but in my correspondence with Dr. Linda Hoyle wherein I shared with her my contrary position on one long-standing tenant of her training center, I received her support of my position. Following this, I discovered a similar error made by one of my psychosynthesis teachers.

I'm expecting that the dialectical model and its stages (thesis, antithesis, synthesis) will play a major role in my discussion of Psychosynthesis, psychological growth, and creativity. The movement from any one paradigm always begins with the emergence of concepts that are antithetical to those of the original paradigm. It is at this point, that the holders of the old paradigm tend to experience the new perspective as a threat. As I learned in my training at the Kentucky Center, the task is to always hold opposites with an attitude of equanimity, because this non-attachment to either polarity creates the space and opportunity for a synthesis of those opposites to arise. This can become a task that requires much mindfulness when one is writing a book that presents any ideas that may be new. There is always the tendency within any individual who tends to have an academic background to become identified with their thoughts and ideas, especially if they are "new."

In the mid-1990s, my wife and I heard Arlo Guthrie perform at the Rocky Mountain Folk Festival. Between songs he responded to a question about how he writes his songs. He stated that the words just come to him, as if he was sitting by a stream and the words were fishes flowing by. He said the trip was just to make sure that one doesn't sit down stream from Bob Dylan. This reminded me of when I wrote poems in high school. The best poems were always the ones that just came to me, not the ones that I worked at writing. I have since learned that the best thoughts come to me when I am Centered.

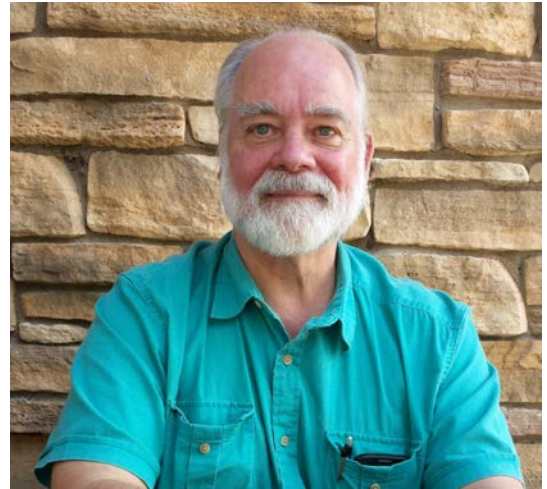
In one therapy session that I had during my training at the Kentucky Center, I had an intense experience of Center in which I accessed the wisdom that is expressed in the statement, "Not my will, but thy will." I understood that the action to be taken in any situation were not actions that would benefit myself only, but were actions that would be a step in the direction of bringing a greater wholeness to all involved. Creativity occurs more when one Centered and dis-identified. A possible good example of a dis-identified individual is Ken Wilber. When his writings were republished chronologically in the series *The Collected Works of Ken Wilber*, he wrote an introduction to each volume in which he criticized his writings, pointing out the errors that he had made and his more correct understanding he had of things as the development of his thoughts progressed.

One may assume that the more one is Centered and the more one is dis-identified, the more creativity occurs. To facilitate this as I write my book, I remind myself, "I experience thoughts, but I'm not the

thoughts that I experience.” I believe by doing so I lessen the likelihood that I’ll become identified with my Psychosynthesist subpersonality who would believe he is the owner and defender of the thoughts expressed in my book. I am merely the scribe who writes down the thoughts of which he became aware in his journey to understand the subject of his book more.

Goleman, D. (1980). Perspectives on Psychology, Reality, and the Study of Consciousness. In Walsh, R. N., & Vaughan, F. Beyond Ego: Transpersonal Dimensions in Psychology. Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher, Inc.

Daniel A. Anderson, Ph.D. works as a clinical psychologist in Loveland, CO. He specializes in the treatment of trauma, stress disorders, mind-body psychology and psychospiritual growth. He obtained his Ph.D. from Texas Tech University. He studied Psychosynthesis at the Kentucky Center of Psychosynthesis from September, 1986 through May, 1989 under John Parks, M.D., Mary Green, Ph.D., Vincent Dummer, Ph.D., and Sharon Martin. He trained under Tom Yeomans, Ph.D. at The Concord Institute from 1989 through 1990. You can connect with him by email at abintra@info2000.net.



FULL BLOOM and BEYOND

Photographs by Wendy Holmes Noyes

The Call of the Roses:

Learning about Letting Go,
and admiring the beauty along the way.





Grief and gratitude are kindred souls,
each pointing to the beauty of what is transient
and given to us by grace.

Patricia C. Carlson

Wendy Noyes has been making photographs for over fifty years. She studied with Didi Firman completing the two year study of the basics of Psychosynthesis, and also with Jon Schottland's program in Brattleboro, Vt. Creative work has been a respite from the trials of the past year, and has encouraged her to engage in her love of life even as we all struggle forward through the pandemic.



