

EDITORIAL

*Dear readers,
our review represents the mirror of the different ways of living the
Psychosynthetic praxis and my wish is that it will become a cultural
crossroad where a broadminded debate could spread over and over.
In this issue you will find an interesting interview to Roberto Assagioli
dating since the seventies and many articles which deserve a reflection
and an opening speech to new horizons.
I may suggest to read The letter to the Director, after the interview and
the open letter sent by the Group of the Psychosynthesis Trainers to the
Prime Minister and the National Council.
You will also find news about the 2014 Convention in Ancona,
informations on the Convention 2015 in Florence and the International
Conference 2016 in Taormina.
The archives of Memory starts from now with some articles by Sergio
Bartoli, a disciple of Assagioli, where you will find evergreen and
future oriented hints.
The survey Books in the window will give you the opportunity of
perceiving how the creativity, the research, the praxis and the will of
knowledge are enthusiastically followed by the members.
New surveys can be found such as The spiritual paths. They can
push us not only to read, watch, listen, pay attention, but also to act
bio-psychosynthesis towards our purpose, so that other goals will be
opened.
Don't miss the encounter proposals at Assagioli's Home: they allow
to live deeply inside moments of our inner research in order to find
oulines for main answers or new interpretative maps.
As you surely can perceive, this review lives the heart throbs of us all.
Have a joyful reading.*

(translation by Silvia Trolli)

Patrizia Bonacina

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TALKS ON THE SELF

a conversation with Roberto Assagioli - 1970

A= Assagioli

I= Interviewer

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A. The central subject is the self. This is an apt beginning of an initial identification, or affirmation of identity, with the self. It may seem strange that this central fact of our existence and our experience, the most immediate, intimate awareness we have is generally ignored or even denied. I could say, spiritually it is a scandal, but psychologically it is quite understandable, owing to the extroverted direction of Western Civilization, the final results we can observe all around us. And therefore, it is time and perhaps, in a sense, the greatest service we can render to proclaim and celebrate the Self. Of course, in the East, not the masses of course, but the enlightened minority has always realized that and the Bhagavad Gita shows clearly and scientifically the distinction between the knower, the knowledge and the field of knowledge. It seems obvious, let us say spiritual common sense, that there could not be knowledge or a field of knowledge without the knower who knows it. And yet in the West one speaks of knowledge without any awareness of a knower, in ourselves or in others.

I put this thing rather bluntly in order to show the situation and encourage change, and the great task and service we all have in this respect. And as usual, as with peace in the world let us begin with ourselves. The first thing is that each of us and as a group we realize vividly the reality of the Self. Because we are all mentally convinced of that or we would not be here!

But that is just a beginning. One might say it is like seeing the top of a mountain bathed in sun from the valley. And at least we know that there is a mountain, that there is a top, that there is a sun above it. But from the beginning, it is a challenge. So I cordially invite you to the adventure of climbing the mountain. Now it is clear, I repeat, all these things are known intellectually by you. But we have to help each other to realize them. And this realization is revolutionary, transforming, transfiguring. Even a clear mental notion of the task is helpful.

Let us realize first that the realization of the Self occurs up to different levels or octaves. First, at the personality level. We must realize that the appearance of the self does not begin at the top – it begins on the plain. It is a purely psychological experience. But it puts the firm foundation for all the rest. Giving the analogy, we will have to clear the field of consciousness, our personal consciousness, of all its contents, both so-called bad and so-called good. And sometimes the good contents may be more difficult to eliminate!

Of course, if at first we can do it for five minutes, it is plenty! I would begin with only a few minutes, not to get discouraged, then arrive to possibly more. It is more important to do it for shorter periods than to do it with effort. So do it repeatedly and even imperfectly; get into the habit of shifting the self-awareness to the centre. This is not a peak experience. So many at present crave for wonderful peak experiences, even with doubtful means, and they neglect the first step or level. Here there is another basic misunderstanding to eliminate. Here I might say the fault or rather the cause is not the blindness of our materialistic civilization but the language used, both in the East and the West. “Destroy the self, destroy the ego, get rid of the ego, it’s all illusion” and all that. That of course provokes a violent reaction from the personality. It is the mistake between the contents of the personality, between the identification with the contents, and the point of Self-awareness.

If we eliminate the content, we remain. The self remains. Pure self awareness, not ecstatic, but it has in itself a sense of assurance, of inner certainty, security, permanence, which is already much. But it is a quiet subtle thing. Therefore, all the assertions “there is no ego” have to be qualified ... What do you mean by ego? If you mean your whole personality, of course, most of which has to go. But if you mean the self, no, the point of self-awareness remains stable, immutable, permanent.

This simple clarification which I see from your faces you agree with, helps to get rid of a quantity of mistakes, of misunderstanding, of false attitudes and attempts. So I think our first task is this, to clarify what I said. I invite you to do it on all occasions and all the time, beginning by yourselves.

This, if you like, can become the essence of personal psychosynthesis, because there cannot be a synthesis of elements without a synthesizing centre. So I think that would be almost enough for today, to have this very clear; but I go a step further. Why does the self at the personality level have this quality? Because it is the reflection of the Higher Self, of the transpersonal Self, and it reflects, however palely, the same qualities of its Source. If you look at the reflection of the sun on a mirror, or on water, you see the light and quality of the sun, infinitesimal, but still the quality of the sun. So that explains why even at the personality's level the self is stable, sure, and indestructible.

Here we enter into the field of what is called spiritual psychosynthesis. But as you know lately the term transpersonal has been used, especially by Maslow, and I, and others, have adopted it because it is very apt. It is neutral. It can be accepted by anybody. It first means beyond the ordinary level, whatever it may be. The word spiritual has various meanings, and some rather doubtful, and of course it arouses opposition of all who are purely mental and intellectual. So it is much better to use "transpersonal." William James said with humour that "souls are out of fashion."

I. Some people do not like the idea of saying I have a body, but I am not the body – or other contents of consciousness. They feel this is a rejection.

A. That is one of the many misunderstandings, which are consequences of the central misunderstanding. No rejection at all, but put things in their place. We need bodies here, and we ought to take care of them and appreciate them. It is not only mystics or religious people who have not the right concept, but also intellectuals, who neglect their body, have no sense of their body, who do not experience, are not even aware of it. So we have to fully appreciate the body, without making any mistake to say I am it. What's the difference. I can appreciate an apple, but I am not the apple! We can appreciate many things without being them. So we appreciate our body, make good use of it, and asking forgiveness for the sins we commit against it, without saying "I am that." It seems obvious. There is an explanation for that mistake. At present to many people it is the body that has them. They are slaves of their body.

So as a first reaction, perhaps a separative stage is needed psychologically. We may have to go to the other extreme for a little while in order to reach it. And that is true for every kind of possession. We must realize that we are all the time possessed, even obsessed, by all the conditioning of our background and current life. And also what is called our material possessions, we do not possess them, they possess us. Those who are attached by money are possessed by money; they do not possess money. And so, for all the rest of the contents of our personality, not being possessed, but possessing is the right way without attachment. But to be appreciated and used; also with money. The depreciation of money, the attack against money, is only a phase for detachment. Money is divine substance crystallized, is energy in a convenient form for handling. It all depends upon our inner attitude.

I. I am so grateful for being here. The Self, the transpersonal, is a great step. It may take years, even a lifetime.

A. Oh yes, there is no end of the realization – from the personal to the transpersonal, from the transpersonal to the group Self, from there to the Universal Self. So you can have a good time!

I. Yesterday, someone mentioned that often therapists are inclined to become perhaps overly involved and preoccupied with only the theoretical aspects of psychosynthesis, and subsequently with too little emphasis on the practical application of the psychosynthetic principles. Will you please explain some of the psycho-dynamic elements and/or causes which underlie this propensity.

A. It is very true what you said, but that one could call the illusion or delusion of intellectualism. Again, intelligence is a wonderful thing, but the intellect should not possess us! We should try to be as intelligent as we can (and we can be more intelligent and use our intelligence), but not be possessed by it. And especially realize that any intellectual formulation or theory is merely a description, not a real thing.

I. What Self were you speaking of – self with a small "s" or with a capital "S"?

A. I spoke of the self in general, without specifying because of the principle of a centre of awareness, a living centre of awareness at all levels, including both the

personal self and the spiritual self. Because essentially they are not separate, as I said the analogy of the reflection of the Source of Light. We have to insist on the central fact that we are subjects, living subjects. Each human being is a living subject. So simple and so hard to realize. Always go back to that awareness – realization. Another way of putting it, and this answers the question about doctrines and so on. You see in psychology and philosophy, and generally, we speak of Will, Love, Mind, thought, &c, but there “ain’t” such a thing. There are only subjects who are willers, living beings who are lovers. The rest is only pure intellectual abstractions, useful for didactic purposes, but they don’t exist very long. We have lovers but there doesn’t exist an entity love, an entity will. And I try to make clear in my book on the Will it’s not a book about the Will. The title is *The Act of Will*, and an act presupposes an act-or; an actor who performs acts of will. That is basic, always remember that. It saves lots of discussion and byways and further confusion. It is an existential attitude – the fact of entities, living beings, and that at all levels. So we first realize it as the personality level, which is good enough for the time being, but then we try to go back to the source of the reflection. So I go slowly to drive home three essential points. Then we can fly more. (Laughter)

How about the Transpersonal Self. These are confused points and concepts. One speaks of (from the higher experiences) illumination, intuition, and all the other so-called cosmic consciousness, &c., as being the same. They are not. The basic difference is that all of these are processes, living processes. They belong to the world of becoming and even at the transpersonal there is this wonderful process of becoming, of growth, of all the phases of super-consciousness. But the Self in contradistinction is stable, firm, permanent – to use the philosophical word “ontological”. It is Pure Being. Pure Being is not becoming and becoming is not Pure Being. It needs the intuition to grasp this, or even the illuminated mind, but they are both together anyhow. Also, on the higher, and let us say the rational mind can see this difference, and many philosophers have pointed out the difference between being and becoming, process and entity.

