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This issue's theme: Relationships

Cover Photos by Diane Lansing [info click here](#)

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.

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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.

Articles are accepted from members only, must relate to the theme, should be between 250 and 1500 words, submitted in word.doc with images sent as jpegs or pngs. We also accept photography and art. You must be an AAP member to submit. To become a member, [click here](#). We encourage you to submit well in advance of the deadline as space is limited.

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Letter from Guest Editor

It has been a privilege to be the guest editor of this edition of the AAP's *Psychosynthesis Quarterly*, on the theme of Relationships. This has been a work of love by the team of collaborators who have made this journal possible. Thank you to Didi Firman, who is a mentor, colleague, and friend. It was Didi who encouraged me to step into the role of editor. She has served as a resource all along the way for me and for many of the contributors to this edition. Thank you to everyone who submitted work—writing and photography. Gratitude is also extended to Marjorie Gross for her persistence, creativity, organizational gifts and leadership. And an extra big thank you to the copyeditors, Sheila Williams, Walter Polt, and Ann McLaughlin.

This edition's topic is "Relationships"—in all its many forms. Our contributors took the invitation to describe the ways we are touched in our movement towards self-realization through our intimate, group, and collective relationships. We begin our journey in exploring the process and experience of individual and inter-individual relationships with our cover, a collage of images from the photographic eye of Diane Lansing. As we enter into this edition's pages, we are invited to consider our connection to Self through silence, and discovering the "coach within." Our authors remind us of the "web of relationships," exploring love and loss, identity and understanding, joy and grief.

This Quarterly is rich with writing that describes the experiences and questions emerging from our personal relationships with intimate partners, children, and grandchildren. Two of our authors identify ways to be an ally to others, as they claim their own gender identity. The potential for expanded interindividual psychosynthesis is addressed in how we can work and live with others, as professionals, helpers, and healers in the larger human systems of group, community and nations. Most importantly and urgently, we are called to come into deeper connection and honoring of our relationship to nature and our precious planet Earth.

Thank you to the AAP and all of the steering committee members who give their time and vision to carry the treasure that is psychosynthesis, and share it with the world. Roberto Assagioli reminds us that we are, ultimately, all "of a greater organism which includes the whole of mankind." Thank you for reading and may we all remember that we are each an interconnected part of the larger whole in this wonderful mystery of being.

Yours in joy,
Susan Jewkes Allen



Susan Jewkes Allen is the founder of the Synthesis Center San Francisco.

She has been inspired, comforted, and guided by psychosynthesis for 20+ years. She is now dancing with the call in her deep commitment to share psychosynthesis through training programs and service projects. In collaboration with Didi Firman and The Synthesis Center she is developing new platforms for teaching and sharing psychosynthesis. With San Francisco as a hub, she is supporting the next generation of psychosynthesis users and practitioners in their professional and self-development. Her wish is that we all continue to work together, each in our contributions, to bring psychosynthesis more fully into the world through service and in global community.

Our relationship to silence

By Craig Behenna

At the beginning of his book *Silence in the Age of Noise*, Erling Kagge writes: ‘Whenever I am unable to walk, climb or sail away from the world, I have learned to shut it out.’

‘Learning this took time. Only when I understood that I had a primal need for silence was I able to begin my search for it – and there, deep beneath a cacophony of traffic noise and thoughts, music and machinery, iPhones and snow ploughs, it lay in wait for me. Silence’.

Kagge aligns silence with curiosity, with questions as opposed to ambition, with wonder. ‘Wonder’, he writes, ‘is the very engine of life’.

His own curiosity about silence led him to conclude not only that silence around us was important, but that the silence within us was, in fact, the most important silence we could experience.

In the world of psychosynthesis, we might draw comparisons between Kagge’s explorations of his own silence and the wonder that it holds and our ability to connect with the deeper Self, to experience the internal I-Thou. While seemingly empty, our inner experiences nourish us through their capacity to bring us beyond the surface of our personalities, our usual day-to-day masks.

Kagge makes extreme treks or adventuring, where he makes his strongest discoveries of outer and inner silence in the beauty and wildness of nature. And although it seems entirely unrelated, I started thinking of the many people I’ve seen make discoveries about their inner selves and the power of silence through acting training.

Some years ago I had the good fortune of being thrown into the deep end of teaching acting to young people. Having made a film, I was now apparently a film acting teacher and I was asked to give a term of classes on acting for camera. The week before classes started, the school told me that they didn’t have a camera. Or a TV for playing back the students’ work. So I was in the interesting position of having to teach young actors how to act for screen without a screen.

Thinking about my approach, I realized that the external wasn’t so important. The camera is not the most important part of film acting. Rather, the camera comes in close and records the actors’ truest moments. So I dropped the external form and worked with the students using a combination of impulse acting training and, as I realized later, a mindfulness practice of observing their own reactions.

We began with an exercise based on Sanford Meisner’s impulse work, which clears mental chatter to the extent that we can feel our impulse.

The exercise starts off looking a little like two-chair work. Two actors sit facing one another a few feet apart. They sit and feel their breath and bodies and say the first thing that occurs to them. Normally with a new group I establish the boundary that it has to be objectively true, so they often start with something as simple as ‘you have long hair’. The other person takes that statement and repeats it from their perspective: ‘I have long hair’ – and the two repeat the phrase until one of them has an impulse to change – maybe, ‘I feel uncomfortable in this chair’. ‘You feel uncomfortable in this chair’. And so on.

This puts the actors in the position of communicating with restrictions and without the verbal chat normally used to distract or to ‘fill the air’ without actually providing any content. It’s important for them to understand that the chatter fed to them by the ‘Be Interesting’ subpersonality is not going to work here. People who have had their ‘Be Interesting/Entertain Us’ subpersonality fed during their early years of performing really find that this exercise pulls the rug out from under their regular act, and they often experience tension and nervousness at not being able to talk any time they feel something slightly awkward – or real – start to arise.

In fact, most people feel that this is a strange exercise at first. They may feel that they are chatting about nothing or feel a level of awkwardness as they communicate in a way that feels strange to them. ‘Be Interesting’ often tells them that the exercise feels boring.

Then we take the exercise in a different direction. The actors don't speak until they feel a deeper impulse, not the basic impulse to speak, not the social impulse to keep the ball in the air, but a deeper inner need to say something. Sometimes I tell them that if they feel that they will scream if they say 'you have long hair' one more time, they're probably at about the right impulse point to change the phrase. The stakes are now high enough.

Now the actors find the exercise more challenging because, as they dip beneath the level of social chat and conversation, they are forced to sit with the awkwardness, the impulse they have to speak simply to cover the silence that happens when there is an impulse to Entertain, to Not Be Boring.

And that's when the connection between them really builds through the silence within each other, and that they create together.

Emotions, tensions, and held pauses mean any number of scene possibilities emerge between two people saying something as simple and banal as 'you have green eyes' over and over again. This is because two people will have different levels of tension within and between each other, and sometimes we will watch two people have a full range of emotions, relationships and tense/loving/fully held silences with nothing more to hang it on than a line about the air conditioning.

And now the actors begin to understand the freedom they have within these restrictions to find and express a deeper connection to themselves and with their partner.

I do this exercise to show the actors that when they drop the social construct, the social subpersonality, that the space within them is a source of liberty, of relaxation, and, to steal again from Kage, 'one of the purest forms of joy I can imagine'.

Often students come back to the following week's class with slightly puzzled looks on their faces. We often talk about how their perception has changed. They say they have conversations differently, that they notice the social surface conversations that are a part of their everyday lives are more superficial and less fulfilling than they thought or than they want; they find them less interesting.

Now they want to experience more of the silence that allows them a deeper connection with themselves, with their scene partner, and with the text they are given.

It's not that easy. As when working with a coaching client, there are physical, mental, sometimes emotional resistances that arise as we develop connection to deeper emotions, to the truth of what they really want to express in the room or the scene.

But as we proceed, they find that they can experience their inner silence as a place to return to and discover deeper meaning and importance in what they want to do in a moment, even in a scene filled with dialogue and lots of work between the partners.

This is not a quick fix, this movement of the actor away from external stimulation. It is often provoked by a desire to 'keep the ball in the air', or worse, by poor teachers who want to be entertained and so also release the 'Stern Teacher' subpersonality (or the even worse and more damaging 'God of the Arts Who Must Be Pleased'). But it provides a way for actors to fundamentally understand their inner silence. Rather than a place to avoid, it is a rich and varied world filled with insight and experience, a deeper connection with 'I'.

Pico Iyer says he doesn't have a cell phone because he fears that the more he tries to keep up, the more he would fall behind. He says he would need to reach out from himself and from his silence and stillness to the point where he would become detached from it, and that detachment would mean he would be unable to be the person he is and to do the things that are meaningful to him in life.

When we let go of the noise in our lives, even for a moment, and return to silence for long moments, even if – especially if – it brings us some discomfort. It brings us back to the silence of the bigger, emptier, yet eminently richer Self. We build on those moments when we touch those cool, calm times when it becomes clear we do not need anything else than what is within us, and we let go of 'trying to be' or to 'keep up with' or 'react to' anything. That is when we discover what we have to give to ourselves and to each other.



Craig Behenna is based in Australia and is a writer, filmmaker, teacher and lapsed accountant. Craig has a background in therapy and meditation teaching and is currently training in Psychosynthesis coaching.
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The Coach Within: The Power of Presence

By, Jonathan Wyatt Dray

Consider for a moment the ineffable complexity of the human body. There are trillions of cells within the human body, an estimated one hundred billion within the brain! Let each cell, unique in its existence, represent a different individual (Self) and the body represent the whole of humanity (Universal Self). Each cell is connected to all others through the body's systems—that is, **each individual is connected through the transpersonal energy of contentless awareness and will.** Barbara Veale Smith articulates this idea well in *The Call of Self*: “The ‘points’ or dots of our unique and varied expressions of humanity and creation are connected through and as contentless awareness. It is the universal common denominator linking all expressions of humanity and creation through and as the One.” From this perspective, it is easy to see how the body's cells are connected and how when there is a biological or anatomical problem, the origin of it is often somewhere other than where it is felt. The interconnectedness of our lives—humanity's network of interpersonal relationships, from a psychosynthesis perspective, is much like the human body.