Covid and Creativity: A Prose Poem

By Valerie Broege

Not content to let the Covid era be a dead zone,
Leaving a legacy of lost time,
Barren and sterile,
I invoke my inner Hermes
To come to my creative rescue,
To bring forth fertility and fruition
From the matrix of this pandemic.
As the leader of dead souls
To Hades' realm of the unconscious,
He knows well the riches to be found there –
A cornucopia of fruits, flowers, vegetables,
As well as precious gems.
He is capable of bringing these things
Into the light of this earthly plane.

I follow his lead,
First as Trismegistus, the alchemist,
Combining basic ingredients
In bowls, pots, pans
Baking, cooking, cooling
To produce the gold
Of culinary delights,
To gratify the taste buds
Of myself and my partner.

Next I call upon Hermes as wordsmith,
Male Muse for the forging of my prose and poetry,
And aided by his trickster guise,
Puns, jokes, funny stories
Flow forth in profusion
From my lips and fingers.
Hermes as trickster also guides me
In the twists and turns
Of constructing my cryptic crosswords.
Communicator par excellence,
I pray that your winged words
May fly forth from my mouth,
As I teach and facilitate discussions.

Another of my subpersonalities,
My inner Athena,
Also clamors for attention.
Goddess of strategy and handicrafts,
She manifests her powers
In the knitting and crochet projects
I design and execute.

My inner Aphrodite,
Goddess of love and beauty,
Revels in the variety
Of the textures and colors
Of the yarns and threads
I stitch together,
Admiring the finished products.
She loves them to be on display,
In the home or as apparel.

She is also the one who influences me,
When the different holidays
Call forth seasonal decorations
In celebration of them
In my apartment.

I honor all three of these inner subpersonalities –
Hermes, Athena, and Aphrodite –
My life preservers, fonts of creativity,
As I weather the waves of Covid.
Where would I be without them?



Valerie Broege is a retired teacher of Humanities at Vanier College in Montreal. She is currently a course designer and leader at the Thomas More Institute, also in Montreal. She studied Psychosynthesis with Olga Denisko and has employed its principles in her work as an educator and in her personal development, melding it with her background in Jungian psychology and expressive arts therapies. Writing poetry has been a recent development in her life and has intensified as a creative response to the vicissitudes of the Covid era.

Creativity: the short form (Haiku by didi)

Create in 3 lines?
Seventeen syllables? Whoa!
Each breath, creation.....

Dorothy (Didi) Firman, Ed.D, LMHC, BCC is the Founder & Director of Training, of The Synthesis Center and a Founding Director of the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis.



Coachcreates

Creative Coaching for Transitions



Coachcreates provides creative coaching for companies and individuals who are involved in making significant transitions. These transitions may be personal, career-related or organisational.

When a system undergoes a deep transition or transformation, whether it is a person, team or a business, every part of it has to adapt and realign itself with the new purpose and emergent identity of the whole. This process is complex, multi-layered and often emotional. Using our creativity allows a deep and adaptive realignment of the Self with the realities of the transformed system. Because creativity reflects our deeper self and its shaping purpose, it can itself be a powerful tool for transformation.

I set up Coachcreates in 2020 during the global pandemic to provide a deeper level of coaching that goes beyond performance and taps into the deeper strata that drive each person's sense of purpose and help them to work with others to manifest this purpose in effective action. Our website is at <https://coachcreates.com> and I am on Twitter as @coachcreates.

Having worked for more than 30 years in the field of energy, as a journalist, consultant and analyst, I am interested in how coaching can be used by those involved in the energy transition to harness the collective will and to drive action. I am also interested in how business leaders can use creativity to transform the workplace, and to help people find more meaning at work. I also see great potential for the use of creativity in conflict resolution.

The Coachcreates logo incorporates the colours of the medicine wheel in a motif (originally by the graphic designer Annabelle Clements) that depicted a simplified labyrinth. I felt that this reflected my interest in intercultural exchange, and this is an aspect of coaching that I would like to develop further. I have worked abroad as an expatriate for many years, in Asia and the Middle East; and for large companies in the US, Russia and Africa.

My interest in Psychosynthesis dates from when I stumbled by chance on Roberto Assagioli's The Act of Will. I subsequently completed a six-month Psychosynthesis Leadership Coaching post-graduate certificate in the UK in 2017 and I have been accredited by the European Mentoring and Coaching Council as a coach/mentor at Foundation level since February 2021. As well as the AAP, I have been involved in several other psychosynthesis groups including the early stages of the nascent European Psychosynthesis Association, which is due to be inaugurated in July. [Click here for Peter's bio page 3](#)

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Psychosynthesis...now for the future

Synthesis Center San Francisco

"Study and Teach with Joy." ~ Roberto Assagioli

Info@SynthesisCenterSF.com
SynthesisCenterSF.com

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"A new psychology is needed - a Ψ which can be and should be at the same time spiritual and scientific."