Well, that has been the wonderful intuition of Maslow

with the title of his book *Towards a Psychology of Being*. Therefore he has seen that when the end of our psychological search is reached where we shall “be”, but present psychology can only go towards it, as we can go only towards it. That gives me an occasion to advise you warmly to thoroughly study Maslow. His basic books, and *Towards a Psychology of Being*, and the new one *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*.

Maslow has been a great pioneer opening the way, but he has not had the possibility of developing all that. He is beginning – he doesn’t give the map and he doesn’t pretend to give it all. He is a pathfinder. He shows paths and he has got rather far on some of them but not to the end, and there are other paths. So he’s upon and shows paths and signposts. The whole exploration practically has to be done in a systematic and scientific way. There are plenty of testimonials of experience, but not a general, consistent map of the inner space. So that’s for all of us to go on and do it. Let us feel the wonder of being pioneers along with others, with a growing minority of others. So not only is the map not the territory, but at present there is not a map. In a sense this is very good for only a primitive map could create limitations. In a sense we should be glad there is not a map so it is our opportunity to trace it. Remember always it is a map. Therefore please study thoroughly Maslow. A special chapter in his last book, which was first published in the *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* is “The 32 Meanings of Transcendence.” That is a perfect example of the dozens and dozens of meanings of the same word and he courageously tackled this word transcendence which, of course, is not a matter for psychology yet. So if you study Maslow I can refer to that in the present and the future, but it can be our good companion and guide up to a certain point in our explorations of the inner world. He, too, doesn’t always make clear the distinction between being and peak experiences. It would be too much to ask him to give us the complete, perfect picture. He has given us so much, but while you read be aware, that often he doesn’t make it very clear.

Now you see how much the Self implies. The confusion, the natural inevitable confusion at first between transpersonal experiences, peak experiences, and the Self is very well illustrated by astronomy. We say currently

that we see the sun. But we don't see the sun! We see the light emanated by the sun. It's something completely different. We don't see the sun. We don't know what the sun is behind the shining curtain of radiation, and the astronomers have lately realized that, and somebody gives – I don't remember who right now, but it's not important. If we look across the lake to the lights and lamps on the other shore, we naturally say we see the lamps. But we see nothing of the kind – the lamps are invisible – we see the light emanated by those bulbs, but we don't see the bulbs. So also at this level we never directly see the core, the source there, immovable, just radiating and shining. What you can see are the radiations that come from that. So all becoming is a radiation from Being.

I. Is the clearing of the contents of the personality of both “good” and “bad” done by dis-identification?

A. Of course, that is the deeper meaning of dis-identification. All of what I have said this morning is a kind of comment and explanation of the basic fact of dis-identification, and I repeat what I hinted – sometimes it is harder work to disidentify from the so-called good points than from the so-called bad points, and on a higher level, from the so-called peak experiences.

I. How can we celebrate the Self?

A. Also here is a paradox. Essentially we cannot celebrate the Self except being the Self, but on the level of relativity, the personal self, the self, the reflection at the personality level, we can well celebrate the Higher Self. So the personal self can celebrate the Higher Self. But when it is united with it there is no more celebration, but as a means to approach it, to rise towards it, celebration is very useful to proclaim and celebrate the Self. In the same sense one can worship, in the good sense, the sun without knowing it directly, but only through the radiation. You see, these are all different ways to see the same thing. Perhaps one could write about the 48 ways of seeing the sun.

I. You said there can't be a synthesis of elements without a synthesizing centre. This seems to be so central to our them and to psychosynthesis. Could you please develop this a little more?

A. Well of course there cannot be anything without a nucleus, a core. There cannot be an atom without a core. There cannot be any living organism without a central

life with keeping the life organized for the purpose of permanence and growth. So you have to say there is always inevitably a core, and what I have done is only to apply specifically to psychosynthesis of the human being, both at the personal and the transpersonal. There could not be any order, any harmony, and real life of a personality without a synthesizing centre.

But the personality is not yet synthesized. It is a constant, dramatic interplay between subsidiary centres of sub-personalities, or drives, or all kinds of contents of the personality, and the synthesizing centre which has such a hard time. But it is there, and however partial and unsatisfactory to a certain point in the so-called normal individual, it is a co-ordinating, bringing together element. Therefore psychosynthesis, first, second and third, is the working from the centre. That centre you see is synthesizing not in itself. I repeat it is a static, pure being but it acts. This is a paradox, also another central point to realize and then enough for today. The Self radiates. Aristotle called it in that fine paradox the “Immovable mover.” It is immovable but sets in motion everything else. I suggest that you meditate upon the immovable mover, and our centre the sun, that unknown mysterious entity sends enormous radiation throughout our whole solar system and beyond. Also, a jewel is static, but sparkles.

The jewel receives light and then reflects it and sends it back again, or even a simple mirror reflects most of the light it receives, so it is not so difficult to realize this paradox of the immovable mover. These are points to ponder on first, and then to realize gradually for days, weeks, months, years, and decades.

I suggest that for a few days we go on with a simple affirmation and realization of the Self. We can do it a little longer today – how many minutes can you stand? five - seven - eight not more! We'll use this egg timer with a bell. It is made to cook eggs, but we sublimate it and use it to set the time for meditation. This is an amusing example of how we can utilize all machinery for spiritual ends. Machines are indifferent. These cassette recorders lend themselves to spiritual messages and to spying. It's all the same to a machine. Let us realize that. So there is no sense in barking against machines, but there are those who make foolish use of the machine. All, let us

say acquisition of a machine, is a test to a false address. It should be to the sender.

So let us meditate. With dis-identification. Let us relax the body, asking it gently to keep quiet for 8 minutes. The same to the emotions, calm but no activity. Now the troublesome mind. More difficulty because we have been using it until 2 minutes ago and it resents being ordered to go ahead full steam and then immediately to keep quiet. It has to be tamed, so let us ask our mind, “you’ll work all right later but for now keep quiet for 5 minutes.” That is the way we need to talk to our various parts – in a kindly way but firm. Now we have made some room, some space in consciousness, let us affirm and proclaim: I am I, a centre of pure self consciousness and of will. “We are that Self. That Self are we.” Let us try to realize it in a triumphant mood. That’s a supreme truth and it shall prevail.

Do not fight the intruding elements coming from body, emotions, and mind, do not fight them actively but keep them on the periphery of consciousness so to speak. Bring back the awareness, the attention, to the radiant core, to the centre of pure Self-awareness.

Don’t be discouraged because you didn’t succeed. This is a training towards. Let us not have any illusion that we succeed. If not, it will go away, finish. So just the beginning of training towards. Of course, we cannot keep quiet all our elements but we have to begin, so no discouragement at all. Just experience and elementary training is all that can be done at present realistically. Don’t ask too much of the personality.

I. You said will is no entity, nor is love. Can one not just meditate on the Will as an entity or a great life?

A. But, of course, there is an entity of love and an entity of will. What I meant is there is not an abstract concept of love, not a theoretical concept or philosophical concept of will, or love, or so; but they are great cosmic entities, archetypes. All are entities. Finally that great affirmation Space is an entity. So, of course. But entities in the sense that they are living, subjective, conscious beings. But when philosophers or psychologists discuss on love, they do not think of love as an entity – they think of a concept of love – a theoretical description of love. That is the distinction I wanted to make clear. There is no philosophical or psychological concept – pure mental

concept – just because they are living entities.

Have a good time with your Selves.

I. In your discussion of the confusion between transcendental experiences, peak experiences, and the Self, you gave us illustrations of the light from the sun and the lights emanating from the bulbs across the lake. In these illustrations we see only two of the above aspects. Would you clarify these points for us, please?

A. I don’t quite see, but I’ll sum up the matter. I mean, we never see the core, the centre, only emanations from it. We don’t know even what the core of the Self is, but the radiation. So the same, we never see the bulb or the spiral in the bulb across the lake. We only see the light. I think there’s nothing more to say than that. The basic differences between the core and the radiation from the core are the essence of the Self – being – and its rays and radiations. All our transpersonal experiences are experiences of radiations, qualities, energies of the Self but not of the Self itself. Is that clear?

I. What is the peak experience and where does it fit into the analogy?

A. Peak experience is only a general term used by Maslow to indicate any kind of transpersonal experience, mystical, aesthetic, &c. Anything of peak means height, an experience above the normal level of consciousness (or personal consciousness). Not something specific, just a general name for any kind of experience above the ordinary level.

But essentially it is this. I could say one thinks, paradoxically, that the self cannot know itself, because knowledge is a dualistic attitude: the Knower and something known. But the Self IS!

It needs not to know itself in a human way. It is being – pure being – essence – that, I think, makes it more and more clear.

Now I should like to add something about the celebration of the Self. Somebody asked me to speak of the celebration of the Self. I gave already the general answer concerning each of us. To celebrate the Self is to become more and more aware that we are the Self. But then there are more specific ways of celebration, especially for others. And I give you a formula, then I’ll comment on it.