Like our cells, we all have a different shape, size, structure and purpose. Our conscious awareness, scientifically a product of our cellular communication, provides us with our personality. This is where we find the unique and diverse expressions of Universal Self. As we move through life, sometimes by intentional action and sometimes by more mysterious impulses, we invariably interact with others, just as the body's cells interact and communicate with each other. And what a gift! Just as our physical activities catalyze our body's anatomical and physiological changes that support them, those we exchange

energy with encourage the evolution of Self as a means to support and guide our personal and spiritual psychosynthesis. To know that Self is suffused with the light and essence of others is a blessing. And regardless of the cause or experience of interaction, the energy of our many movements within humanity manifests in our lives both consciously and unconsciously. “The Transpersonal Self of each is an intimate union with the Transpersonal Self of all other individuals, however unconscious they may be of this. All Transpersonal Selves can be considered ‘points’ within the Universal Self.” (Assagioli 2010). You can imagine the benefits of harmonious cellular interaction versus an inharmonious one. You can also imagine how when one cell (or group of cells) is not homeostatic, others nearby or far away will suffer as well. The same results ring true for interpersonal interactions and relationships. Our causes have noticeable effects in our immediate field of conscious awareness and far beyond it.

Take a moment to reflect on the many ‘cells’ you’ve interacted with. Think about the ways these people have impacted you, challenged and influenced your decisions at choice points, and guided your physical, emotional and spiritual movements. Let us express gratitude for the individuals who have been or are currently **present** for us. Isn't it wonderful? Let us narrow in on these influential people and how they bring such harmony to our lives.

Of course, there are many qualities that exist in someone who is present for us, but there are a few that particularly stand out. Know, too, that any definition of a transpersonal quality such as presence is much more than the words used to

describe it. **Presence** is synonymous with **Being** and is the hallmark of coaching. Presence is sincere and compassionate ‘here’-ness. When someone is present for us, they are ‘showing up’ from a place of compassion, sincerity, and undivided psycho-somatic attention. From this place of contentless awareness and will, a trust-infused space for all types of expression and experience is created for us.

A product of this presence is **authenticity**, though often fogged by our story and content. Authenticity is living, eagerly, from a place of genuinity—expressing oneself as they are in their rawest and imperfect (yet perfect) form. *And it is more than this.* We grow into our authenticity by allowing ourselves to be vulnerable. To be present, and therefore authentic, one must see the others’ vision, even if they don’t. Anyone who has been present for us would describe us, if familiar with psychosynthesis, as a center of contentless awareness and will.

Transpersonal qualities are revealed through our relationships as much as they are intentionally developed. Someone who is present for us (an external unifying center) induces us into a state of I-ness. This subtle, yet profound shift in our consciousness facilitates an ‘undoing’ of our story, sheering of our content-full layers, and reveals to us the contentless awareness *and* will of Self. Through their presence we are provided with greater access to Self through *all* of the psychological functions free of subpersonalities and to the process of developing ourselves as internal unifying centers. Overtime we begin to realize that those who are present for us are merely a mirror of our own transpersonal nature. Our own Coach Within is revealed.

Now the question appears...so what? Realizing that we are a ‘coach’ for those who we have a relationship with as much as they are a coach for us, allows us to move forward in our life with greater healing power and potential for positive impact. Appearing for others as the center of contentless awareness and will that we are catalyzes a shift in their consciousness and snowballs throughout humanity, improving life states, manifesting will, and increasing harmony between all. Rest assured, our conscious attempts of presence combined with the inexorable urges of Self create a potent recipe for growth within our relationships.

The Sea of Self

*Bombarded by the winds of creation,
the sands of Self are replaced
one by one,
By gems of distant lands.*

*For the bird of the beach
that remains in the nest,
the sand is always white.*

Only time away reveals change.

*For the bird of the sea
that seeks a new coast,
lands of variegation are inevitable.*

*When you land,
bury yourself
in these Sands of Creation
and collect
all gems amongst your buried bones.*

*And know,
exposed to the waves of Awareness
and showered by the waters of Will,
the Sands of Self are nourished
with Love.*



Jonathan (Jonny) Dray is excited to be immersing himself in Psychosynthesis through the Synthesis Center San Francisco's Distance Learning Program from which he intends to graduate in 2020. Jonny lives in Boston where he works as the Assistant Director for Harvard's Technique Swim Academy and is looking forward to deepening and expanding his coaching practice. Jonny makes time for

his mind and body through surfing, rock climbing, swimming and mountain biking. He can be found practicing qigong and playing his Hangdrum by the Charles River.

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Growing Whole: Self-realization for the Great Turning *excerpt 1.*

(Psychosynthesis Press, 2009)

"Relationships: Growing Whole Together."

By, Molly Young Brown

The Sun Dancer believes that each person is a unique Living Medicine Wheel, powerful beyond imagination, that has been limited and placed upon this earth to Touch, Experience and Learn. The Six Grandfathers Taught me that each man, woman, and child at one time was a Living Power that existed somewhere in time and space. These Powers were without form, but they were aware. They were alive.

Each Power possessed boundless energy and beauty. These Living Medicine Wheels were capable of nearly anything. They were perfect in all ways except one. They had no understanding of limitation, no experience of substance. These Beings were total energy of the Mind, without Body or Heart. They were placed upon this earth that they might Learn the things of the Heart through Touching.

According to the Teachers, there is only one thing that all people possess equally. This is their loneliness. No two people on the face of the earth are alike in any one thing except for their loneliness. This is the cause of our Growing, but it is also the cause of our wars. Love, hate, greed and generosity are all rooted within our loneliness, within our desire to be needed and loved.

The only way we can overcome our loneliness is through Touching. It is only in this way that we can learn to be Total Beings. God is a presence of this Total ... this Wholeness.
~ Hyemeyohsts Storm.

Psychosynthesis has tended to focus on individual work, on how we as individuals can discover our inner wealth and bring it more into our daily life. Individual work is in fact working with relationships: the relationship of the various aspects of the personality to one another, and to the whole, and the relationship of this whole to Self and Spirit, and to the interconnected web of life that encompasses us all. Our journey of Self-discovery and Self-realization is a reflection of our desire to make a difference in the world, in

relationship to our families, communities, and the environment. Our relationships are laboratories for our spiritual growth and awakening.

A look at our relationships to others gives rise to several questions: What is love? How do we balance individuality with mutuality? How can we grow through our relationships with lovers and life partners? How can we create loving, supportive, and respectful relationships with our children? What constitutes a healthy relationship with our community, with our nation, with the whole human family? How can we deepen our experience of relationship with nature and with other living beings, including the Earth itself?

Systems theory has helped us to see everything as part of larger wholes; everything is in relationship to everything else. When we try to define ourselves as separate, we run into trouble. Although we may believe we are isolated, especially if we are living alone and are not involved in a "primary relationship," we cannot escape being in relationship to our communities and our natural environment. Like it or not, we are in relationship with the other people on the bus, with people on the street, with the grocery clerk and the letter carrier. Any contact we have with mass media—newspapers, magazines, television, or radio—puts us in relationship with the culture around us. Even more basically and in every moment, we breathe air, which is shared with all the living beings around us, and which may carry particles from dust storms, fires, or volcanoes thousands of miles away.

And we are truly "in" relationship; relationship contains us, sustains us, keeps us alive. As Joanna Macy so eloquently says:

"And you know that your lives are as inextricably interwoven as nerve cells in the mind of a great being... Out of that web you cannot fall... no stupidity, or failure, or cowardice, can ever sever you from that living web. For that is what you are..." (Macy & Brown, 2014, p. 283)



Molly Young Brown, M.A., M.Div. lives in Mt Shasta, CA with her husband Jim. In her work as a writer, workshop facilitator, and life coach, she draws on psychosynthesis, the *Work That Reconnects*, ecopsychology, and systems thinking, and specializes in working with activists. She co-authored with Joanna Macy both editions of *Coming Back to Life* (1998, 2014) and edits an online journal, [Deep Times: A Journal of the Work That Reconnects](http://DeepTimes.org). Her other publications include: *Unfolding Self: The Practice of Psychosynthesis*, *Growing Whole: Self-realization for the Great Turning*; *Held in Love: Life Stories To Inspire Us Through Times of Change* (co-editor Carolyn Treadway); and *Lighting A Candle: Collected Reflections on a Spiritual Life*. Website: MollyYoungBrown.com. WorkThatReconnects.org

John Firman: On Relationship

Selected comments from his emails to friends

Submitted by Ann Gila

1994

Cows? Last year our car broke down on I-5, at the Harris Ranch sea of cows. Well, after looking at that breathing mass of big brown eyes, we became vegetarians. Been so since. Dominate nature? Only dorks try. Have dorks ever been on an icy hill with a 35- ton rig? Or in a storm which blew over empty rigs and froze your fuel? Relate to nature as a “Thou” is the only way for me. Words I heard on the CB one dark day, fighting through a blizzard in Wisconsin, driving by cars sticking out of snowbanks like so many toys: “It’s not nice to fool with Mother Nature.”

1994

Learning to love is amazing.

Nov 2, 1994

Relationships are a huge mystery. Don’t think they can be separated from childhood experience operating in the here-and-now, for better or worse.

Nov 13, 1994

If a relationship isn’t warm, nurturing, joyful-painful, but above all, intimate, it ain’t worth it in my book.

2000

We’ve been pretty much swallowed by events ever since Ann’s mom got sick. She died in October at home, with us there, which is what she wanted. Slipped away when no one was looking her way, which is how my dad went too. You go off, have breakfast, come back, and someone is gone. I guess it’s a very intimate thing people want some privacy for. Death is so amazing. How

can one be there one minute and gone the next? Birth—same thing. Mystery, mystery, mystery. I’ve been getting how important our bonds to those who have “gone before” are. I try to keep all of them close, including my cats and dogs.

May 20, 2005

The profundity of assuming deep good will in each partner. When someone sits down with their reactivity, to know there is someone hurt in there who needs to be included. Unpacking is not threatening because you KNOW there is goodness and God at the bottom.

And in 1973:

Despite John’s struggle against Assagioli’s dualism, John loved Roberto. Here are the last lines of the letter John wrote to Roberto Assagioli upon leaving Florence in December 1973.

Well, I don’t know what else to say, except that I love you and the light you have incarnated in your lifetime, more I am sure than I am aware of. I intend to follow the lead you have given for the rest of my life. I see clearly my “duty to joy” and service, and shall carry it out. My personality isn’t adequate to express what I want to tell you, so I guess it doesn’t have to; you’ll hear it on a higher octave. Anyway, my personality really likes your personality too!

Namaskara,
John

**See bio*

Living in Harmony: The Couple's Journey

by, Jon Schottland

What does it mean to live harmoniously? This seems an important, even vital question that has relevance for each one of us individually and all of us collectively. How do we live in harmony with our neighbor, with people from different backgrounds, with those who hold different beliefs? How do we live in harmony with the nonhuman world, with animals and forests and nature as a whole? Finally, given the complex inner workings of our own personal psyche--the ways we can become internally conflicted or fragmented--how do we live more in harmony with ourselves?

