

Self and Superconscious that the man overcomes his isolation of individual, to pose himself in connection with all other human beings, in a powerful and quiet dialogue made of impalpable relationships but able to change our personal history and that of the entire human race. In synthesis, it seems to me that the Self should continue to be represented in the Ovoid and should be represented exactly there where it has placed by Roberto Assagioli because otherwise, as well as putting at risk the very essence of the psychosynthetic interpretation of the Human Being, we end up to camouflage and blend in with many others, while interesting, psychological interpretations. *Another and different issue instead is to want to deepen the meaning, the role and bio-fisica nature of what we call the Superior Self, which in many ways is still related to the Mystery and scientific doubt.* For this reason it is important to return to the concept of the Self to a century away from its first formulations and do so either on the basis of objective scientific advances of neurosciences and on the basis of cultural evolution that mankind has made in the course of a century scarred by two world wars and many conflicts, through successive cultural theories of Modernity, then the Post-Modern and finally, the most recent hyper-technological reflections of the Post- Human on one side and the New Realism on the other. An in-depth investigation and verification, not sure of reinterpretation. Last but not least, I would like to emphasize that only the acceptance of the concept of *Unconscious* by the western culture has allowed the Freudian Psychoanalysis to bear fruits and be able to develop in multiple directions and studies. Similarly, only the affirmation and acceptance of the existence of the Self and the recognition of its action-interaction with Ego towards complex synthesis, may allow development of the individual and collective consciousness, to those highest values of the human being that specifically belong to the territory of the Superior Unconscious.

On the basis of what we have tried here to briefly expose we consider important that the Institute of Psychosynthesis founded by Roberto Assagioli with the support of the magazine *Psicosintesi* express themselves on what is

written by Firman, Gila and Young Brown verifying *what, how and if* these positions are effectively shared, or to refute, with appropriate responses at the international level. Answers no controversial or opponent but meditate, thorough and constructive, which update at the threshold of the new century and millennium, the debate on one of the most important aspects of psychosynthetic theory. To this end, we publish a text not yet published in Italy by R. Assagioli, recorded in 1970 during a visit to Florence of American students and invite anyone interested to send to [rivista@psicosintesi.it](mailto:rivista@psicosintesi.it) or [fulvioleoni@libero.it](mailto:fulvioleoni@libero.it) reflections, experiences, documentation about the importance or otherwise of the presence of the symbol of the Self in the Ovoid of Assagioli and, therefore, its role and significance in the psychosynthetic theory and practice. The material will be collected to make a day of study at the Institute of Florence, to be organized in a Round Table whose results will be published in the April issue of the magazine and will be the basis for one or more substantive responses to bring in the appropriate international fora.

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Fulvio Leoni

## FROM TOLERANCE TO INTOLERANCE

(Translation by Achille Cattaneo)

Psychosynthesis proposes, to know ourselves, to draw up an “inventory” of the known aspects of our own personality. In order to prepare the inventory is not enough a vague awareness of the psychic contents, we need an effective ‘awareness’, that is, an understanding of their dynamics, a critical analysis of them and moreover how they developed in time and environment. To achieve a real understanding of the psychic contents, often contradictory, it is necessary to assume and retain during the inventory an “spectator attitude”. Experiences, psychic activities, internal conflict, need to be observed objectively, *from outside*, as if they were external objects of investigation.

To acquire this attitude is necessary, inter alia, that

tolerance is a quality present in the self-survey.

The quality of tolerating, i.e. “accepting” in the strong sense of the term, implies the commitment to expel any feelings of rejection or denial. Tolerance, by *tollere*, that is carrying the weight, to manifest, requires a willingness to understand and respect ideas and behaviors. The lack of tolerance for some of our own non accepted psychic parties (that, nevertheless, generate ways of being and relationship) inevitably leads to deny or reject them, and, on the opposite side, to trivialize.

When the individual does not want to become aware of his internal non accepted dynamics, nature gives him the psychic mechanisms of defense, to grant him control over negative emotions. The defense mechanisms are helps for the anxiety emergencies that come in action when anxiety and anguish dilate for psychic not tolerated aspects.

The non-acceptance and intolerance for our own psychological dynamics are the basis of the neurosis. The sub-personalities, most of the times, follow roads of thought and behavior that are not in line with the image that the person wants to present to others and to himself. The subject is induced, by activating the psychic mechanisms of defense, to be analyzed and draw up an inventory lacking and only related to certain visual angles.

The first rule that it is required in drawing up the psychic inventory is the tolerance for the masks and actors, more or less adequate, who play on psychic stage or behind the scenes. Tolerance, proper to the analytical phase of ourselves, should not, however, be born from the conviction that there is no alternative to being so structured, so might as well tolerated. In many persons dominates the concept: “Nature made me in this way, I cannot change and, therefore, I tolerate me as I am”.