“To proclaim and celebrate the Self in thought, and word, and deed, in life and death.”

This requires comment, especially the last sentence.

“In thought” is just what we are doing. To realize also mentally as much as possible, as little as possible, something of the essence of what the self is. And in meditation: a vital meditation on the self is to proclaim and celebrate it in thought.

“In word” is just what I’m doing and what you will do; and what you are invited to do when you go back, on every possible occasion. Both spoken and written work so to speak, may I suggest, are champions of the Self. Because a more difficult thing to do is to proclaim it in deed. You can start by the constant use of the “as if” technique. Let us try to be as much as possible “as if” we were identified with the Self. And after the visual preparation, imagine ourselves identified with the Self how we would behave in different situations. So very simple to understand, not so simple to do it...

Now “in life and death.” From the transpersonal standpoint life is beyond the body.

The transpersonal that is not identified with the body. For life is a joyous proclamation of the true life of the Self. So when we say “in life and death”, we are to think life and death. So you can use this in all of your work on the Self and with the Self, and with others.

I. Could you speak of sub-personalities?

A. I think it is good to speak about the sub-personalities because it is an essential technique and not all have a clear idea about them. Sub-personalities can be considered in two ways: In a general way one might say that as the sun reflects itself in countless mirrors, so the Self can reflect itself, not only in the one central personal ego but also in others. It is difficult to realize but each sub-personality that is developed enough to have a will, to be consistent, to think, and to feel, is a miniature personality, and has the same qualities of the general personality. A sub-personality is a small personality on its own that would live in rather deep water, There is the principle of personification, but I will not go into that because it is more theoretical, and I abhor theory. But after all it is not a theory, it is a process of personification. Every psychological element, especially every group of psychological elements, e.g. those that in psychology are called “complexes”, tend to personify themselves.

Up to this point it is not a theory. We can observe that.

Let us take the simplest example, the roles. A woman often identifies herself with her motherly function to the point that she feels and acts chiefly as a mother. So that is a sub-personality on its own – which may be conflict with the feminine traits. One of the subjects of practical importance – I don’t go into that now – is the conflict between the wife role and the mother role. We may take this up another day, but it shows that each sub-personality has a kind of ego.

Now, I’ll just mention a theoretical question. One could conceive a sub-personality as a direct reflection of the Self, as I said, of the Higher Self, or as a second reflection of the ego. The first perhaps is more correct to say metaphysically, but the second is more useful for practical purposes in education and in therapy because that helps to re-absorb each sub-personality into the integrating personality. So for purposes of psychosynthesis, self-actualization, education, and therapy it is better to adopt this, which is true as far as it goes. It happens! One can reabsorb and let us say, put down a role, a sub-personality, through each function of the role. It is very different if one says, “I am the mother”, or instead one says “I play now the role of the mother as well as I can”. That makes a difference. Then the mother is now no more independent, self-asserting, &c. But it is a subsidiary role of the whole personality. That makes all the difference, practically. It can also be expressed in terms of dis-identification.

Dis-identification means putting at the right place every element and role and sub-personality.

So it is not abolishing, not criticizing, nothing of the kind. It is giving to each its proper position and function, under the guidance of the personal self first, and eventually the Higher Self – or the two combined. So the different approaches complete each other at various sides.

But this is one of the most practical approaches, if we only remember it. It is easy to understand – and easier to forget!

Now, awareness. I speak much of awareness. Awareness is just this – to be aware all the time is not “pure awareness” or something transcendent. There is that of course. But the first awareness is to be aware of the interplay of the factors in the personality. I present these points on purpose in a non-systematic way, just answering

the needs of the moment, because it is more direct, more vital. Then it is up to you to put order in this madness. So it gives you something to do. It is better, also, in your work to never give things ready-made on a plate.

Just give them the ingredients and say “you cook them”. And most like that – needs cooperation and their own work, and all that. And those who won’t take the trouble, they simply aren’t ripe. Let them go and play and swear. So you see how your comments tickle me and give an occasion to say some things.

I. Does this process, though, mean that the personality’s becoming (becoming what?

– integrated, synthesized, actualized?) is a radiation of the Self’s being?

A. That shows how very difficult it is to become aware of these things. They appear simple, but it is difficult; I quite appreciate it. If you find it too easy I would be doubtful. Of course the personality is becoming – becoming what? integrated, yes; synthesized, yes; actualized, yes; is a radiation of the Self’s being, yes!

The integrating factor in the personality is the personal self, the reflection of the Higher Self, or Transpersonal Self. Without that integrating, synthesizing factor there could be no real personality, no integration. This has been expressed well as it, in a sense, is an aspect of the Universal Law of syntropy. Physicists, up to recent times, spoke as if there was entropy only, that is the degradation of energy until everything was dead. A very tragic picture, fortunately completely false. Now they have discovered, with the new research, and both in sub-atomic physics and in astronomy, that there is indeed a process of syntropy, of increasing the potential, the tension. It is what Teilhard de Chardin calls the Omega Point. So it has been demonstrated as a reality.

In a sense, only in a sense, it could be considered as an aspect of the law of gravity, of attracting towards the centre, but in motion, and becoming, especially in rapid motion, there is the other tendency of dissipation, of spreading; so the life both cosmic and individual is a fine balance, or should be a fine balance between the tendency to concentration and to diffusion. If there was only concentration death would ensure. If there was only diffusion, also. To repeat, we can always observe in empirical terms, that there are two trends. The trend

to concentration and the trend to dispersion. Partially it corresponds to introversion and extroversion. And as in personality integration and psychosynthesis the aim is ambiversion, that is being able to alternate extroversion and introversion from a higher point of awareness.

It is the self, even at the personality level, which through the regulating function of the will, the directive regulative function of the Will, can balance the alternation of extroversion and introversion, according to needs, opportunities and tasks. This is the personal, simple, let us say manifestation of the cosmic love, of the balancing between gravitation and expansion. Is that clear?

I. Could you say something of the ambivert? Is there a personality type indicating integration and ambiversion?

A. I’m going to give you the appendix from my book on the Will, on differential psychology. There I made it clear that, in a sense, there are no fixed types. Introvert, extrovert, &c., are not labels. They simply mean a direction of the life interest; that is a process, not something static. Therefore, we should not label either ourselves nor anybody as extrovert or introvert, and we do that all the time and it is a limiting label. Fortunately there is no 100% introvert or he would perhaps be a severe psychotic, nor a 100% extrovert. Although many modern men, business men, &c., get dangerously near to being 100% extroverts, but happily they cannot reach it and then some crisis comes in beneficially to pull them back. Therefore, introversion, extroversion, and ambiversion are just temporary conditions, or I might say percentages of the flow of energy.

Also, biologically, while we are asleep, we are biologically introverted but many activities go on and when we are very active physically, emotionally, in gymnastics or sports, we are physically extroverted. So at all levels it is a momentary direction of the greatest percentage of vital, psychological, and spiritual energy. So no labels, but just an existential condition which changes anyhow, and which we can take in hand and direct. Of course, at best, someone who has an integrated personality has the power to be ambivert at will. They can be one of the two at will.

I. Are the terms individual self and group self just terms, since all is one? Do we have to experience individual then group on the way to be One?

A. Now that gives me an opportunity to take up another essential point of psychosynthesis, that of the various levels of reality. There are various levels of reality, or if you like a modern term – energy fields. Each has its own qualities and laws. For instance, certain chemical laws at the atomic level are no more valid at the subatomic level but they are not abolished, not superseded; only at the other level other laws work. Here comes a jump, leaving aside intermediate steps which you can find out – “All is One” is a deep metaphysical truth at that level, but unfortunately many bring down that wonderful reality at human levels, or other levels in manifestation where it simply does not operate, and many of the so-called metaphysical movements, and also some Oriental approaches don’t take into consideration the basic difference. All is One in essence, in Being; but in becoming, in manifestation, in that process of life, there are countless many. I don’t enter into that problem. “All life is One” has chosen to reflect itself in countless ways. If He did it we may surmise He had very good reasons, but it is His business not ours. What we can say is that the great process of involution culminated in the mineral, as far as we know, and then started the contrary movement or process of evolution. We perhaps optimistically can say that we are at the middle point. We have passed through the mineral, vegetable, animal and partially human. So we have to proceed in this evolutionary work towards the “One”, but it is still far off. And here comes the confusion between the two selves which creates so much mischief. When we say “I am that Self” – quite true, I am the One, but we are not that in daily life at all; that would be paranoia.

As I have written, some paranoias just take that literally, and when they have a glimpse they think they are God. So you see all this fits with the levels of reality. Now you can work it out nicely with your active mind. Write something on it. And also today I think I gave enough.

The egg starts cooking. We can jokingly say it is a question of the condensation of the yoke or the core.

But also with Self we can use each day for a moment, first a rapid recollection of the personal self, quieting as much as possible in a short time, relaxing the body, quieting the emotions, asking the mind to be so good as to keep still. And then in the measure we succeed in doing that,

the elastic pull, the thread between the personal self and the transpersonal Self can be considered as being elastic, and a good elastic. And when all the things which tie the personal self to the ordinary level are eliminated in a measure, the pull continuously operates and the personal self is drawn joyously upward toward the Self.

In the silence let us try, as much as possible, to go close to the Self, without strain or anxiety, but calmly, joyously and easily, helped by central affirmation: We are that Self, That Self are we. Try to realize it in the silence.