For the purposes of this article, we will consider briefly the couple's journey and how two people in a relationship can learn to live in harmony with each other. But first let us note that, very broadly speaking, we humans often seem flummoxed by the differences between us and contradictions within us. We break complex systems down into simplistic "either/or" divisions that deny the larger, more inclusive truths that point towards the potential richness and depth of these systems. So, for example, you're either with us or against us, a red state or blue state, pro-life or pro-choice. Personally, you can be a workaholic or a slacker, sensitive or strong, a leader or a follower. These divisions produce a sort of personal and collective politics of antagonism and disharmony.

The challenge and opportunity we are facing at this point in human evolution, what is being asked of us all, is to see if we can figure out something more constructive and life affirming to do with our differences--in a word, to find a way to live more in *harmony* with ourselves, each other and the natural world. Psychosynthesis offers us a process through which the various and even conflicting elements in our environment and within ourselves, might be reconciled and integrated as part of a larger whole through the inclusive principle of *synthesis*.

In the most basic sense, harmony suggests a relationship between the part and the whole. It is a very particular kind of relationship in which each part maintains its own distinct nature yet in combination with the other elements creates something that is quite pleasing or even beautiful. In music, to sing harmony means to add different

notes that resonate sweetly with the main melody. We might view living in harmony with each other as a similar process: that each one of us can add our distinctive "note" in such a way that it produces a very satisfying effect.

To produce any kind of harmony, whether in creating music or living in relationship with another person, we must first be good listeners and pay close attention. You can't sing harmony if you are not hearing the other voices around you. Second, we must be able to see beyond ourselves, to take into account the effect or impact of our actions, words, and behavior. This requires a sustained presence and attention both to our own experience and the environment around us. Next, there has to be a positive and determined *intention* to live in harmony with others, a "will-to-harmony" so to speak. As we know from psychosynthesis, every intention or need evokes a corresponding will to meet that need.

In terms of the couple's journey, another factor that comes into play is the degree to which each person in the relationship is able to attain and maintain a good measure of differentiation (as a distinct self). If I am too easily rattled by my partner's behavior or moods, then this reactivity sends an unconscious message to my partner that says, essentially, "you are a problem." This is perhaps good reason to develop what Assagioli referred to as an attitude of "indifference" or what the Buddhists call equanimity: not being too easily stirred or unnerved by what is arising in our environment. While a strong sense of connection and togetherness is of course essential, if the couple seeks only unity without enough differentiation, the potential for an active and creative synthesis between the partners is in some ways diminished.

To live in harmony with another person means we must also address our own internal discord and actively cultivate harmony within. This is why the process of personal psychosynthesis is a great support to any relationship: it promotes synthesis and integration of our various and sometimes conflicting inner elements. It's important to note that harmony isn't just about feeling good or cheerful all the time. I can be sad and still be in harmony with myself, other people and my

environment. The idea here is that if we are open, accepting and loving towards ourselves, this in turn makes us better able to co-exist well with others. Of course, there will be moments of conflict and difficulty, that's inevitable, when things just seem not to fit together in any sort of harmonious way. We can accept that too.

The inner work of the couple's journey involves identifying and addressing unconscious beliefs or stories we may carry that directly impact our relationships. For many years, I held a belief that if my partner (or anyone) was unhappy with me, I must have done something wrong. Furthermore, I believed it was my job to fix it, to make the situation better so that a feeling of love and connection would be restored. What took me a long time to understand was that I didn't have to fix anything; what was required was simply for me to give the other person permission to feel their feelings, to be unhappy at times if that was the case, and not to buy into the idea that I was somehow responsible for someone else's feelings. This is a big lesson to learn in life, and it seems fundamental to living in harmony with another person. If our partner is angry, give him or her space to be angry. If they are sad, permission granted to be sad. It's not my job to protect people or keep them (and me) safe from their own difficult feelings.

Another way to promote harmony in relationships is to think of the couple in terms of a system or relational "field" in which events unfold. Nothing happens in isolation, everything is interconnected. To think otherwise is like throwing a stone into a pond and saying "no ripples, please!" The implications of seeing a couple in the context of a relational field can be quite illuminating and even consciously employed for the good, reminding us to infuse the field with plenty of warmth, joy, care and understanding. On the flip side, the existence of the field also means we want to be mindful of polluting our relational environment: as the old saying goes, "garbage in, garbage out." We want to be aware of even the subtlest energies we are introducing into our shared pond.

Along these same lines, if the couple feels free to bring difficult issues and feelings to the surface, then it's less likely that the relational field will be littered with unspoken resentments, blame, and other repressed feelings and needs. This requires a willingness to accept and include the messy side

of things as well as the more comfortable aspects of our lives together.

About six months before my wife Lyn and I were married in 2017, we went to an art show hosted by a very talented artist and friend from Morocco named Mohammed. Of all the wonderful pieces hanging in his rural Vermont studio nestled in the woods, the one that jumped out at us was "The Conversation." It was a rich, brightly colored abstract composition with flowing brush strokes that created a strong sense of movement and engagement between two figures who were practicing the art of conversation.

This painting immediately became a prominent theme for us as we moved toward the big day, even appearing on the wedding invitation itself. In psychosynthesis terms, it became something of an "ideal model" for us. We started to envision that our marriage and lives together could be viewed in the context of an ongoing conversation, and that our task (or opportunity) was to make that conversation as rich, expansive, and inclusive as possible.

What if both of us were free to bring our whole self into the marriage: our love and joy as well as our doubts and vulnerability, and who knows what else? This was an exciting and uplifting idea, though we also acknowledged that at times we would inevitably encounter challenges and difficulties. Beyond any specific words or exchanges, we felt committed to the conversation itself, to making it honest and real and loving. This exercise of creating an ideal model for living in harmony has given us a template or framework for our journey.

From a psychosynthesis perspective, we can also actively draw upon transpersonal resources and qualities to strengthen the bonds between us. Even the best of relationships can be hard at times, so why not invest a little energy reflecting on what's wonderful or even precious about being together? Perhaps crawling into bed on a cold winter night and warming up together under the covers. Or picking up dinner on the way home from work, enough for two and sharing a quiet meal at the end of the day, nothing that needs to be said. With this sort of gratitude practice, the love and appreciation for each other has a chance to deepen and grow. Take a moment right now and consider the things you value about being in a relationship: what's on your list?



Editor's Note: This article includes material excerpted from a chapter in a forthcoming book on the "Psychosynthesis of the Couple" in which the author further explores relationships through the lens of Assagioli's seven core concepts.

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The "Thigh" Story: An Example of Intimacy

John Firman, Submitted by Ann Gila

[Occurred in 1996; written in this form in 2007]

My wife was driving the car in her white cotton shorts, and I, in the passenger seat, found myself very attracted to her. I reached over and gently squeezed her thigh. But she reacted in a bothered, irritated way, brushing my hand away with a disgusted, "Don't do that!"

I became quiet and withdrawn. Years ago I wouldn't have been aware of this as withdrawal, but would have simply fallen silent for a long time. My partner would finally say that I'd been awfully quiet and was there anything wrong? I would say no, nothing, what do you mean? And believe it. This type of interaction—and the feelings with it—were hidden in my earlier relationships.

Knowing better now, this time I let myself know how hurt and angered I felt at her rebuff. This acknowledgement was hard for my pride—what kind of a person feels so strongly about such a small thing? How petty! How immature! Unmanly, even. This is why in years past I was not even aware of this type of reaction.

But again, knowing better, I let myself feel the younger part of myself who felt so deeply rageful at the rejection that he wanted to close off to this "enemy" forever. This rage was my reaction to my father's demeaning criticism of me—I would close off, withdraw, disappear. Underneath the rage of this young boy in me,

though, was a more difficult level of feeling. Here I felt rejected and worthless. In the depths of this despair, I truly did not want to be alive. All this from a mild rebuff from my loving wife of many years? Yes. Though as you see, it took some unpacking to discover this!

As my wife and I talked about all of this, we realized that she too had felt a violation and a rage when I'd squeezed her thigh. She didn't understand that, but we agreed that it was important for us to protect this vulnerability in her so that the wounding might have space to emerge in its own time. Simply: I would not squeeze her thigh like that. We knew there was a wound there, but we didn't know what it was or who in her held it.

It wasn't until a year or more later, talking to her aunt, that we heard the story of my wife's grandfather sexually fondling my wife's legs when she sat in his lap as a little girl. We both had a huge "Aha!" hearing this story, and my wife could feel the little girl in her, in her short dress, being molested by her grandfather.

This is an example of intimacy. Spiritual empathy within this couple allowed an empathic resonance to build between them, and eventually primal wounds emerged that were then inadvertently impinged upon. His father wound was touched, as was her grandfather wound, each triggering their own reaction. This is completely normal.

Any authentic, intimate relationship establishes a deep empathic resonance that will inevitably surface primal wounding within the relationship. These wounds are highly vulnerable, like painfully sensitive abscesses surfacing, and so may be impinged upon by the slightest word or deed. The resultant extreme and seemingly disproportionate reactions to such an impingement can be hard to understand and manage.

It can be quite confusing, of course, because these wounds may have lain dormant for years and only are appearing now. One can be left with the impression that it is the particular partner that is to blame for this, since, “This hasn’t been an issue with other people I’ve been with.” While this can be the result of a particularly insensitive partner, more often the emergence of such wounding indicates a strength in the relationship rather than a weakness—it is the power of the empathic resonance that is allowing these deeper wounds to emerge. In a way, the wounds are responding to the authentic unifying center established by the couple, as if the wounded ones in us recognize it is safe enough to surface.

Crucial here, then, is to know that this is happening and that it is a normal and expected part of human intimacy. Otherwise, the man would be left with his long silences, cut off from himself and his partner. Or perhaps the woman, feeling the rage towards her grandfather, would continually demean the man’s advances. And either one might criticize the other as too sensitive or too high maintenance, telling the other to “get over it.” “grow up,” or perhaps, ‘quit projecting.’

If attitudes like the latter become chronic, the couple will establish a relationship based on a repression of the vulnerable layers of each. The relationship will become a survival unifying center dictating what parts of each person are acceptable and what are not—the precise opposite of the freedom, spontaneity, and creativity of authenticity. Such a survival relationship can last indefinitely unless some inner or outer crisis causes the pattern to falter, allowing the outcast aspects of the individuals to emerge.