~ Roberto Assagioli

OUR STUDENTS & FACULTY

We are a diverse global community of students, faculty, and coaches who live and work in places that include:

United States, Canada, Australia, Spain, UK, Ireland, France, Scandinavia, Africa, the Netherlands, South America, Central America, Switzerland, Turkey, Greece, and more!



OUR PROGRAMS 2021 - 2022

 Psychosynthesis for Life (P4L)
  Board Certified Coach Training
  Advanced Training
  What Matters: Webinars, Workshops, Podcasts
  Coaching Practice Community
  Psychosynthesis "In-Service"

BOARD CERTIFIED PSYCHOSYNTHESIS COACH TRAINING

Summer Intensives and New Fall 2021 Coach Training Cohort
Contact us: Info@SynthesisCenterSF.com

 Psychosynthesis for Life (P4L)
  Board Certified Coach Training
  Advanced Training

INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP COACHING

We are a global practice group of associate psychosynthesis coaches, committed to participate, support and share in the benefits of group collaboration.

We also provide psychosynthesis resources and tools in service to the community. coaching@SynthesisCenterSF.com



What Matters: Staying Present In Uncertain Times



Cosa Conta: Restare Presenti In Tempi Insicuri

A Shared Project of Synthesis Center San Francisco and Gruppo Alle Fonti, Casa Assagioli

Psychosynthesis and Creativity

*Carrying the quarterly theme through to the webinar,
presented by Peter Stewart this editions guest editor*

Saturday, June 19, 2021 noon - 2pm (Eastern Time) via Zoom

This webinar will provide practical ways to explore the links between creative work and psychosynthesis. Delegates will have a chance to practice a few brief creative exercises that can be used in meditation and in daily life, at work or at home, to facilitate and strengthen personal and organizational transitions. The seminar will provide an initial conceptual summary of the use of creativity in psychosynthesis, and will then move on to a more experiential approach that will allow delegates to put theory into practice.

Target Audience: Target audience is psychosynthesis coaches and therapists who want to use creative work in their practice. The seminar will be of interest to creative individuals who want to push their creative boundaries by exploring the connection between creativity and psychosynthesis.

The conceptual summary will be based on the Roberto Assagioli's work and modern neuroscience, and will last about 15 minutes with 15 minutes for discussion.

The webinar will then move on to three exercises involving 1) creating a drama of the sub- personalities, 2) the use of creative visualization to walk around a labyrinth and 3) building a creative map that can be used to explore transitions. Each of these will take around ½ an hour.

The seminar will last for 2-2.5 hours in total.

Learning Objectives - Attendees will:

- Understand the meaning and value of creativity in a psychosynthesis context through Roberto Assagioli's writings on creativity in the arts, sciences and technical work, and recent findings from modern neuroscience. Discuss and brainstorm what creativity means for your own psychosynthesis goals.
- Explore how sub-personalities can be used to create a "drama of the self" that can be pieced together in an evolving narrative for purposes such as personal transition, career change and conflict resolution. Depending on numbers attending this may be done individually or in teams.

- Engage with the ancient symbol of the labyrinth in a creative visualisation that can help you and your clients to identify more fully with their authentic inner Self, and explore how this can deepen one's sense of purpose and meaning. Discover your inner radiance through walking the labyrinth and reaching its still center.
- Create and then explore a map of past, present and future lands that allows you to envision a personal transition or desired transformation. Understand how one's memories of the past and memories of the future both affect how you approach the transition. Use the created map as a physical prop to catalyse your energy and to overcome barriers.

Presenter: Peter Stewart is a psychosynthesis coach and aspiring ceramicist who worked for most of his career as a technical journalist with interludes as a creative writer. He is interested in how creativity and psychosynthesis can be used to facilitate and catalyse sustainable transitions in individuals, organisations and even societal transitions.

Biography: Peter discovered Roberto Assagioli's The Act of Will in a second-hand book store in his home town of Lewes, England in 2013, and he has been interested in psychosynthesis ever since. He trained as a psychosynthesis leadership coach in 2017 on the PGCPLC certificate program run by the Institute of Psychosynthesis in north London, with the University of Middlesex. He is an aspiring potter, having trained with Ray Maw, who runs the Shehy Mountain Centre in Ireland. Peter runs his own creative coaching practice Coachcreates whose website is <https://coachcreates.com> and he runs a number of other websites related to his creative interests, including the psychosynthesis community website <https://psychosynthesis.community>. For the last decade he has been on the editorial board of the Frogmore Press and has run its sister publication Morphrog, an online poetry journal <https://morphrog.com>. Peter worked for many years as a journalist, manager and director in organisations such as Reuters, Standard & Poor's and Interfax, and he is a director of the British Institute of Energy Economics.