I. You have spoken so much of the Self. I have been pondering these last few days on the distinction between the Self and the mind. I am a little confused. If you can bear with me for a moment, I would just like to ask this. Is the mind, The Self at a peculiar level of evolutionary development, or is the mind but the vehicle of the centre of pure self-awareness of the Self being lifted onto the mental plane, the plane of mind, manus? The mind is a creative organ it seems to me. Therefore, it is not simply a vehicle until the point of self-awareness has been raised onto a higher level so that it can impress the mind from a super-conscious or abstract level with its will and purpose. Therefore, through deductive reasoning, the mind, in my estimation, is a creative, active, energizing organ with a conscious I. The point of self-awareness has been shifted consciously by the will into a higher psychological, or spiritual centre. In other words, when is the mind a vehicle for the Self, and when is it the Self itself manifesting through its qualities and field of energy?

A. This I answer in purely psychological language, because it can be done. Well, the mind, to put it in an extreme way, has nothing to do with the Self. Animals have some mentality. Sometimes they are cunning and intelligent. This apart from the fact that there is an intelligent mind in our life, and so on, but that has nothing to do with the Self. The mind can function at different levels, independently of the Self. The mind is really an instrument in the higher sense. We can psychologically distinguish the concrete mind and the higher mind which is reason, “nous” in Greek. But psychologically one can say there is the analytical mind, concrete mind, scientific mind, and on another level there is the abstract and more philosophical mind, which deals with the universal, let

us say Kant, Plato, &c., but that has nothing to do with the Self. There are very intelligent philosophers who deny or ignore the Self. You say the mind is creative. In a sense an instrument can be a creative organ. It is creative in its own way. The processes of the mind, induction and deduction, are creative.

Moreover, the mind is often associated with imagination and with feeling, sometimes with intuition, so their combination is distinctly creative, but has nothing to do with the Self. Is this clear? The Self is a completely different dimension. The Self is a completely different dimension. There is a mathematical term – “incommensurable”. The Self is incommensurable to any other dimensions of the Psyche.

I think I made it clear. It is good to clear this point because for everybody present and for all those you will teach and treat. It is part of everything. I put everything in its own place.

That doesn't mean complete separation, but clear distinction of functions. See?

I. When a person who feels he is out of the body without intention or control through some form of meditation, how can we help him to be grounded?

A. Well the immediate help may be to shake him up, throw cold water on his face, but the cure is as often purely chiefly preventative toward people not to let go of conscious awareness, of the “I” awareness all the time. It is not necessary at all; one can have the highest state of consciousness, keeping alert, never any reason to give up the precious gift, hardly developed through inclinations of self-awareness.

There is a very fine phrase, you know, Sanskrit, which brings this clearly: Sat chit ananda. Sat is truth; the ultimate reality. The universal, the transcendent. Chit is mental awareness of it. And the result is ananda, bliss. You cannot have bliss if you are not aware of it.

So remember and use it for yourselves, Sat, Chit, Ananda. Blissful awareness of reality. But awareness; self-conscious awareness. That disposes of all those fears of losing oneself in the whole and the drop in the sea and all that. These are quite misleading expressions. In my forthcoming book I deal much more with this, of the fusion of individual and universal consciousness.

I. In the diagram of the human being the Higher Self

is not the super-ego (construct) and it is also not any “phenomenological” concept of the Self. Instead it is pure being, essence, not an intellectual construction. This is correct? Can the fact of the transpersonal Self be “proven” scientifically? I mean as an entity, not in the Jungian sense. Is it by presenting exercises through which individuals can subjectively realize the Self, and then let their testimonials speak, or do you expect also a more “objective” proof to become possible?

A. Well, this is absolutely quite correct. The higher Self is pure being and essence, not an intellectual construction. We'll have to stick to that. You ask how it can be proven scientifically. It all depends what you consider science. By ordinary science it cannot be proven because there is no proof on that conceptual level. But if you take the scientific attitude and method in the way I have put it, then yes. It is proven by its direct experience; it is one of those primary experiences which are the evidences of themselves. Just as colour, a sense of beauty, or other, they need no explanation. They are primary experiences and therefore have full scientific value, in the broader sense. The point is that one has to create the conditions needed for having the experience and scientists up to now have not taken the trouble to do that. It should be the ABC of the scientific method. You see, the pattern is, let us take a hypothesis and then let us see if the facts corroborate or not. If we have only sense enough to make the hypothesis that the self exists then the next step would be to make the relevant experiments to see if it is there or not. Only, those experiments cannot be made in the laboratory with quantitative methods. In a sense they are difficult, e.g. the exercise of Disidentification, and making room for the experience of Self-identification. The exercise exists and is a definite one; only we should take the trouble to do it. Here it is a strange blindness; well, not strange, it can be explained, but there is no use. The only answer is that there are hundreds of thousands of people of every kind and continent who have had this experience and have proclaimed it and given testimonial of that, of course, in an indirect way, because it in itself is ineffable. So it is worth hard trying if it is true. Nothing else to say. Either you experiment or lay the subject aside. There cannot be any objective proof because it would be a contradiction in terms. Therefore it would be useless to

make an attempt to appease them. It wouldn't work.

I. So the Self is radiant, the immovable mover. How can the Self be immovable if in meditation we say we raise the centre of consciousness to its highest level? I say self (small s here). Did Aristotle speak of the Self (capital) here? Dr. Assagioli says they are all one. I can see that in my mind, but find another part differentiating them. Self or Higher Self both seem to move in the physical sense. The one up and the other down and up. I like the idea of an elastic string, connecting them. How then is the Self immovable? It's a paradox. Or is there a different meaning of immovable? Immovable meaning perhaps undeviating centrality?

Undeviating in motivating movement in other bodies (those of the personality)? Undeviating in radiance? Undeviating in purpose? But not, seemingly not, movable in the physical sense.

The Self radiates all the time. It's a constant source of radiation and energy. It is not always though through the personality. Sometimes the personality seems more important than the inner radiation. So the Self is not seen or is not apparent. On the other hand, though, the Self can be seen reflected in the unfolding personality. What a paradox and a muddle!

A. That is good. You have courageously faced the most difficult problem concerning the Self and reality in general. Courageously! And you have brought out vividly all the apparent contradictions and paradoxes; and it's good to realize that before going to solutions.

Sometimes we have the illusion that we understand this mystery. It is good that you realize you are confused and baffled. It is a very necessary and useful stage, and I think others may be too. Well, it is a problem that has intrigued for ages human beings, also in the East. Just this morning I happened to go through three Upanishads in which this problem is taken up. So you see that it has degrees of nobility. Thank you for bringing up our questions.

THE HORIZON

(Translation by Achille Cattaneo)

There is now a widespread recognition of psychology in explaining the way of thinking and being in function of interpersonal patterns lived during childhood. In the evolutionary perspective it is possible to understand the manifestations of behavior and thoughts that guide the subject in the "today" through the evaluation of his development processes and how these have given rise to specific cognitive, psychic and operative organizations. In this perspective, the human being is considered as a complex cognitive system that evolves over time retaining his own defined internal consistency, a sense of Self and a corresponding perception of reality which have their origin in the quality of primary relationships with parental and social figures. His psychic structures have arisen in early childhood, guide the processing of information, the expectations about himself, about others. Relational experienced connections are considered symbols accepted by the child that - as symbols - activate the corresponding psychic modalities. We have now at our disposal an in-depth description of the routes viable development of the child as a function of affective symbols in which he was immersed.

The idea of deep structures appointed to organize, anticipate and represent the existential experience was started by what Freud wrote: "Every man acquired, for the joint action of its congenital disposition and the influences exerted on him during the childhood years, a certain disposition that characterizes the way to lead his life, namely the conditions that he puts in love, the pulsions that satisfy him and the goals he aims. The result is as it were a cliché that in the course of existence is constantly repeated, reprinted in so far as it allows the external circumstances and the nature of love objects accessible... "Hence the importance of the deepening of our own child's life, implemented through the story or the writing of autobiography and its critical analysis. This, if carefully evaluated, allows to grasp his concepts and value dimensions hitherto unknown or minimized. In the process of investigation and analysis of the child's

world, besides the basic importance of the parental figures, in the autobiography it is also necessary to pay attention to another component: the physical space surrounding the early periods of life. To understand the psychic organization it is necessary to force - from memories of childhood - to emerge also the physical horizon that surrounded the baby. The horizon, as space container of existential childhood events, is never a neutral container but affects directing the processes of individual psychic functions. A horizon of bare walls, of gray and monotonous apartment buildings, of green forests, countryside, sea, mountain ranges has symbolic and energetic properties that selectively shape the psyche and lead it towards specific ways of thinking, ways that will be interpretative assumptions of the future human being in the world. They will guide the deep and intimate interests of the subject, though, due to existential needs, he will change his living environment and horizons.

Therefore, the spatial horizon is a symbol with which the child comes into contact and like each symbol works on his psychological life. The symbols operate, although not realized. The psychic laws of the will, according to the psychosynthetic model, explicit it. The symbol of a horizon, introduced in the psyche with the repetitive daily conscious or unconscious visualization, is conditioning. The reiteration in observing, consolidates the symbol awakening feelings, ideas or behaviors related even in the early periods of life. Offering to a child a suitable horizon which whom reporting has a similar meaning relating to offering him the symbol enclosed, for example, in the caress. The proper qualities of the symbol are absorbed, are imprinted and stimulate aspects of the future personality.