*Ann Gila and her late husband John Firman taught psychosynthesis together for over twenty years. Ann is a licensed psychotherapist in California and an adjunct faculty member at Sofia University (formerly the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology). John and Ann co-authored three books: *The Primal Wound: A Transpersonal View of Trauma, Addiction, and Growth*(1996); *Psychosynthesis: A Psychology of the Spirit* (2002); and *A Psychotherapy of Love: Psychosynthesis in Practice*(2010). Ann authored *Stay Present and Love Him*(2017).*

Cherish the Memories

By Sheila Williams

Cherish the memories, the time spent with those little ones whom we love so dearly. My own

daughter grew up so quickly, and my son never made it to adulthood, as I reflect back on those years that sped by—the busyness of life, work, making a home, and maturing myself. Today,

I am blessed with time and all the necessities of life, a slower time, a gentler time, a more patient time to wrap myself around these precious little boys of mine. We play, we swim, we watch cartoons, we sing, we laugh, we hug.



Even grandma can make a booboo feel better, especially when mom isn't around. It's a lovely experience, to spend the time with the grandkids, nurturing them in ways that mom does not have time for, even giving them ice cream for breakfast and brownies for dinner and allowing social norms to fly right on by, just for a short while.



The relationship between my grandkids and myself is such a treasured one for me. I find myself feeling so much delight at watching them discover new things, new

ways of doing things, for themselves, instead of always having to step in and take over, as I did as a mother. Now I sit and watch and wait for them

to find their own way. It delights me in how much it delights them that they find it for themselves. What a sense of accomplishment I see in their eyes when they figure out how to put the right blocks through the right holes, all by themselves, or how to fit the puzzle piece into the proper place. I feel a sense of sadness that at one time I would have been right there showing my own children how to do those things instead of allowing them the freedom to figure it out for themselves.

I see so many young parents over-managing their children, and I feel a sense of sorrow at how this may inhibit those children from achieving their fullest potential. Raising children who are more dependent upon mom and dad cannot serve our society well, I'm afraid. I feel I have the right to say this as I sit here now as a grandparent and realize what I would have done differently, had I only known.

Upon completion of my Master's degree in transpersonal psychology at Sofia University, Palo Alto, CA., I also came away with certification as a transformative life coach and certified



in creativity and innovation. It was during my time at Sofia that I also was introduced to psychosynthesis. As a result, after graduation, I continued to study through the Synthesis Center under Didi Firman and became board certified as a psychosynthesis coach. I continue to learn through various channels including courses in NLP and am interested in retreat planning and facilitation. Please take a moment to visit my webpage at www.directionalgrowth.com where you will be able to learn more about me and my offerings. Thank you for your support.

Life, Loss, and Love

By, Ami Ji Schmid

Although Michelle no longer walks on this planet, we still have a relationship. Although that's my truth, I also grieve the loss of her. It's complex. Her energy exists and I relate with her in that way, *and* she does not have a physical body and I miss that – I miss her. That's part of the complexity of life and death – of grief – of Spirit – of love.

Those who study human energetic systems say that the emotional heart lives in the chest, near the lungs and the physical heart. When I'm extraordinarily tired or sad, my chest and heart physically hurt. A 'grief wave' (sometimes described as a Mac truck crashing into you from the side) takes my breath away; it's hard to breathe. The feeling of grief is the feeling of my heart stretching...far beyond its limits – tearing – and then, breaking. Grief is the emotional heart breaking open – farther and wider and deeper than it was.

If, to any degree, you have loved, this [person, animal, thing] affected you in a way that blew through your doors and blocks and defenses, dropped you full immersion into your center, catalyzed an explosion of Light, or opened you to Joy. The experience left you feeling gratitude. Your emotional heart stretched and broke open, and what filled the new, bigger space – we call Love. Love is what fills the heart-space.

'Falling in love' is like that. Sick to your stomach, insecure, fighting to keep autonomy... until the surrender. When sexual intimacy is involved, we call the participants 'Lovers', their sexual act 'making love', and often, the culmination is 'orgasm'. There's an afterglow – a sense of release, peace, freedom – a sense that the world is alive. The French use the term *la petite mort*, or *the little death*. I liken the experience to metamorphosis – a caterpillar dissolves into goop; the cellular structure that it had existed as rearranges itself; and now: a butterfly. Everything has changed.

Giving birth is like that: stretching, tearing, and then – a brand new person – a miracle – your infant. Raising a child is like that – watching her rolling over, crawling, walking, growing, reinventing herself every step and skip and leap of

the way. Releasing your child back to Spirit is like that.

Michelle left her body on spring equinox: the time of rebirth. She was being reborn into Spirit as Earth was being reborn here in New England. On the outside, the soil was warm and soft, birthing tender crocuses. Inside, grief was raw. "Look" my friends would say, "the flowers are coming up". I knew they thought that if I saw beauty, new life, felt hope... I would feel connected, less loss, better. It infuriated me. "Fuck that." Michelle died and life continued, and it just felt wrong. I have heard different descriptions of what initial, raw grief feels like. One friend, whose husband died, said that color was gone. Another friend, whose daughter died a year after mine, said that the heart-space (that had been filled with love) became empty. Initial, raw grief is like a black hole, sucking all of existence into it.

Simple logic tells me that to feel emptiness, a person must believe that the [person, animal, thing] that died *created* the love; that *they were* love; that when they left, they took love with them; and that the heart-space they had inhabited is now void of love, empty. More complex logic tells me otherwise.

Once love is realized, it remains where it has always lived – in the heart-space. We don't always recognize love, because love is difficult to define. As it grows, love can feel like freedom, or joy, or gratitude, or loss, or longing – an empty container to be filled, or sadness. Love is so multi-faceted. I have experienced an empty space inside, that when touched by beauty, fills with gratitude and tears. After Michelle died, I had an experience while dancing. It was my first time being social. The band played Bob Marley's *Is this Love? Is this love, is this love, is this love, is this love that I'm feeling?* I felt my community. I felt appreciation. I felt extraordinary joy. And then, I was on the ground sobbing, immersed in excruciating sadness. Raw emotions inhabit a deep, common space in the emotional heart. I call it 'the grieving well' because accessing the heart-space involves letting go – loss. Growing love – tearing the heart open to a greater depth – is grief's work. I have come to know Grief well.

When Michelle died, a tsunami tore through me. I had no control of it. Nature is much more powerful than humans. The 'grief wave' (as I called it) would start as a sense of impending doom. Something was creeping up from behind. It had increasing power. I felt uncomfortable. I mistakenly thought the source of the discomfort was coming from outside of me – from cars – from people. I sensed an unknown enemy. My defenses became activated. My brain went into fight-flight-freeze survival mode. Sometimes I'd get angry; sometimes I wanted to leave, be alone, hide; sometimes I'd go numb. And then, seemingly out-of-the-blue, I'd be crying – pouring tears searing hot and salty, snot running – and would realize a tsunami had just crashed over me, and that the tsunami was grief. I was reminded over and over again that I was grieving. This happened for a period of about six years, at which time the emotional scale of 'mostly sad' tipped to 'mostly accepting'. Accepting that Michelle died. Accepting that life continued without her. As my schedule became more and more full, something felt more and more empty. Was it my heart? My life?

Eight years later, in a Psychosynthesis training, being guided into a transpersonal heart meditation, I opened the doors into my heart-space and stepped in. My heart, I found, was far from empty. To the contrary, what I entered was a salty, endless ocean. It did not surprise me that my heart was watery. I relate to mermaids; my astrological chart is fishy; I'm affected by the pull of the moon and the tides. It *did* surprise me that the body of water in my heart was salty like tears, and endless. I had thought I was done with the bulk of grief. A new thought emerged: *my heart broke open and an ocean filled it.*

There was another aspect of the meditation that surprised and transformed me. The two doors to my heart-space were shaped like two sides of a broken heart, the jagged edges in the middle fitting perfectly together. While inside – in the endless ocean – an entity called Wisdom gave me a gift: a shoelace. It struck me as odd, but I brought the gift with me, anyhow, when our guide moved us toward the heart's opening. When it was time to leave the heart-space, gift in hand, I closed the doors behind me. But this time, the shoe lace, now woven between the two doors, caused the broken, jagged crack to remain slightly open, allowing a steady, gentle stream to flow out of the heart-space and into my life.

Michelle's dad once said to me: *a broken heart is an open heart.* Grief broke my heart open and my heart-space filled with an endless ocean of tears and joy and all the complexities of love. From that ocean, a gentle and steady river flows into my life. I now embrace grief, love, complexity, Michelle. My life is full.



Ami lost her daughter to a heroin overdose in 2005, and son-in-law to suicide in 2018. The couple left behind Ami's grandson, who she has been grieving with and raising for 6.5 years. Following her daughter's overdose, Ami became a co-founding board member of Vermont FACES (Families of Addiction Consulting for Effective Services), co-facilitated a chapter of Vermont Wits End (education/support group for families dealing with addiction), and created the Michelle Workshop (prevention for teens). Following her son-in-law's death, Ami created 100 Days of Grieving (social media videos), to increase suicide awareness and support surviving family and friends. Ami's work is of an integrated mind-body-spirit healer, mental health counselor & Psychosynthesis-based transformational life coach, with a focus on integrating grief with life. She continues to live and navigate grief with her (now 16-year-old) grandson, in Brattleboro, Vermont

On the Eve of Your Official Name Change *for Dylan* By, Paula Sayword

Even before language found your tongue,
you knew something was wrong.
Pulled at the collar of your blouse,
cried when they put a dress on you.
Wanted your brother's things,
because nothing felt true,
exiled within your own body.
Four years old, one Christmas Eve,
you thumped your chest twice and said,
My god made me a boy.
We knew then
the sky would shatter above you someday,
your young haunted self would shake off
the false claim your body made,
your voice would lift with longing
to say you wanted everyone to call you *he*.
call you Dylan John not Emmalina Sophia.
At nine years old your parents still hold your hand
proud of your brave heart,
knowing even in your fearless certainty,
you stand on the edge of a wide meadow,
where monsters and bigots wait in the woods.
And as you wander through an undefined geography,
we would spare you any anguish if we could,
knowing in time, sorrow finds us all.
But for now you are a boy running through childhood,
running with a name you gave yourself.