Registration is free to members and \$25 to non-members.

Deadline to register is June 15, 2021.

You will receive Zoom instructions on June 16, 2021.

Please make sure to check your email on the 16th.

[Click here to register](#)

Contribute to the September 2021 Quarterly:

The Power of Difference: Intersectionality, Identity and Psychosynthesis

Guest editors Zoe A. Isdell & Ryan O’Kane

Relationships involve struggle - the struggle to understand, to empathise with and to trust. The wider the gap between each other’s experiences, attitudes and identities - the harder these struggles can become. Dealing with these dynamics is perhaps the central challenge of any counselling or helping relationship. Our proposition for this month’s quarterly is that the concept of *intersectionality* complements psychosynthesis by providing a tool to help put these gaps in their broader *context* and, in the process, to build empathy, trust and more empowering relationships.

Intersectionality refers to the convergence of our social identities - such as class, race, gender and sexuality – which place us within intersecting systems of power, and the combined impact of these systems on our life experiences, opportunities, perspectives and dignity. Intersectionality is not a new concept - coined in the 1980s by UCLA law Professor Kimberley Crenshaw to address the invisibility of black women within the mainstream feminist movement - but its prominence today reflects a new urgency in understanding and addressing issues of power and identity, led by a legitimate fear that the 20th century gains of civil rights and social justice movements can no longer be taken for granted.

In this issue we want to catalyse a conversation about the relevance of intersectionality to contemporary psychosynthesis, its practitioners and its institutions; and the extent to which psychosynthesis provides a space in which intersectional identities and experiences of discrimination and privilege can be seen, understood and welcomed.

We welcome contributions addressing questions such as:

- Can adopting intersectional attitudes help psychosynthesis counsellors and coaches deepen their empathic relationship with their clients - especially those from different backgrounds, and experiences of discrimination, to their own?
- How has psychosynthesis itself been influenced by the social context and implicit biases of its thinkers and educators? How welcoming are its concepts and techniques to a diversity of experiences and identities? And how do the dynamics of social power manifest themselves in psychosynthesis institutions?
- Does the concept of intersectionality conflict with or complement and enrich psychosynthesis approaches to the personal self?
- Could intersectionality help square the circle between individual and collective; between the personal, the political and the transpersonal?

Firm Deadline for Submissions is August 1, 2021

We welcome articles from all who study, teach, coach, counsel, and play with psychosynthesis. **We are of course particularly keen to include a range of different perspectives from people with direct experiences of discrimination and marginalisation.**

The Psychosynthesis Quarterly accepts announcements, ideas, reviews of books and events, articles, poetry, art, exercises, photos, and letters, with a request that non-members who wish to submit advertising make a donation to AAP.

For longer articles we hope that a suggestion of 1500 words may serve as a guideline that helps your writing. We prefer that you use the APA (American Psychological Association) style guide when possible, for things like punctuation and references.

Please send submissions as soon as they are ready so we can get started reading and editing before the deadline. If you need any further guidance on the topic or submission guidelines do please get in touch. Thank you so much! **Send your contributions to: newsletter@aap-psychosynthesis.org**



Ryan O'Kane is a graduate of, and current Study Tutor with, the Psychosynthesis Trust in London; and has a small psychosynthesis counselling practice in Wales in the UK. He also works as a Mental Health Mentor for students at Aberystwyth University.

He is a former lecturer in International Development studies at the University of East London, with a particular interest in the pitfalls and potentials of systems thinking. He is also a trained group facilitator who is curious and excited about the dynamics and potentials of groups, communities and civil society, and has spent the majority of his career in charities and projects supporting people to improve their local communities, social justice and environment.

*Ryan O'Kane (MBACP, PGDip, MPhil)
+44 7981 166436 contact@ryanokane.uk*

Zoë Alexandra Isdell is, a current student at Psychosynthesis Northeast and Chair of the AAP's Committee on Diversity. Her career of nearly 20 years in health and healthcare most recently gave her the opportunity to study and address health equity through the New York State (NYS) Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) Program. DSRIP was designed to fundamentally restructure and improve the health system, with a focus on improving health outcomes and lowering cost for the Medicaid (and uninsured) population, who are statistically our most vulnerable, and our sickest, community members. Drawing together health and social service providers across a 5-county region, our mission was to collaboratively develop population health management strategies to reduce the disparities in care for roughly 80,000 individuals. In addition to serving as Communications Director and Government Relations Officer, Zoë lead the region's Workforce Development and Cultural Competency & Health Literacy Committees.



**And watch for their webinar coming in September,
Date, time and registration coming soon.**