The meaning of the horizon lived primarily is therefore to be found and clarified by the personal analysis as it operates in the present. The horizon can be a positive symbol that leads us towards the future or, conversely, a greyness that attracts into involution. Green expanses or tarry asphalt, colorful settings or anonymous walls, open spaces or anonymous blocks are not symbols without an existential meaning. The horizon as words,

objects, music has its own specific energy charge that requires careful consideration when it is presented to the child. Each symbol, physical, verbal, emotional, visual, spatial, without exception, has its own specific quality that produces vibrations similar in those who receive it.

The careful research of 'food' not harmful covers the body and, more importantly, the psyche. Contact with underestimated symbols in their energetic valence, triggers, often, undesirable intra-psychic processes. These psychic dynamics are established, even if the subject is not aware of, indeed even more.

The horizon line with its qualities models thoughts and feelings of the adult. The qualities of gray or blue, infinite or limited, green or opaque, noise or silence, light or the dark absorbed by the horizon in early age give color to the mental reflections of the adult. The analysis process of our existence requires, therefore, that a space is reserved for the research of the ancient childish horizon evaluating which processes have led in the path of evolution. Important and significant components of the personality will find their origin here.

The existential journey draws liberally from the relational and affective episodes that paved the way in the early years of life, but its way is inserted into the horizon on which they occurred.

If we track down the symbol of the childish horizon and understand the dynamic activities that led into the personality, we must not be satisfied and, like Leopardi, must go beyond ... looking for the symbol of Infinity.

*Always dear to me was this solitary hill
and this hedge, which, for its part,
excludes most of the far horizon.
But sitting and gazing at such
endless spaces beyond it, the transcendent
silences, and the most profound calm,
letting my wandering thoughts
engulf me; where my heart almost fears. As the wind
I hear rustling through the trees,
I must keep on, pondering
that infinite silence with this voice.
I recall the eternal,
the dead seasons, the present one,
the living, and the sound of her;
So in the mist of this immensity,
my thoughts drown, and to me
sweet is sinking in this sea.*

LOVING UNDERSTANDING

THE OPENING OF THE HEART TO THE REASONS OF THE OTHER

(Translation by Achille Cattaneo)

The loving understanding is critical to create good relationships between individuals.

It is neither obvious nor easy to acquire, but the result of a lot of inner work and long practice of disidentification.

In this article we will analyze what it is, what it is not, what are the most frequent obstacles that you encounter, what aid we can give and what qualities we can develop to help us in the difficult task of fully express this quality that is Transpersonal.

As first definition, but we will see that it is much more, we find that the result of “comprendere (understanding), from the Latin cum = together + “*prehendere*”, take, carry within themselves.

Loving, *considering what is intended with benevolence*, is the ability to consider the feelings of others in a spirit of tolerance.

In turn, “*comprendere*” (understand) has as synonyms contain, enclose, incorporate, embrace, understand, by extension justify, forgive.

The loving understanding is the ability to go beyond appearances and “get inside us” the motivation behind the behavior of the other.

The opposite of loving understanding is judgment, criticism, rejection, emotional reaction, the destruction of the other with the thought.

We practice loving understanding when we are disidentified by “changing contents of consciousness” and self-identified in the Ego.

We pass by judgment and criticism to questions “why are he telling me this?” “Why are he doing this?”.

The active energy of loving understanding elicits a powerful reaction against hate.

Empathy is the magic key to open every heart, the medium irresistible to dispel misunderstandings, dislike, hostility, conflicts and separateness.

The magic key to establish right human relations in every

field of consociate life: from the family to the group of the whole humanity, because we understand the needs and motives of others.

So it is the most effective cure to heal human relationships. Without understanding there can never be the Brotherhood, that sense of Unity with all.

The loving understanding is the meeting point between intelligence and love: therefore possesses qualities of mind and heart. It is the result of the union of mind and heart. The Heart is the “mediator”; in it all opposites merge and synthesize.

To express it is necessary an act of will.

Continuing our analysis, let us realize first of all what it is not and, conversely, what it is.

It is not doing good, on the contrary, it is the Will of Good.

It is not passive acquiescence, rather it is an strong act because it brings with it the ability of the mind to understand and the benevolence of heart; is the host of the heart and the light of intelligence.

It is not to justify, but to accept the manifold and various expressions of life. It is not a form of weakness, but it is an act of Will.

It is not ignorance of the wrongs of others, but go beyond appearances keeping well separated, the “sinner” from the “sinner.”

It is not renunciation of the defense, but understanding the reasons and then look for the appropriate measures to address the situation.

It is not an obligation of “attendance”, but sure understanding.

Loving understanding begins with listening and attention to the other.

Continues in the conscious word, aware accepting and helping.

The understanding has nothing of sentimental, but arises from a level that is mental and at the same time is smart, tends to be seeing another point of view, give rise to the response from the inner of individual as in question it is already inherent the response, in the problem the solution.

It is laying the thought in the heart: think with the heart and to love with the mind.

Of course, the understanding should be given first and

foremost to ourselves as understanding towards others goes hand in hand with what we can give to ourselves.

To understand it is necessary must make room inside us, hence the importance of inner work.

To understand it is necessary to know.

To understand it is necessary to contact our pain and then the pain of every human being behind the usual masks.

A proper understanding also sees the solution or way forward to overcome that pain.

Another important chapter to be taken into consideration are the obstacles in their way.

- Pride (afraid to show for what we are for fear of not being accepted)
- Stubbornness and egotistical demands. Its corollary is self-centeredness... I, I, I
- Separateness (excessive attention to personal Self)
- Criticism that comes from the ideology
- Attachments, for example, the need to look for the “culprit outside”, opinions, anger
- Expectations - how things/people should be
- Encamp excuse not to change ourselves
- Selfishness
- Unfulfilled needs (belonging, being recognized, appreciation...) that create gaps
- Frustrations
- Fears
- Thirst for power
- Prejudices

Large aid may come from the development of the qualities of the Heart, Mind and Will (see box).

Wanting to understand is of course the first step. As we all know the will is the key factor in any choice we make and for any quality we want to develop and express.

The impersonality is another step that is required to us by the same understanding. How can we deeply understand others if we are continually focused on ourselves and our problems. The impersonality can be defined as the inner attitude that gives attention to others withdrawing from the continuous identification on ourselves or, in other words, the detachment from the Ego.

A sincere and genuine interest in others is of course a strong help.

The loving understanding is facilitated by reflection on three feelings:

- Compassion: antithesis of passion, which is greedy and selfish
- Tenderness: antithesis of egotism, more rigid and closed in itself
- Fairness: antithesis of greed or desire.

When these three feelings are understood and practiced, we are in relationship with the soul of all men.

Compassion moves the focus from egoistic interests and makes us partakers of the sufferings of the others. It blends us with the needs of others, leads to share what dwells in the heart. It can be got harmonizing with the love of the soul, the unifying principle that opens all hearts. Compassion, in fact, is the ability to identify with others in all outdoor conditions.

Tenderness brings a quality of selflessness, that draws inspiration from the outside and inspire the desire to serve and help. This feeling is sometimes called mercy, and marks all those who come to the aid of humanity.

Implies positive help, altruistic intention, wise discernment and loving activity. Is not motivated by a desire for reward and recognition.

Fairness detaches from the results of the activities in favour of others. It frees from desire. Fairness is more mental than compassion and tenderness.

In summary, we see that the steps to develop understanding are:

- Stop the personal reactions
- Quieting the emotions
- Stop the judgment
- Put us in a position of listening
- Wondering why, what are the causes of a certain behaviour
- Understand that it is more than understanding. We understand with the intellect, more cold and detached, surgical, while when we understand we bring in, we include, we allow things to be a part of ourselves
- Finally, answering, that is being active - emissive.

Life is difficult for everyone; therefore does no longer make sense to help each other instead of fighting us?

Quality of the Heart

Sincerity	Generosity
Humility	Equanimity
Gratitude	Benevolence / Charity
Perseverance	Aspirations
Receptivity	Trust
Peace	Forgiveness
Courage	Waiting
Goodwill	Wisdom
Sharing	Cooperation
Responsibility	Freedom
Direction	Synthesis
Love	Union
Brotherhood	Human Membership
Compassion	Patience
Transmutation	Understanding

Quality of Mind

Intelligence	Discrimination
Understanding	Connection
<i>(establish logical and analogical relationships between thoughts and phenomena)</i>	
Processing	Research the causes
Vision beyond appearances	Discernment
<i>(eg. Good from evil, right from wrong)</i>	
Interpretation and explanation	Observation and awareness
<i>(of the world outside and inside)</i>	
Memory	Imagination
Planning	Correction of errors
Analysis	Managing emotions

Quality of Will

Intention	Listening
Make room	Concentration
Focusing attention	
Domain	Control
Discipline	Endurance
Courage	Integration
Organization	Synthesis

Another step toward loving understanding is to understand that humans are not all equal. Human beings are equivalent, they all have the same value but are not equal.

If we understand that there are developmental levels, we can understand that certain behaviours we see are almost “forced” with respect to the level of consciousness to which the individual is located.

As a result, this knowledge allows us to eliminate the judgement and to develop an understanding that individuals can only do what the level of consciousness allows them.

Continuing on, we come to understand and accept that in reality there is nothing to understand, in the sense that every event has the right to exist as an expression of thousands and thousands of human conditions and experiences that everyone does.