*Paula Sayword has published two books of poetry, *Canticle of Light and Dark* and *What Sleep Inside*. Her poetry has appeared in various journals and collections, including *Sinister Wisdom*, *Naugatuck River Review*, *Silkworm*, and *Adrienne Rich, a Tribute Anthology*. She spent many years traveling across the country to a home in New Mexico. She lives in Western Massachusetts with her longtime woman partner.*

Coach as Ally

By, Leyza Toste

This article is intended to generate self-reflection and spur interest in embracing the role of coach as ally. There are numerous ways in which privilege can be used to create the culture envisioned by Robert Assagioli and that Martin Luther King, Jr., and countless others lived their life for. Psychosynthesis coaches are positioned for success with the unique training we are afforded and an inherent drive to improve the condition of humankind.

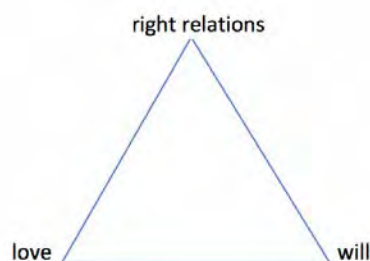
Coaches work with individuals from all walks of life and have a range of life experience themselves that informs the vigor of rapport built with clients. The connection between guide and traveler is essential to the work and is additionally informed by some level of privilege or marginalization that shapes each of them as they move through their respective life paths.

Key to this understanding is awareness of one's "ordinary privilege" which Dolly Chugh describes as characteristics we have that "blend in with the norms and people around us, and thus, [are] easily forgotten" (Harvard Business Review, 2018). By way of example, while my female identification is mine as part of a marginalized group, I also enjoy a number of privileges, such as: use of the bathroom of my choosing without question; assured access to quality healthcare; reliable transportation to meet my needs; access to establishments without physical assistance; and additionally, not living in fear of potential interactions with police. This experience is shared by many of those close to me, colleagues, family members, and neighbors. We live day to day free from ridicule, discrimination, and fear of basic needs not being met, so it is easy to slip into a sense of taking for granted the general ease we are afforded.

As awareness of such privilege grows, a feeling of guilt can be triggered. It is important to look at our options when this happens, with the intent to regain our authenticity and connection to Self. What subpersonalities and old stories have surfaced? Once this is examined the coach is positioned to make choices that support movement into "right relations" (Assagioli's

archived note ID document 1201) with themselves and the traveler.

Assagioli describes the establishment of right relations as the integration of the transpersonal qualities of love and will. He believed that at the heart of "today's disorders is the lack of love on the part of those who have will and the lack of will in those who are good and loving (Assagioli, 1973, p. 91)."



The Coach as Ally is one path to right relations. An ally, in one definition in the Merriam-Webster online dictionary, is "a person who is not a member of a marginalized or mistreated group but who expresses or gives support to that group." This points to allying in right relationship, as the synthesis of the yin transpersonal quality of love and the yang quality of will. For example, something more than just shedding tears for another's hardship. This only serves to momentarily assuage the feeling of personal distress. However when combined with an act of will, such as educating others with privilege, one is able to make a difference and come into right relationship. Feelings of guilt are transformed into active support of those less privileged.

A deeper look at the right relations polarity strengthens the understanding of true allying. Assagioli describes many forms of love, one being humanitarian. He says it "derive[s] fundamentally from a sense of essential identity with one's brothers in humanity" (Assagioli, 1973, p. 94). The work then is to align this with the fully developed Will working with the strong, skillful, and good aspects of the Will Assagioli described (p. 15-16).

How might the coach, in right relationship as committed ally, live a life of informed action that gives voice to good intention? One example begins by taking the online Implicit Bias Test (Project Implicit) as a way to expand the “good will” with increased self-awareness of unconscious bias, something we all have. Then strengthen the “skilled will” and gain further education by reading a book on the topic. There are many, but a great starting point is Dolly Chugh’s *The Person You Mean to Be: How Good People Fight Bias* (referred to in Harvard Business Review, September 18, 2018). Lastly,



regularly take visible action that flexes the muscle of the “strong will.” One simple and effective way I have done this is to visibly wear the “I’ll go with you” pin. Numerous gender queer and transgender people, complete strangers to

me, have thanked me for wearing this. In a pay it forward sort of way, I purchased extra pins to give away as countless times individuals express interest in having one to proudly wear. Also, this has presented the opportunity to educate those who are curious about the pin and do not know its origin.

What privilege do you have? The Privilege Checklist provides insight into this. Put your knowledge of this to good use in creating the “New Culture” as described by Assagioli in his archived note (ID document 15224) in which there is “Elimination of incalculable suffering and of mass of bad karma already produced and being constantly produced by wrong relations. Each individual and group is responsible and must pay in full for the conditions created by wrong relations.”

In the words of Martin Luther King, “We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the vitriolic words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people” (King, 1963).



Leyza Toste is founder and sole proprietor of Sundara Pathways, LLC, offering guidance and tools for personal fulfillment and well-being. Leyza is a board-certified Life Synthesis Coach, a master level Reiki practitioner, a facilitator of Peggy Huddleston's Prepare for Surgery, Heal Faster mind-body techniques, and an experienced human resources professional with over 25 years in higher education.

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Resources

I’llGoWithYou: An Ally Project, <http://www.illgowithyou.org/>
Privilege Checklist, <https://sites.google.com/a/u.boisestate.edu/social-justice-training/about-us/our-training/privilege-checklist>

Project Implicit, <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

Longing for Relationship

By, Shamai Currim

Introduction

For most people, their family of origin is the pattern that sees them through life. Infants are coddled, fed, bathed, clothed, and made to feel like they belong. Their scraped knees are bandaged, their bruises kissed, and their hurt feelings given expression. They have a safe net in which to fall and are helped back onto their feet when life gets difficult. Their primary needs (food, shelter, and belonging) are met, first by their families of origin, and later by their social circles. We learn to behave, to act and react, according to social norms. Our need to belong is so strong that it might even override our inner sense of knowing right from wrong, misplacing and overriding our primary sense of self. We create sub personalities, inner beings who act on our behalf and eventually we lose our authentic selves and forget who we really are.

Maslow theory on needs

"It is quite true that man lives by bread alone — when there is no bread. But what happens to man's desires when there is plenty of bread and when his belly is chronically filled?"ⁱ

In Maslow's diagram of hierarchy of needs we see the development of man's fundamental needs. When our physiological and safety needs are fulfilled we can then move towards a higher understanding of self. As these higher needs emerge they dominate until, again satisfied, a still higher need emerges. This is what is meant by saying that our basic human needs are organized into a hierarchy of relative prepotency. It refers to the person's desire for self-fulfillment, the tendency for him to become actualized in what he is potentially. The specific form that these needs will take will of course vary greatly from person to person. In one individual

it may take the form of the desire to be an ideal mother, in another it may be expressed athletically, and in still another it may be expressed in painting pictures or in inventions.
ii

Roberto Assagioli talks about states of consciousness (superconscious, unconscious and conscious) and their interface. At times the superconscious breaks into the conscious mind in the form of intuitive thoughts, sudden enlightenment or inspiration as a spontaneous, unexpected occurrence. Other times there may be a response to a call or an invocation on the part of the individual, whether conscious or not. This consists of raising our centre of consciousness, the self-conscious 'I', to levels above the ordinary, until we reach the sphere of the superconscious.

Assagioli says that we are fundamentally extroverts with a fear of looking inwards. We tend to avoid and evade anything which focuses our mind inwards and causes us to face ourselves. We refuse to accept superconscious experiences as being a valid subject for scientific investigation. We can examine, classify, interpret and evaluate superconscious experiences, and it isn't until we have experienced, brought down elements of the superconscious into the realm of the

conscious, or raised the centre of consciousness to the shining regions above, that we can believe. He talks about an awakening, a sense of awakening to a higher reality or moving from an ordinary life to a state of enhanced awareness.ⁱⁱⁱ

Maslow refers to characteristics which he called 'Being values' (a sense of fullness,

integration, wholeness; a sense of perfection, completeness, vitality and intensity of life; a



sense of richness and, at the same time, a sense of simplicity; a sense of beauty, consciousness of goodness, absence of effort, spontaneity, joy, cheerfulness, humour; a sense of truth or authenticity of the experience, and a sense of independence, an inner freedom which takes away the need to rely on anything else: self-sufficiency in the higher, spiritual sense). Maslow states that these outward manifestations are interpenetrating and linked together: all facets of Being, rather than parts of it.

Experience of not belonging

Belonging means acceptance as a member or part of a group.

A sense of belonging is a human need and is most important in seeing value in life and in coping with intensely painful emotions. Some find belonging in a church, some with friends, some with family, and some on social media. Some see themselves as connected only to one or two people. Others believe and feel a connection to all people the world over, to humanity. Some struggle to find a sense of belonging and their loneliness is physically painful for them.

Some seek belonging through excluding others. That reflects the idea that there must be those who don't belong in order for there to be those who do. Yet a single instance of being excluded can undermine one's own sense of worth.^{iv}

Feelings of isolation can have a serious detrimental effect on one's mental and physical health. Loneliness can be a chronic stress condition that ages the body and causes great damage to overall well-being.^v

Client

I had a client who had a history of extreme abuse, incest, neglect, and abandonment. She rated high on the Dissociative Scale with memories of ritual abuse over most of her childhood. She told me she never felt like she belonged anywhere. Throughout her childhood she was treated like the black sheep of the family, singled out for mistreatment, and her childhood friends were few and frequently changed. She joined organized groups and worked hard at belonging, and never quite felt like she had reached her goal. In adulthood, at a

university training weekend, she opened up about a small fraction of her abuse background, putting herself in a very vulnerable position. It was not only not well received, she was group judged for her behavior. She shared with me that, when the group left for a lunch break, she walked over to each of their chairs in the hopes that connecting into their energetic fields left on the chairs that she could finally connect to something, a very high level of desperation and expression of the need to belong. These are, many times, the people who get caught in cults. Any warm greeting draws them in and the eventual abuse feels like a comfortable pattern that they already know from their past.