Tolerance must be associated with concepts of dialogue and constructive discussion with sub personalities or psychic dynamics to be changed. The attitude as tolerant spectator at this early stage of the therapeutic process is addressed to the definition of the *how do am I* and not *how I would like to be*. The sub-personality, received and heard, is a harbinger of potential. Tolerance, in this phase of observation and evaluation, contains also agreeing to think that the analyzed sub-personality, may be right. It is

always worthwhile to carefully listen of sub-personalities as, on the other hand, of others. Who decide to deal with his own inner world can not absolutely reject any kind of psychic individuality, even when it is the most evil, the most miserable or the most ridiculous because it is shaped by our existential journey.

Tolerance, sympathy and patience towards our own psychic world are the first requirement for an approach that encourages the evolutionary process. This attitude is not a sign of weakness but, on the contrary, the sign of character and strength. If in the mind passes a thought of mistrust, anger or distress to the internal characters, you must chase it so that it may fly away without a trace... and in its place arises a smile. A good inventory psychic inventory let slide on the screen of consciousness, with impartial observation, the sub-personalities that collide with each other or with consciousness. Tolerance is a condition for well observing and a good observation is the basis of knowledge. Who is intolerant can not formulate precise and objective picture of his own psychic situation: is not able to observe and it is short-sighted. Incidentally tolerance towards our own sub-personality is acquired by practicing tolerance for other people. If you fail in this task, it is likely that the psychological work of knowing yourself is a failure.

Tolerance is a sign of the sovereignty of consciousness; is the good face of sovereignty which, by its height, suggests to the sub-personality: “You are not unbearable, I leave a place in my house, but do not forget, you’re in my house... and you will have to evolve and modify “. In the subsequent phases of the “possessing yourself” and “transforming yourself” of the psychological work, in fact, is no longer valid the saying: “There is only one thing I cannot tolerate: intolerance.” Even tolerance has a limit! A tolerant conscience of psychic components and sub-personalities at odds with the principles and existential plans of Ego, makes an inept and vanishing guide. If consciousness is not prepared to defend its existential project against the attacks of the disturbing sub-personalities, will be destroyed by these ones, and with it, its tolerance. The tolerance becomes an obstacle in the operational phase of the “possessing and transforming yourself.” Conscience must tolerate sub-personalities in the phase of “knowing yourself”, if it

maintains such attitude in the conversion stage, tolerance becomes a grinding for change. If psychic parties infringe the principles of the Ego, it is right that he reacts asking for respect. Everything is based on reacting in a balanced way of course... and this is not always the case, indeed!

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Pier Maria Bonacina

## ROBERTO ASSAGIOLI: NOTES AND PERSONAL MEMORIES

10

(Translation by Kylie Drew)  
Florence 21 March 1999

Assagioli was at the same time “big and small”, he had the capacity to express things that were big and profound in a small language, in a simple sense that was accessible to everyone. In fact, truth is always something simple, not a mental complication. His greatness and his profoundness were in his simplicity.

He had the correct proportional sense. He was not a charismatic “guru”, but above all a “Man” with his limits and potentialities. He was fundamentally a “scientist”, who examined the facts of life with neutrality, and reasoned calmly over them, at their significance, their causes and effects, and above all he posed the problem of the use of those facts and experiences, and the responsibility they had on man.

His serenity always struck me, his capacity of “presence” and at the same time his “detachment”, his orientation towards the positive, his knowing how to draw out the best from each person, his capacity to see every single thing from above in a spiritual sense, even the most mundane. One could say he replied from above to questions that came from below. He replied with soul to questions without soul (and this is also the correct method to be a “therapist”).

He did not judge, but understood, he did not allow

himself to be provoked, but always replied with love and mildness, and at the same time with strength and intelligence to aggressiveness and criticisms, often using his sense of humour. In short, he always spoke with the best part of himself, directed to the best part of others.

He was simple and profoundly wise. His principal qualities were therefore wisdom, serenity, detachment together with participation, the capacity to see problems from above, and above all the “joyfulness”. Everything was minimized with joy, nothing was judged. There was comprehension and acceptance of human imperfections and weaknesses. Everything was always lifted or at least seen in its totality.

Assagioli once said to me “Psychosynthesis is completion”. That is, it signifies that everything has, can and must, find the right place. And this means not only for every element and psychological content in the psyche in general, but also for every single individual human being, also for every living entity (including inorganic matter that appears non-living) in the world and in the universe. Since everything is alive, everything is part of life, everything has a soul.

Another important characteristic of Assagioli was that of drawing from direct experience. He did not like giving conceptual definitions but always tried to use an example taken from his experience. For example, when I asked him “What is the Self?”, he replied “The Self isn’t a theoretical concept but an existential experience from which one draws a direct experience if we use techniques that are adequate for that experience. If one wants to really know what is the Self, one needs to go and find it in his own home”.

I remember to have asked him often for advice, for his willingness to act as my “father” always and forever. Assagioli, after having read my autobiography, told me that I had “the complex of freedom”. The simplicity of his reply struck me, and the solution to my problem. “You are free”. I realized by this affirmation that freedom is a deep natural condition of mankind. I understood that there doesn’t exist a problem of freedom, but the