It’s a bit like forgiveness, the day comes when one realizes that there is nothing to forgive because everyone does what they can.

The ancient spiritual traditions called for the aspirant to abide by the following Rule.

“Enter into the heart of your brother and see his pain. Then speak. Your words instill in him the power and strength he needs to break his chains. But do not break them to him yourself. Your work is to talk with your intelligent understanding. From the force that he will receive will be supported in his work.”

When the critical part of our mind learns the silence and humility, makes us recognize the qualities and strengths of those with whom we relate, then our life is heated by the warmth of loving understanding that gives sweetness to our relationships.

I SEE, I FEEL, I SPEAK, AND ...

(Translation by Mike Malagrecia)

One step after another, we have reached a crucial stage of our journey. We have explored the stages of the *secure base* or *holding environment* of the early months and years of life, and we have considered the great crisis of identification during puberty and adolescence. Now, we will consider one of the most fundamental rights of any human being, the right of the Soul to affirm its potency, its strength – the right that expresses the will-to-be and to assert itself, to find its own space in existence.

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Keeping in mind all the considerations presented in the previous articles in this series, we can think of this next stage as an *adult* existential dimension that includes the various levels and functions of the individual; it coordinates and integrates the various planes that constitute the building blocks of the personality.

First, the ability to perceive the external reality as an “object,” distinguishing it from the personal self, is related to **the function of seeing** or, rather, *observing*. This has to do with mental functioning and with the ability to distinguish and discriminate the self and the outside world. This is a function related to the brain’s subcortical region, although, strangely enough, is mainly concerned with purely bodily functions. The well-known studies on “mirror neurons” confirm the psychodynamic theory of object relations. The function of effective mirroring, the ability to empathize, distinguish and appreciate the borders of the self by visually recognizing those of the other (the mother) translate into the inner construction of the self-image, i.e.: the ability to perceive and understand the meaning of any given action that is the precondition for the development of inter-subjectivity (Racalbuto, 1994).

Second, in any consideration of empathy, what we are actually looking at is **the function of feeling** – a further step into awareness. In particular, this implies

the discovery of the uniquely human ability to be in a relationship – feeling our inside world allows to feel somebody else’s world. This is possible when the individual has had the early experience of feeling the heat, the voice, the smell, the loving gestures of another individual, the adult-mother, through whom we can begin to feel one’s self as a *being-in-the-good*.

This is the primary experience of identity and the prerequisite for the ability to self-identify. This experience lets us appreciate the Soul is within us and, at the same time, it is something that encompasses us.

Another way we could consider this is by taking into account the energy of Eros, simply and beautifully described by Roberto Assagioli as: “the primordial vital impulse, the tendency that originates all the basic instincts, later differentiated into the various human impulses and desires, refined in feelings, sublimated in aspirations: pulsating life, overwhelming flame, propulsive force, heat, fire.” (Assagioli, 1993).

Third, and finally, **the function of the word**, or the dynamics of Logos that include the right to expression and the ability to guide and direct Eros. This function originates in the conceptualization of the need and of the pleasure principle – the fundamental instances that become recognized, expressed, and “narrated” first with the recognition of one’s capacity to love, then with the wish to be an active vehicle for love, and finally through the ability to exercise the right to be genuine, honest, and meaningful.

In “The Soul’s Bill of Rights,” Massimo Rosselli indicates: “truth and knowledge are the basis of this right that involves the search for meaning in existence, along with a need for deep honesty in all manifestations of life. It would seem that the Soul is at home in the truth and in the various forms it takes.” (Rosselli, 2008).

We live in a society and in an age that exacerbate the outer form of life. Fragmentation and separation of the self is evident in family, in work and social roles, and in the interrelations among them, leading to dramatic forms of isolation that might trigger fear of living.

These are, in turn, amplified by the current (we might say, *permanent*) socio-economic crisis and result in an increase of the suicide rates, the use of psychotropic drugs and psychotropic substances, domestic violence, femicide, homophobia, and the anguish of loss.

In particular, within the family unit, the mother-child relationship is often overwhelmed by the role of education or, rather, by a commitment to the standard form of education we feel we should comply with. This becomes an unbearable burden when is added to the initial role of caregiver. The emotional investment is projected and actively looked for “outside,” in the many forms of narcissistic individualism that have now become the norm. The most recent clinical research studies indicate the widespread myth of materialistic gratification, the euphoria for any kind of external fulfilment, and the obsession with achieving personal goals based on consumerism’s demands. In addition, there is the progressive dissolution of the father figure, that is, the *pater* model (*pater* = patrimony) that is capable of taking responsibility and harmonize a genuine sense of personal success with the fostering and promotion of the common good.

The opportunity of a phase of crisis is that it helps us to focus the attention on what happens “inside.” What shall we find there? What vision lies ahead for us?

Any cognitive processes (from the Latin root meaning *born together* or *born with*) is primarily an emotional experience, and hence a bodily experience. In other words, any educational and formative process is associated with the acquisition of new content knowledge (both about oneself and about the outside world), and is filtered by the relationship with the other. This is why it is essential to develop the ability to learn from experience and give one’s creative, constructive contribution to the world. This is possible when we develop the ability to tolerate and hold within the inevitable anxiety and uncertainty triggered by the experience of “not knowing,” “not understanding.” We can only develop this ability with the other, a “thou” that is fully present within the formative relationship.

Oftentimes, unfortunately, what we encounter while working with young adults is, instead, a deep sense of failure and inadequacy. If the primordial experience of holding and mirroring is absent, there develops a sense of failure of the relationship, with a direct impact on the emotional world, one’s inner parts.

Oftentimes, while undergoing therapy or counseling, people often spend their time talking about “others” to avoid the difficulties of addressing what is happening in their inner world – is this not the basic socializing and anti-panic function of gossiping? This is particularly the case with teenagers grown in isolation, within the context of a virtual communication, video-centric, culture. They often suffer from what might be called “emotional illiteracy:” they cannot describe why they feel offended or hurt by friends; they do not know how to explain why they love this particular friend, or the reason why they love someone who does not love them back; they cannot describe why they hate a specific teacher, or a parent. This condition can greatly amplify the suffering, making it overwhelming and devastating, especially if one is lonely and isolated.

Emotional isolation is a defense mechanism against the irruption of emotional, unknown contents perceived as dangerous (and oftentimes linked to trauma) and that might activate “avoiding” and “denying” sub-personalities. Instead, *alexithymia* (i.e. lack of words to express an emotion) is a pre-existing condition that indicates the failure of the holding and mirroring relationship between the “good enough” mother and the child. It reveals the violation of the primary Soul rights, resulting in the failure of the mother-child rapport, noticeable during the developmental phases and personal growth in the form of injuries and wounds.

In this relational dimension, the body is at the very center, insofar as it is a direct expression of the Self’s rights and needs.

If the mother does not “digest and reconstitute” those needs with her body (sight, voice, touch, etc.), hence creating a bond with the body of the child, everything remains at

the level of proto-emotions (or “beta elements,” to use Bion’s term) – uncommunicable psychological elements that cannot be expressed (Solano, 2001). This is also the origin of the so-called “somatizations:” symbolic (as well as neuro-biological) representations of the needs and expressions of the Self that are an attempt to integrate the discomfort into the field of consciousness and, therefore, constitute an attempt towards adaptation.

According to Daniel Siegel, the American psychiatrist that have developed the *mindsight* (presence mindful awareness) approach, there is a “window of tolerance” consisting of *adaptive function* and *harmony*, which opens and expands when the initial mother-child attunement succeeds. Beyond the borders of this window, we become dysfunctional and move either into chaos, confusion and dispersion, or towards rigidity, isolation and contraction (Siegel, 2013).

The maternal function (the “alpha” function) is precisely that of a unifying center that lets the child’s body become harmoniously integrated, a genuine witness, assertive and expressive of herself, even throughout her future cognitive development, hence experimenting the adaptive function and harmony. This function grants the ability to move towards the borders of the window where dysfunction and danger are perceived, where safety “is never enough” – that is, where change is possible.

In the event of failure of the primary mother-child attunement, can the “alpha function” be recovered? The answer is yes, insofar as it is a *function*, it is not the exclusive monopoly of any single individual capacity. In fact, this recovery can happen in a relationship with substitutive figures (friend, teacher, parent, coach, animals, nature, etc.) that function as external unifying centers. It can also happen in the therapeutic relationship, where the therapist may initially play a maternal role or the function of *rèverie* – the ability to take in pre-verbal or verbal communications and to process them, restituting them to the person, usually repaired in the form of symbols that provide structuring and holding. In this sense, the wide range of imaginative techniques, so central in Psychosynthesis, are of primary importance.

Finally, the *adolescent group*, the clan, but especially the personal and spiritual growth group can perform this alpha function, because they act proving the support of borders and of holding. The group becomes the representation of the inner world, varied and complex, limited and defined by a sort of “*I-skin*.” That is, the group allows the experience of having a space and time to get in touch with one’s emotional world, to make it even conceivable at the mental level and to promote the expansion of feeling, the expansion of the heart.

The significance of this lies in the possibility of re-processing our increasing trust in contacting our wholeness from the most intimate and simplest center within, which is a reflection of the presence of the Soul, and an ability to assert the Soul’s rights. The person becomes capable of being present, simply and wholly, in the world.