How do we create belonging

Building a sense of belonging requires active effort and practice. One thing that helps is to look for ways we are similar with others instead of focusing on ways we are different. Through acceptance of self and other we learn to find value and truth. When we learn to let go of judgement we open opportunities for expanding our experiences with others. When we learn to self-evaluate, we open an opportunity to understand and value our own unique contributions to life.^{vi}

We are motivated to bring all of ourselves closer to a place, person or group when we experience belonging. Authentic belonging is accompanied by a comfort to reveal who we are, especially when we are welcomed and received warmly. If we come from a background of ridicule and disapproval, then a sense of non-belonging may be our only image of life. Responsibility and obligation, as well as fear, may keep us in this role of non-belonging. Sometimes we create a fantasy person or group where we attempt to augment our deep need to belong. Our imaginary experience of belonging is destined to leave us empty and wanting. In order to move beyond this, it is important to get help, an ally who can live the exploration of where we have been and where we wish to be, to help deepen our sense of belonging to ourselves and to help us learn to accept our feelings, our beliefs and our choices.^{vii}

What it feels like to belong

Belonging feels like sleeping soundly under a fluffy down comforter, in the perfect room with the correct temperature and the right amount of

light. And even if you should wake, the sense of comfort remains. All is good. You are worthy and you are accepted.^{viii}

Belonging defines our social value. Working on a transpersonal level helps us to discover a sense of interconnectedness. We begin to choose, in thought, word, and action, interdependence over independence and autonomy. Our awareness of universality and of belonging to the larger whole of life carries deep implications for our role and behaviour in society. Our ability to discriminate that it's not just what one does that matters, but how one does it. Life itself becomes the arena for creative self-expression.^{ix}

Conclusion

The need to energize our bodies through nutrition, and to keep ourselves safe from the outer environment is very strong, and yet stronger still is our need to belong. In our aloneness we seek out that which gives us a sense of safety and trust. We long for other, sometimes at the cost of self. Maslow rightly stated that we need to fill our primary needs before we can achieve higher states of being. Assagioli tells us that we can function at higher levels of being and go beyond the fear of finding out who we really are. Higher states of being require us to face our fears, own our authentic selves, and act out of a balance of our lower and higher selves, overriding our childhood patterns and coming into a space of forgiveness and self-acceptance. True belonging does not come from a false creation of outer values. It comes from an inner awareness and acceptance of the higher values of life.

ⁱ Maslow, A. H. (1943) A Theory of Human Motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370-96.

ⁱⁱ Maslow, A. H. (1943) A Theory of Human Motivation, p. 382-383

ⁱⁱⁱ Assagioli, Roberto, MD (2007) *Transpersonal Development The Dimension Beyond Psychosynthesis Smiling Wisdom Inner Way Productions*, Scotland

^{iv} <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/pieces-mind/201403/create-sense-belonging>^v <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/basics/loneliness>

^{vi} <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/pieces-mind/201403/create-sense-belonging>

^{vii} https://www.huffpost.com/entry/the-hazards-of-non-belonging_n_7874706^{viii} <https://www.quora.com/How-does-it-feel-like-to-belong>

^{ix} https://us.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/66161_Whitmore.pdf



Shamai 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.

Shamai is now immersed in the arts and has had her work displayed in many local shows. She is a professional, BOD member of her local art association and encourages her children and grandchildren to be their most creative selves.

Shamai has presented at numerous conferences, has been published in many peer review journals, and is the author of Meaghan's Story.

The Potential of the Human Group

By, Marco Moretti

Speech given at the XXXII National Congress of Psychosynthesis
of 27-28 April 2019 in Ancona (Italy): “Roberto Assagioli e il Potenziale Umano”.

(Translated by Vivien Reid Ferrucci)

“What is the bridge between the individual and the Universal? It is *the group* - we can become *group conscious*. We can first unify ourselves with even one other individual in the highest aspects of love; then we can become unified with a small group, then a larger group, then a larger group and gradually with larger and larger groups, until we reach a certain degree of universal awareness.” [1].

Roberto Assagioli

Think of your most beautiful realizations in life. Most of them you will have had with someone else. They are not individual realizations, but collective ones, with a group of at least two people. Few are the realizations we can achieve alone. The most wonderful dreams in our life we have attained with others.

When you think about it, no great change has happened by the work of single individuals. Jesus Christ himself had to form a group, as did the Buddha. Assagioli created the Psychosynthesis Centres.

The big changes can be carried by groups.

The individual grows and develops within the family, community, and humankind, sustained by other kingdoms of nature: this is the context in which a human being emerges. The journey of psychosynthesis leads us to individuation and the development of individual potentialities. Nevertheless, if individuals do not develop a group consciousness, they will stay in their egocentrism, in the need to affirm themselves and “be right”, in isolation from others.

Assagioli said: “Self-consciousness is human but not spiritual. [...] Self-consciousness is the point at the centre of consciousness [...], meaning consciousness of one's personal ego, of one's own interests and pleasures, so it has nothing spiritual in itself. The Self is something else, a whole new level. [...]. Normal self-consciousness is separative, egocentric, conservative [2]”.

And he wrote: “[...] the realization of the central self is not all that has to be discovered. In fact, it

is, in a sense, only the beginning, because, having reached awareness of the central “I” which is naturally and rightly self-centered and separative at first, in order to assert its unique and separate identity as an individual, we find this is not enough, and that there are other and greater states of consciousness with which to identify. Their stages [...] include recognition of the self in others, group awareness, and realization of the higher or Spiritual Self [3]”.

We must, therefore, transcend the personal self (the “I”), inasmuch as individuation contains a kind of separateness. The development of the individual passes through consciousness of the group, collaboration and interdependence, as a means of overcoming egocentrism, isolation and individualism.

Groups, like individuals, go through several evolutionary stages. One group may be more or less evolved, and just as it can keep evolving, it can also devolve.

On what does the wellbeing of the group depend? On the aspects that characterize “right human relations” [4]: on the degree of reciprocal acceptance, trust, security, mental understanding, emotional responsiveness, and interpersonal understanding – in other words, on interpersonal harmony.

For this reason, the development of inter-individual psychosynthesis is crucial to the creation of groups based on right human relations [5].

What makes a group strong? A group does not stay together only because it provides wellbeing, but also because it actively collaborates towards attaining the group's goals. It grows strong when its members together overcome difficulties so as to reach those goals. In other words, the group's strength hinges on the degree of group consciousness, collaboration, mutual support, repair and mastery in overcoming and transforming internal and external hindrances, and on the shared achievement of common aims.

It is from the possibility of sharing certain ideals and reaching certain goals that group psychosynthesis arises. This develops because of the will to join with others in order to realize those ideals and goals. Obviously, the quality of the psychosynthesis will vary according to the group's level of evolution.

An evolved group is one which has developed a unanimous consciousness and is connected to the group's Soul. Just as an individual Self exists, so does a group Self exist. This Self is not the sum of the souls that comprise it: it is something more and different.

Every group has its own Soul. This mark, this Soul, is independent of the members that comprise it. When you enter a group, you enter a field of consciousness, in which each person is influenced by this Soul. The Soul continues even when its members enter and leave the group. Psychosynthesis too has a Soul that remains despite people's coming and going.

The greater the connection members have with the group's Soul, through a unanimous consciousness, the more evolved is the group.

The devolved group is one in which the leader carries out the role of "top dog", "leader of the pack". In this we find the dynamics of dependence/counter dependence, "we are good, the others are bad", "witch-hunting", "scapegoating", expulsion in case of disagreement. In short, there is no adult group consciousness. The only way for a group to evolve in such a context is through conflict, because within such a group the chance for personal growth is lacking.

In a more evolved group, a process of adult psychosynthesis begins: just as the conscious "I" carries out the role of coordinating and

harmonizing the various subpersonalities, so the leader coordinates the individual wills in order to foster and develop the consciousness and responsibility of the group. In this kind of context, the leader presents himself or herself not as boss, but as servant.

An even more evolved group is one in which leadership is shared. This is possible when a leader is not necessary because all have a sense of responsibility and of group consciousness. In such a context the leader is the Soul of the group, and all work together to achieve a spiritual synchronization.

In such a group, members work in both the horizontal and vertical planes – towards the horizontal expansion and interpersonal harmonization, and towards elevation and spiritual synchronization.

Every group has its own Soul with a specific wavelength and plan to be realized. This plan is included in the original purpose that gave rise to the group; still, it is the Soul that holds it, and the members have the responsibility to interpret it.

The Soul of the group tries to manifest itself through its members: it is incarnated in order to realize its particular mark, its own plan and will, through the members and the group activities. How possible this may be depends on the group's receptivity. Furthermore, just as personal "glamours" exists, so group "glamours" can also exist [6].

For this reason, Assagioli has left us some important tools:

Unanimity, Unity in diversity, can be achieved through harmonization with the Soul of the group, thanks to receptive meditation and reciprocal sharing. A unanimous consciousness does not mean leveling, but rather Unity generated by harmonization with the Soul.

We can practice receptive meditation together so as to bring ourselves into harmony with the group Soul, for the purpose of:

1. Receiving from the Soul information regarding the next step in the plan to be actualized.
2. Sharing this information in order to create a synthesis in the group.

3. At this point the will of the group's Soul may be catalyzed, thanks to the creative meditation attained by a cooperative activity:
4. With creative meditation we visualize clearly and in detail the next step of the plan, as set by the Soul and synthesized by the group.
5. We implement this step through shared group activity.

This work proposal has been offered us by Assagioli for *its special and urgent function of building the structure for the new civilization and new culture in all its aspects* [7].

In support of this possibility, there is some scientific data that pertains to the relationship between mind and matter: it comes from the project PEAR, started in 1979 at the University of Princeton and lasting nearly thirty years. In these studies, they tried to understand if the intentionality of one or more persons could influence a generator of chance events (for instance, the throw of a coin, done on a computer, which, after thousands of tests, always gives the result: heads and tails 50% each). From this research it emerged that the intentionality of one individual, put before a generator of chance events, is able significantly to change the result. Further, it emerged that if it is a group of people, the change is even more significant [8].

What is more, if a group of people has the intention of changing the result, even though it is not put in front of the generator but in some other place, the change happens anyway, independently of physical distance. And it works even if the group decides that it will occur at a later date, such as the next day at a specific hour [9]. This suggests that the intentionality of a group can have effects beyond space and time. It is like saying that intentionality acts from a transpersonal and universal dimension.

These studies have also shown that if a group has equal numbers of males and females, the shift in the result is three-and-a-half times greater. This means that we should strive for a greater parity of gender in groups. More interesting still is that the shift in the result is six times greater when there is an emotional engagement among the members [10]. It suggests that the power of the group's intentionality is proportional to the emotional engagement between its members.

In conclusion, we can generate significant changes in the world if we work to develop group consciousness, harmonization with the Soul, and the implementing, through creative meditation and group activity, of the directions we receive from on High.

“Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matthew 18, 19-20. The King James Bible).