This article about the cycle of experience must have an open end because beyond this point we enter the psychological dimension of the super-conscious and the region of the Higher Self, which entails Its ability to communicate, to let energy flow, and to being. According to Roberto Assagioli, this dimension is a *paradoxical fusion of individuality and universality* (Assagioli, 1973) that, we might humbly add, leaves us “speechless.”

Indeed, the experience of the Self is personal, unique and original; it may manifest in different ways: through the appreciation of beauty, poetry, art, love, nature, knowledge, altruism, social commitment, spiritual growth, meditation, etc., all of which originate in the same sense of universality, permanence and unification that are part of the existential experience of each of us.

What humans being can and really wish to experience, insofar as we are represented in the *living I* (Assagioli, 1977), can only take place through a gradual unfoldment that reveals itself to the light of consciousness and progressively comes into realization. Each momentary and partial synthesis brings with it the reality and value of our conflicts, struggle and pain as possible dynamic elements that lead us to take the next step. It also carries

within the attractive energy of our center of consciousness reflecting the Principle of Universal Love – unchanging, instinctively projected into ongoing action and full manifestation.

In order to experience and enjoy such a reflection of the Higher Self in the center of consciousness (at least in one of its many possible forms), it is necessary to recognize the function of *external unifying centers*. These help to keep alive the spark of desire and, along with it, the possibility that any event bring to life new meaning, purpose and design.

More precisely, as Roberto Assagioli indicates, the external unifying center is “*an indirect but strong link, a point of connection, between the person and the Higher Self, which is reflected and represented in that object...*” (Firman, Gila, 2004).

Without the spark of desire the will is not ignited, and without the will dreams remain sidereal ghosts (*desideris*). They remain mere idealized aspirations, a synthesis conceived only “in the mind of Zeus,” but not *in-spired*, not brought down to earth and incarnated in the human personal experience. As such, these are useless in the construction of any life project that is based in the constant research for actions willed by a *living I*.

The sense of what our life experience may become, the fullness of meaning that can be achieved, can also provide hope for the new generations, hungry as they are for new perspectives, projects and purpose. In this sense, we can become models that might restore the sense of *being present*, *being* “despite all odds,” opened to the new with creativity; *being present* in the world with our wounds, losses and discomfort; facing suffering with courage, trust and love.

PAIN AND JOY

(Translation by Kylie Drew)

“Transform pain”: this phrase was pronounced by an elderly lady during a condivision following a lesson on Panikkar; for me it was the beginning of a long process that allowed me to arrive at a realization and a desire to share it with others.

The lady was referring to her mother-in-law who’s life had been a succession of mournful events, to which she reacted by moving them to a higher level of conscience that permitted her to overcome the trials to which she was periodically subjected. “My mother-in-law was able to transform pain” she said, seriously absorbed, and at a certain point, convinced, as though she wanted to steal a secret from another person that she had never really understood in depth.

I would have wanted to hear more, to know how a woman born at the beginning of 1900, without the possibility of analytical or psychosynthetic studies, was able to pass through pain attributing to it a sense, or transcending it in some way; but then the speaker changed argument and I remained suspended and incapable of listening to what the others were saying. “An elderly lady probably without instruction, without having done therapy, was able to live fully despite various incidents”. It has always been like that, I said to myself, that simplicity, wisdom and an uncommon vitality allow some people to become stronger than others. As usual all of this produced in me amazement and enchantment.

During the evening, the phrase stuck in my brain, like a seed blown in the wind and planted in the soil waiting to manifest itself.

The following day I remembered what I had studied on resiliency motivated by the necessity to fortify the spirit in the light of certain personal events.

Today there is much more discussion about resiliency. What is it? The word derives from latin “resilire”- to jump, bounce back. Adapted to physics, the word

indicates a material that resists to knocks without breaking.

By transposition, in psychology resilience means the capacity of an individual to face negative and traumatic events and, without giving in, to re-organize positively one's life.

The word resilience is used in many fields: in data processing it is the quality of a system that can function correctly despite breakdowns; in ecology it expresses the aptitude of an ecosystem to recover rapidly (more or less) after a cataclysm e.g. reconstruction of a forest after a fire. One can also speak of biological, sport, geriatric and company resiliency.

Boris Cyrulnik is one of the major experts on this argument. He analyzed the 3 factors that contributed to determining it: 1) temperament on the individual side 2) attribution of significance on the social-cultural side 3) social support on the relationship side.

The first factor consists of intellectual capacity, communication, optimism, sense of humour, and auto effectiveness.

The second factor consists of the human capacity to know how to attribute significance to events. Significance is an act, a job that transforms, via the brain, information taken from real events and the affective sphere, and deeply influences personal convictions and consequently changes the quality of life.

The third factor includes a good network of social relationships e.g. an important adult outside of the family, and/or a supporting community capable of offering efficient services like schools, parishes, libraries etc.

Other psychologists have tried to define which protective factors consent a person to sustain with vigour various types of adversities. They have called them: resilient tutors.

A tutor is one who guides and guarantees for a person, resilient tutors are those factors that by coming into play,

they will guarantee that a person will act efficiently and hold out against knocks.

Here is a non- exhaustive list: "good attachment to parents in early stages of life; characterial and personal traits that can foresee positive evolutions ; consolidated sentiments; having values; respecting oneself; capacity to postpone rewards; sense of humour; sense of belonging; optimism; capacity to collaborate; faith; keeping things in prospective; inserting stressful events in a broad aspect and adopting a long period prospect; knowing how to respond to life rather than asking continuously; good social relationships; knowing how to transform painful experiences in lessons; in moments of maximum crisis to be able to open up to a broader view so that one is not obsessed but inspired".

The building up of resilience is possible even if by nature or culture one starts disadvantaged, one's childhood is not one's destiny.

How? Sprucing up our sense of identity , increasing faith in ourselves and our resources, but also looking at ways resilient people have been able to rebuild themselves after various traumas.

Another method consists in learning how to have a constructive attitude and orient oneself towards inner growth .

All of this is not dissimilar to humanistic psychology in general, but a glance at courage, the numerous examples of those who remained on their feet after stressful events, the vision that takes note not only of the individual but also one's culture, the social-sanitary, educational-scholastic, political and economical institutions to which one can refer in moments of crisis, make for a rather interesting field of study.

I personally gained benefit from some textbooks and I also held courses on this particular argument. On the other hand, what interests me in life is to contribute to finding ways to live better.

What instruments are needed to handle strong emotions,

to navigate in the sea of life, to suffer less, to love more and then enjoy all of this? To reply to this question is what interests me most in life. One can become a better human being, which for me means becoming more capable of knowing oneself better, to respect oneself lovingly, to empathize by relating to oneself, to listen by listening to oneself, to understand oneself and others better, by living all of this.

This is what interests me most in life.

Strongly motivated by questions of this kind, after the courses on resilience, I realized that I could do more by studying the birth of a capacity to resist adversity and the consequent pain that is inflicted on us.

So I came back to psychosynthesis which I had never really forgotten, it is my point of reference, to which I can easily refer, when sounding out new ideas. This is possible because psychosynthesis has a full comprehensive vision of man at all levels biological-physiological-psychical-spiritual that one can rapport to other theories without diminishing either of them. Naturally in the case of orientated visions towards well-being and personal development, they draw near to them a richness that supports what Roberto Assagioli affirms. It is a little like looking at a human being by changing one's point of observation, the perspective is absolutely beneficial, indispensable in order not to crystallize oneself.

Roberto Assagioli, in his studies and in his personal life, has repeated that in front of various hardships -sufferance, illness, death etc.- he has continuously re-affirmed that man is able to assume the correct mental disposition that helps himself support whatever destiny offers without surrendering. "Collaborate with the inevitable" is his invitation; but each person will find their own personal mental attitude that will illuminate "how to suffer" rather than "why suffer", and how he will be personally responsible in regard to what he is facing, and by adopting this attitude, he becomes a protagonist and not a victim. As such he can draw on extra energies in respect to the tragedy he is facing, which will not be

blocked but passed through knowingly, and by doing so, investing in his future life, never forgetting his passions, desires, interests - even when it isn't possible to physically obtain something, one can always use one's imagination and creativity.

Disidentification is another pillar of psychosynthesis, it consists in detaching oneself from events in one's life, to look at them as though one is looking at a film without judging but with love and comprehension.

But... sometimes in front of emotional tempests, many of us feel frustrated because we feel we cannot disidentify ourselves, all is clear theoretically but in the middle of a hurricane everything is much more difficult. In what are we strongly identified? And how can we find the answer? What emotions are involved, which is the main one, how much space in our conscience does it occupy? Can I give a name to these emotions and visualize the invasion and draw and write about it. Then, maybe, slowly, you receive a little relief, but not all, only the amount you need to breathe easier and live well and even be happy. To be happy is the biggest rivendication that we have in front of life.

Sometimes we act like mad moths, we search for a remedy, an immediate relief that stops the pain, then how many of us have done a personal growth course and remembered that this is exactly what one must not do, that one has to accept the pain, wait to see what lesson it reveals, what it hides inside.

We try but when there are chronically difficult situations, we lose our patience and the happy moment of serenity disappears. "STOP" is the scream that flows onto our internal path, causing only damage.

At the Psychosynthesis Centre of Milan a group of psychologists gather together with me every 15 days to study in depth the CdA themes, they are arguments that touch us deeply and that stimulate us to talk amongst ourselves, simply and genuinely; we know that no one will judge us and that each of us will feel resonance with the interior world of the other, and in this way, produce

an amplification of one's sentiments, emotions, images that induce in each of us an expansion of one's conscience and, occasionally, insights.