Marco Moretti, psychologist and psychotherapist, formed in Psychosynthesis, Biosystemic Psychotherapy, EMDR Therapy, Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy and Family Constellations. He is a member of the Psychosynthesis Institute and of the Hellinger Scienza®. In his psychosynthetic training he has



followed the personal therapy and supervision with Piero Ferrucci, and he has developed his knowledge of Systemic Therapy through specific trainings with Bert Hellinger, Sheldon Kramer, Sue Johnson and Paul Greenman. Currently Moretti is a trainer at the Institute of Psychosynthesis, deputy director of the Centre of Psychosynthesis in Bologna, and he has lectured at the Integrated Systemic Psychotherapy Institute (IDIPSI) of Parma on the use of Family Constellations in Individual Therapy. Moretti treats regularly groups and individuals. Marco Moretti has published three books: *Due maestri un solo cuore* (2004), *La promessa di ciò che puoi essere* (2010), *Handbook of Individual Family Constellations* (2015). E-mail: biopsicosintesi@gmail.com

- [1] Meditation Group for the New Age. Second year, Set III, p. 9.
- [2] B. Caldironi, L'uomo a tre dimensioni. Colloqui con Roberto Assagioli (1967-1971). Edizioni del Girasole, Ravenna, 2004, pp. 63-64.
- [3] Meditation Group for the New Age. Third year, Set II, p. 6.
- [4] According to Assagioli the qualities necessary for establishing right relations are: sense of responsibility, understanding, compassion, love, harmlessness, spirit of sharing; further, he points to goodwill as a source of right relations and foundation for harmony and unity among human beings (see Meditation Group for the New Age).
- [5] See R. Assagioli, Dalla Coppia all'Umanità. Introduzione alla psicosintesi inter-individuale. L'Uomo Edizioni, Firenze, 2011; see Meditation Group for the New Age.
- [6] See Meditation Group for the New Age. Third year, Set I, p. 10: "Glamor in its broader sense can be said to be the attributing of false values and exaggerated importance to people, situations, and - most frequently - to ourselves. This distorted proportion creates a kind of fog, an illusory world which comes between us and Reality, and shrouds it so that it is impossible to perceive it clearly or think about it in a balanced way. The word glamor covers all the deception, misunderstanding, misinterpretation, and false conceptions with which we surround ourselves."
- [7] See Group for Creative Meditation.
- [8] Jahn R., Dunne B., Nelson R., Dobyns Y., Bradish G., (1997), Correlations of Random Binary Sequences with Pre-Stated Operator Intention: A Review of a 12-Year Program, in Journal of Scientific Exploration, Vol. 11, n. 3, pp. 345-367.
- [9] Jahn R., Dunne B., (1992), Experiments in Remote Human/Machine Interaction, in Journal of Scientific Exploration, Vol. 6, n. 4, pp. 311-332.
- [10] Jahn R., Dunne B., (1997), Science of the Subjective, in Journal of Scientific Exploration, Vol. 11, n. 2, pp. 20 1-22.
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Photos by Diane Lansing

Cover Photos

Top row (L to R): "Picasso Portrait", "Old Friends", and "Holy Haircut".

2nd row (L to R): "The Dresser", and "Embracing Capri".

3rd row (L to R): "Heart Connection", and "Secrets".



"Heart Connection" - Italy; 2012

Diane Lansing B.A. (art), M.A.(expressive therapies) is a retired art teacher & photographer who loves to travel the world, inviting exquisite moments in everyday life to draw her to them. The camera focuses her - rather than the other way around - revealing the extraordinary in the ordinary. She believes that her best photos are a collaboration with the transpersonal.



Her photos have been exhibited in a variety of art galleries, juried shows & art venues, and have won prizes in photo competitions. Diane is particularly thrilled that this year, one of her photos was selected to be the cover of a Women's Datebook that is sold internationally.

Diane says: "My hope is that my photos selected for this AAP Quarterly will touch people in such a way that they can enjoy & experience vicariously what I saw & felt through my viewfinder, as well as stimulate special feelings & memories from their own life experience."

"Psychosynthesis has blessed my life in so many ways - providing me with guideposts to help me on my life's journey, and gifting me with special, lifelong friends who I met during my psychosynthesis training at the Synthesis Center in Amherst, MA, and at AAP conferences. I am so very grateful!" drlansing@earthlink.net

Growing Whole: Self-realization for the Great Turning *excerpt 2.*

(Psychosynthesis Press, 2009)

"Relationships: Growing Whole Together."

By, Molly Young Brown

Exploring Your Web of Relationships

Take a few moments to contemplate the vast web of relationships that support you. Make note of a few of your biological, economic, political, social, cultural, spiritual, professional, familial, close, and intimate relationships.

Now breathe quietly for several minutes, letting your breath deepen your sense of these relationships and noticing any feelings which come up.

How have these various relationships given you support, nurture, help? How have they injured or betrayed you? How have you learned from them?

We have all been wounded in relationships--betrayed, rejected, exploited, even brutalized. As a result, we are sometimes suspicious, hard-hearted, or manipulative in our response to others. Our mutual wounding is enormous and is at the heart of all our human conflicts. Yet we cannot survive without each other, and we are driven by

our deep need to connect with one another. We really have no choice but to love.

Ferrucci (1982, p. 175) retells a story by Tolstoy about a fallen angel who must learn what people live by in order to return to heaven. Finally he realizes "that human beings cannot live each for himself, that they are necessary to one another, and that love is what they live by." Ferrucci goes on to speculate, "The yearning for unity seems to be present even in the most elementary forms of life. It may be something analogous to that deeply rooted need, that obscure nostalgia for undifferentiated oneness, that sense of belonging and inclusiveness, which appears in numerous forms and to which we sometimes give the title of 'love'" (p. 176).

In its broadest sense, love is the force of unconditional attraction that binds us all together—that binds together everything in the universe.

We are all interconnected through this underlying force, no matter how we may feel about each other. So all relationships ultimately are based on love, however unconscious and distorted it may be. Our basic challenge in any relationship may be to discover the underlying connection-attraction-unity-love and be guided thereby in our actions within that relationship.

That's a pretty tall order for anyone. It's hard for me to get in touch with our underlying unity when someone has just insulted or attacked me. I might be afraid that such a perspective would prevent me from protecting myself and my integrity. Unity and love are all too often misconstrued to mean I must sacrifice my own self-interest to indulge the whims or demands of another, or that I must lose my personal identity and individuality in some kind of amorphous love soup. These are both gross distortions of what love and unity can mean.

First of all, our underlying unity doesn't mean it's okay for anyone to harm another, or for us to allow another to harm us. As a matter of fact, such behavior is unloving and divisive and needs to be countered in the interests of love and unity. We actually honor our essential unity when we say "no" to another's harmful behavior.

Moreover, our underlying unity and love demand that we respect individual boundaries and differences. There is a kind of paradox in this: love and unity are meaningless words if we have no separations or differences from one another. Hyemeyohsts Storm speaks to this paradox in his recounting of the Plains Indian People's teaching that began this article. We need boundaries, separations, and differences in order to learn "the things of the Heart" through Touching.

[See Molly's Bio](#)

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Schedule: The program will be offered over four weekends (48 hrs. of training) from February - May, 2020. See dates [here](#).

Trainers ([see bio's](#)): Jon Schottland, Director of Synthesis Northeast and former senior trainer at the Synthesis Center, will be lead instructor, along with Robin White and Amy Spalding-Fecher.

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email: jon@synthesiscoaching.org

phone: 802-451-6768

web: www.synthesiscoaching.org

Limited space available – Application deadline December 31, 2019 Tuition: \$1,600. Financial assistance available as needed.

"Passing in
inner quietness,
slowly listening,
to hear the
right word.
I am obeying
certain
conditions.

Shall I take
this road or
that? Shall I
respond to this
call or await
another."

—ROBERTO ASSAGIOLI

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Contact Bill or Cris at info@synthesis-coaching.com

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Mindfulness and Psychosynthesis to Navigate Turbulent Times



2 day immersion in the *Harmonics of Psychosynthesis & Mindfulness* as anchors and responses to today's challenges

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designed and offered by **Abigail De Soto and Keith Hackwood**

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<https://abigaildesoto.com/workshops-and-trainings/current-offerings-registration/>

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(10 am-6 pm Sat; 9:30-4:30 pm Sunday)

Questions and Registration: Abigail - discovery.transformation@gmail.com
or Keith - keith@keithhackwood.com



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Facilitated by Julie
Clark

Julie Clark is a fellow
Cosmic Warrior. She is
a certified
Psychosynthesis Coach,
which focuses on
guidance through an
understanding of
spiritually based
psychology.

Julie has worked
extensively with
Shamans who have
lovingly offered
teachings that integrate
love for and
understanding of
ourselves, Mother
Earth, and the
undeniable
interconnectedness of
all life. Julie's life
purpose is to empower
others to unlock the
Cosmic Wisdom that
each person carries
within. She guides
under the premise that
each and every person

has a unique purpose, special talents and pure passions that ultimately, when fully uncovered and evoked, contribute to the spiritual evolution of all living beings on the planet.

In this workshop, we will use Roberto Assagioli's Ideal Model exercise. This is a powerful tool that will allow us to establish the neural pathways to enhance our forgiveness and boundary setting processes.

We'll also learn about discovering Choice Points that foster a greater personal power to create our desired states of being. We will learn about and creatively use Assagioli's Psychological Laws so that the gains, insights and growth we experience during our gathering take firm hold. We will use these Laws to ensure our intentions powerfully manifest, and the work we do will translate to real life changes and shifts in our perception and way of being in the world.

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Faculty:

Bonney Gulino Schaub, RN, MS, PMHCNS-BC, NC-BC
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PSYCHOSPIRITUAL INSTITUTE offers one of the world's leading fully accredited coach training and leadership programs in the transpersonal psychology of Psychosynthesis, which explores the evolutionary potential of human consciousness. Psychosynthesis blends science and spirituality through 7 core concepts of transformation that address the whole person. It utilizes a powerful, proven framework for radical self-awareness and long-lasting change.

This program will not only transform your ability to become more present in your own life, connect more deeply to your life purpose, and align who you are with how you show up in the world (many people come through our program just to focus on their own personal growth!), but it will completely **up-level your confidence as a coach and give you the proven tools, framework and methodology to transform lives, create a profitable business doing what you love, and make a greater impact as a thought leader.**

Our comprehensive accredited program is based on the transpersonal psychology of Psychosynthesis, which explores the evolutionary potential of human consciousness. It blends science and spirituality through 7 core concepts of transformation that address the whole person. Psychosynthesis deepens self-awareness and inspires powerful, purpose-driven choices that create a more meaningful and fulfilled life. Through Psychosynthesis, we become the master of ourselves and experience new levels of freedom.

The transformation of our world begins within each one of us.

Want to know more?

Read all about our program at Psychospiritual Institute [HERE!](#)



Psychosynthesis Northeast Community

Connecting through Dis-Identification

Using disidentification to heal a sense of disconnection

with Ami Ji Schmid & Guadalupe Chavez

Sept 15, 1-5pm

Saints James & Andrew Episcopal Church, Whiteman Room

8 Church St., Greenfield, MA 01301

Park either: At free meters on Federal or Church **OR** In Parking area on St. James Ct. (just outside our entrance, or further South) Once inside, go left toward the Whiteman Room.

In this thought-provoking, deeply experiential workshop, we will explore the theme of disconnection and the healing attributes of dis-identification --- bringing in aspects of cultural awareness,* NVC,** and inner child and core shame work*** --- to strengthen our sense of connection (with self, others, Nature, and Source) and evoke compassionate understanding.

*Cultural Awareness: the ability and willingness to objectively examine the values, beliefs, traditions, and perceptions within our own and other cultures. Becoming culturally aware fosters counteracting unconscious bias, improving diversity and inclusion, and increasing sensitivity and compassion for all sentient beings (In Eastern philosophy, sentience is a metaphysical quality of all things that require respect and care).

**NVC (Non-Violent Communication), developed by Marshall B. Rosenberg, contends that connection is a universal value, characteristic of all humans.

***John Bradshaw, “the founding father of the self-help movement”, brought the phrases ‘dysfunctional family’, ‘the inner child’, ‘the wounded child’ and ‘core shame’ into mainstream consciousness.



Guadalupe Chavez, completed her training as a Psychosynthesis Life Coach and Teacher at the Synthesis Center in Amherst, has BS in Chemistry and over 25 years of work and study on Montessori Early Childhood Education. Guadalupe’s long life personal interest has been the study and research of spirituality and religion and their impact on political and social structures. Presently she lives in Greenfield MA with her husband and their 14 year old chihuahua Bissous.

Ami Ji Schmid, is a graduate of Synthesis Northeast’s psychosynthesis life coach training, completed the Synthesis Center’s advanced psychosynthesis practitioner training, has a master’s degree in MH Counseling, has been studying and practicing metaphysical healing since 1977, is an Integrated Mind-Body-Spirit healing practitioner, and hosts an online Mindfulness meditation group twice a week (through Meditation Chapel.org). As an intuit, empath, and highly sensitive person (HSP), Ami has tapped into divine compassion and dedicated educational leadership to create and facilitate hundreds of intimate group experiences on a variety of subjects for over 40 years – including two 10-week workshops based on John Bradshaw’s inner child and core shame work. Ami is currently launching TLC Coaching and Consultation Services, where she practices as a Self-Love and Confidence coach, and lives in Brattleboro, Vermont with her (now 16-year-old) grandson “Mr. Awesome” and their “Kenzie-cat”



[.MORE INFO CLICK HERE](#)

Relationship as a Journey Webinar

Date/Time: Sunday, Sept. 22, 2019 1:00-2:30 EST
Presented by Ilene Val-Essen, PhD

Target Audience: appropriate for all people interested in relationship, whether romantic, interpersonal, professional, parental, or educational. The session is oriented towards personal growth and will address professional applications as well.

Presented by Ilene Val-Essen, PhD, a LMFT in private practice since 1975. Dr. Val-Essen has authored two books on parenting, *Bring Out the Best in Your Child and Yourself* and *Parenting with Wisdom and Compassion* and has created the Quality Parenting programs, which have been translated into Spanish, Dutch, and Swedish. She is also a contributing author in a psychosynthesis book about relationships to be published in 2020 and has taught at UCLA, Education Extension. The principles, mindsets, and practical skills she applies in various relationships have proven to be applicable in diverse communities.

In this interactive webinar, we'll *engage* with two sets of foundational principles, which invite us to enter a new paradigm of relationship that can dramatically improve how we relate to the people in our lives. As doors open that were previously closed, we become free to interact with others with a wiser and more compassionate heart—even during extraordinary stress when buttons are pushed and fears take center stage.

We'll experience a bridge exercise to the higher self and become acquainted with a higher-self character, which I've named *Faithful*. Faithful helps us recognize the transformational opportunities in relationship when we value connection more than personal upset.

As we work with foundational principles, a bridge exercise to the higher self, and Faithful, a powerful higher-self character, we'll gain support in being in relationship with greater wisdom and compassion.

Learning Objectives: by the end of the session, you will

1. Compare the attitudes we bring to two relationships: one viewed as positive and the other viewed as challenging to raise awareness as a foundation for growth and healing.
2. Engage in applying a set of basic principles in order to strengthen, heal, or improve relationships.
3. Explore the concept of extraordinary stress to help understand why we find it extremely difficult to stay centered in certain situations.
4. Practice applying the advanced set of principles to help deal more effectively with extraordinary stress.
5. Integrate the mindset of Faithful, a higher-self character, as a guide to approaching challenging relationships with wisdom and compassion.

Dr. Val-Essen has enjoyed working with parents, families, children and teens, as well as couples and individuals during thirty years as a psychotherapist in private practice. She believes that people of all ages want to grow and enjoy a full and meaningful life. She creates a safe environment to encourage the process of growth. Drawing upon many approaches from Western psychology as well as Eastern traditions, Dr. Val-Essen's goal is to help people discover and bring out their best. Dr. Val-Essen is a frequent speaker at national and international conferences. bringoutthebest.com



[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

PERSONAL & TRANSPERSONAL KNOWING WEBINAR

October 12, 2019 12pm- 2pm EST

Presented by Keith Hackwood

Building on the Interest in the first Personal & Transpersonal Knowing webinar, we intend on offering a mini-series continuing to explore the interactions between the personal and transpersonal through the body, mind, spirit and collective using theory, case material and experiential practices. We will consider the relational edge, the fluidity of consciousness within space and time, and ways of working sensitively with subtle states and energies.

Aims & Learning Objectives

- An exploration of the boundaries between the personal and transpersonal aspects of awareness
- An opportunity to reflect on case material relating to this interface
- Inquiry into the 'organs of perception' associated with transpersonal awareness – how do we perceive that we are perceiving?
- Contexts for working with transpersonal will
- Explorations of identity within the liminal realms of altered states of consciousness.
- Opportunity for open discussion/Q&A
-



I am Keith Hackwood, a counsellor, Psychosynthesis therapist, supervisor and Mindfulness teacher working in Newport, South Wales. I have been in practice for more than fifteen years and have many thousands of hours of client experience. My work is mainly with individuals, though I also work with couples and groups too. Apart from Psychosynthesis I also work with traditions of Mindfulness and have taught many courses and retreats across South Wales for the general public, individuals and a range of organisations and businesses. I also offer online mindfulness courses.

My main interests lie in a range of directions – therapeutically I enjoy the creative collision of Psychosynthesis ideas with those of archetypal and transpersonal practitioners, such as James Hillman, AH Almaas and Owen Barfield. I value the insights of Ecopsychology and the challenge of taking the work outdoors, beyond the therapy room. I am interested in the integration of the personal with the collective in the experiencing of trauma and crisis. I enjoy Nature in all her forms, and have long been a student of many of the world's great wisdom traditions (notably Kabbalah, Buddhism, the Western hermeticism, Sufism and the intact cultures of First Nations peoples). I delight in good poetry and interesting music and in all the true arts. I have an active meditation practice, and enjoy life with my young family.

My work experience bridges private practice and also previously held roles within organisations – these have included universities (Cardiff, Cardiff Metropolitan, Newport) a prison (HMP Cardiff), schools and spiritual organisations. I have spoken at national and international conferences and have a growing number of published works, poetry and journal articles, even some material for roleplaying games.

I am an active member of Literature Wales (formerly Academi), since being invited to join in 2005; a member of BACP (I also serve as member of the Executive of BACP Spirituality with a remit for 'Emerging Spiritualities') and AHPP, as well as the Scientific & Medical Network (SMN).

[TO REGISTER CLICK HERE](#)

Contribute to the December 2019 issue of Psychosynthesis Quarterly with Guest Editor Shamaï Currim

Our Theme is: Purpose, Meaning, and Values

Send your articles, exercises, poems, photography, and art to:
newsletter@aap-psychosynthesis.org

We are so looking forward to all your contributions to the last Psychosynthesis Quarterly of the year 2019 which will be released December 1st. Guest editor, Shamaï Currim, excitedly announces the theme as: Purpose, Meaning and Values.

“What is it that drives the Will? that gives life meaning and helps us to carry forward on our journey? Think about the times you felt stuck in your life. What is it that finally got you over that last hump that felt insurmountable? How do you decide what is important in your life? and how do you decide what to hold on to, and what to let go of? As you think about your Life Purpose, has it always been the same? Has it changed over time? What comes into your mind and heart when YOU think of Purpose, Meaning and Values?”

Articles are accepted from members only, must relate to the theme, should be between 250 and 1500 words, submitted in word.doc with images sent as jpegs or pngs. We also accept photography and art. You must be an AAP member to submit. To become a member, click here. Our deadline for submissions is October 10th. We encourage you to submit well in advance of the deadline as space is limited.

We accept psychosynthesis-related advertising from members. Non-members who wish to run psychosynthesis-related advertising are requested to make a donation to AAP. To donate, [click here](#). Send submittals to: newsletter@aap-psychosynthesis.org

[Shamaï's bio click here](#)

Purpose, Meaning, and Values Webinar Presented by Jon Schottland

Tentative date weekend of 12/9-10 to be confirmed.

*Jon Schottland is the director and senior trainer at the Synthesis Northeast institute in Brattleboro, VT.
www.synthesiscoaching.org or email jon@synthesiscoaching.org*

HELP US GROW



We hope you enjoyed this issue of the *Psychosynthesis Quarterly* and want to say thank you once again to everyone who contributed. Did you know that everyone who produces the Quarterly, presents webinars, maintains the website, updates the calendar, upkeeps membership and

communication, and does all the behind-the-scene planning of events ARE ALL VOLUNTEERS? We do it because we love psychosynthesis and are committed to fulfilling the AAP's mission "to advance the theory and practice of psychosynthesis to benefit individuals and society." However, in order to grow, we need your help.



- Are you or would you like to suggest someone who is accomplished in your/their field on a particular subject or concept to present a webinar or consider being a guest editor of the quarterly?
- Are you a copyeditor who would like to lend your skill to assisting in the production of the quarterly?
- Are you computer savvy and want to help with the website?
- How about helping us actually "steer" the direction of the AAP by joining the Steering Committee?
- Want to help but don't see your interest on this list? Contact us anyway and share your thoughts.
- Please contact us at communication@aap-psychosynthesis.org