I remember that once we faced the problem of too strong or recurring emotions and we decided that in order to manage them, we needed to make space inside - space is correlated to love, compassion - so that we could have a big enough container, and a well-centred "I" that could not be invaded.

A short time later while I was reading a textbook of a Buddhist monk, I found an anecdote that made me understand better the importance of the container: "if we throw a teaspoon of salt into a very small glass of water, it will cause big repercussions because of the reduced dimensions of the container: but if we throw a teaspoon of salt into, say, a lake, it will not have the same intense effect because of the vastness of the recipient. Although the salt remains the same, the space inside the container changes everything..."

Wonderful ! I thought, but what can I do to create an even larger container?

At the same time another question continued to obsess me: how can I transform pain? I was going through a difficult period and I was looking for solutions.

Continuing to read the Buddhist text, I came upon a revelation of Buddha that indicates four states of the mind - loving kindness, compassion, sharing joy, impartiality - calling them divine houses and inviting human beings to cultivate them and so arrive at the liberation of the heart.

I remain fascinated by certain metaphors, this particular one conquered me, like an enticing mermaid who attracts me by twisting my thoughts, making my eyes smile, my heart happy. I feel that, there, there is a profound truth, those mental states that raise us from blind habits and by taking a quantic jump, they transport us into the reign of the transpersonal. Besides these mental states expand, extend, satisfy, gratify, while mental states like rage, fear, attachment produce contraction, separation, narrow mindedness.

It was not long before I put this together with the four divine houses and the necessity to make space for pain, when one evening I had a small illumination: the container, our interior space - which our conscience governs - can be enlarged if we frequent the four divine houses i.e. loving kindness, compassion, joy and impartiality, and these will determine our attitudes and habits in the form of smiles, genteel gestures, benedictions, actions that will help all, and all of this will expand our conscience, which will regale us with a luminous and benevolent sensation of being interconnected, interdependent, participating in the continual evolutionary path of our species.

In other words in moments of crisis one must do something significant despite how one feels; the situation that makes us suffer comes from a certain sphere (family, work, study), and will need time to be cured, in the meantime the world awaits us and wants us to be sincere, open, transparent, to be able to direct our attention where we want it because a fluctuating attention allows us to be free.

If in the middle of critical situations instead of being ground down, we don't forget to be loving, to anticipate the needs or wishes of those around us and help them and satisfy them, to be happy for the happiness of others, to live following our own profound values and not give in to pain and identify oneself with it; we will obtain sufficient strength to put ourselves "in front of pain", not in a subordinate position, but with dignity, efficiently, empathically, lovingly, face to face.

If we leave space to an exuberant spirit and therefore to the qualities listed above and all the others that Roberto Assagioli mentions, we will receive from our interlocutors continuous reflections in the form of a thanks, a smile, an affectionate gesture, in fact to kindness one replies with kindness, to love with love, goodness with goodness. This continuous bouncing back and forth of what goes out and returns is what makes us richer and produces an expansion of our conscience - and here the circle closes - that inside will grow the capacity to face events and contain them.

In a conscience where the highest human qualities with capacity of renewal inhabit, afflictions will be engulfed like a teaspoon of salt in a lake, they won't have the power to overwhelm us. The pain will be transformed because, re-dimensioned, it will lose its aggressive hold; it will be the counterbalance to our research for significance.

The dizzy abundance that is the Self, the greatness of life makes us relate to the unpleasantness of things that happen to us. Other awaits us and expects to be realized.

JOY

(Translation by Achille Cattaneo)

For psychosynthesis the Joy is a real existential “prescription” to use and recommend as a rule of life. It is that special wisdom that lights the fire of enthusiasm for the future and discovers the beauty of distant worlds in the boundless horizon of man. It is the proclamation that all should adhere to in order to live happy and full of gratitude in the human community.

Strangely, the experience of Joy starts neglect to be conquered. Starts in the joyful overcoming of old habits to find the new; appears in the joyful certainty of knowing how to manage and contain ourselves, freeing us from the constraints and regressive impulses; manifests itself in adhering with enthusiasm to the ideal of the common good, detaching ourselves from expectations and personal privileges.

Therefore, the Joy is a quality to teach to young people by linking them to the love for the new. It is in fact linked to the realization of all that belongs to the evolution, which sometimes may seem far away, but if accepted and understood warms us so deeply that we can deal with strength and serenity the storms of life.

The road to happiness is built gradually and patiently through the knowledge of the “existential phenomenon”, and then only a strong desire to understand pushes the man towards that path. Once the goal of life is placed in the understanding, sooner or later it is inevitable the experience of Joy. This, once received, must be retained and accumulated, because is it still so rare on earth to represent a valuable mineral to be extracted and preserved with great care.

The illusion that the Joy derives from idleness or from material achievements is absolutely illogical because everything in nature is ever changing and nothing is inactive and static. The life of any plant, of any animal, and why not, of any man is enough to prove it. This is why the Joy is never tied to the past but is always combined

Sergio Bartoli (1929-2009), Roman physician and psychotherapist was a student and close associate of Roberto Assagioli. Having sensed the ability to work with educational groups and organizational skills, Assagioli strongly pushes him to open in Rome in 1968, the first *Center of Psychosynthesis* in Italy. Bartoli maintains the position of director for more than twenty years, in those years contributing significantly to the spread of psychosynthesis. After serving for several years in the executive offices of the Institute of Psychosynthesis, Bartoli founded in the early seventies with the other students SIPT (Italian Society of Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy), where will be a teacher for many years and president for the first three mandates. In the early eighties, Bartoli matures willingness to abandon the therapeutic practice and move steadily to Umbria to totally devote himself to the spiritual quest. Shortly creates at Città della Pieve (PG) to the community of *Poggio del Fuoco*, residential center oriented to the study and dissemination of the transpersonal appearance of psychosynthesis. We can find here now, as a cornerstone, the teaching of Creative Meditation, and a new ideal model of life inspired by some Principles and fundamental Laws of the Aquarian Age. At the end of the nineties, the Community takes on the new name still maintained today of *Community of Living Ethics of Città della Pieve*. The vision of Bartoli always oriented to the future is realized over the years with the constitution at Poggio del Fuoco of various schools of education - *Types human, Creative Meditation, Education, Service, Focusing* - that, even after his death, continue the activity he began

with the fire of courage for the “human adventure”, adventure that inevitably makes us detached from what is already acquired and transient.

Nor is it to be confused and searched in the pleasure, because it is just after passing a few obstacles that sometimes the Joy begins to appear. It is then easy to see how a joyful attitude in dealing with the inevitable hardships of life represents a real workout to Joy. Taking responsibility to exist and striving to the development of its own human model is a quest that gives Joy because is the inevitable fate of our event.

It can happen sometimes that Joy has a stern face, and this is because, by giving the correct assessment of the circumstances, we are committed to the most demanding task that awaits us. We said that the Joy is linked to the world of possibilities, and while noting that it is easier to deny everything that comes out of the ordinary rather than look at it, it is in the commitment to achieve the unusual that we must seek the source of Joy.

Then there is a natural “nursery” of Joy that is represented by each manifestation of beauty. From the beauty of the light to the beauty of every leaf awakens to life, you pull a “heartbeat” of Joy, which shall distil within us if we will modify from sluggish consumers to shrewd collectors of the treasure of the beauty of nature.

The experience of Joy is still essential because it is the only one that binds us to our future. It should therefore be sought and gained, but not in pain and neurosis or intoxication of a daily life without meaning but, as we have already said, in the treasures of the beauty that nature provides us anyway. Although it is true that the world today is mostly a dry well that can not quench, it is equally true that there are still sources of upland able to refresh and regenerate anyone who comes near.

It has been said that Joy is in self-sacrifice and then it is right to join the cause and effect in our consciousness to build the bridge of our improvement that will lead us to the absolute Joy of the infinite.

If we carefully reflect, only secular habits deprive men of the experience of Joy holding them in ignorance and fear of existence.

It is essential to learn how to sow Joy because as pain calls pain, so joy renews itself and spreads to others. This Joy that begins with toil and danger, once conquered dissolves barriers and glows with its radiance those who has it.

I remember it was just a gleam of Joy perceived in the eyes of Roberto Assagioli to seize me, years ago, the full value of a successful life. It seemed to me then that I discovered the Joy of renunciation of the ancient

religions and old philosophies, the true Joy that flows along the thin line that separates the self satisfaction from work for humanity.

Knowledge, as it realized, requires more and more complete responsibility, and these have to be lived with growing Joy. It is the Joy of fighting without help and to resist the attacks of the adverse elements with the sheer force of our own understanding and will. It is the Joy of the work that best represents the flame of the spirit, which lights up with the escalation of commitment and activity. That is why working with Joy facilitates success, because it frees a special form of “energy” that amplifies the results.

It is also important to remember that the Joy is not in the conclusion but in starting, because as the beginning corresponds to the motion, so the continuity is generated by the inertia.

This is how destroying sometimes becomes a creative act, when has in itself the consciousness of the future. Then it is often necessary to break down the static nature of human constructions to release the energy held in it and use it to create the new. Currently there is much talk everywhere and it is hoped a renewal of man and world, but it is certain that this will never arise from inactivity and the existential crystallization of the individuals. It is essential to demonstrate movement both in thought and in action, and even if the search of the renewal is long and difficult, once undertaken allows us to use our forces in the conquest of the future, and every step in that direction it is a Joy. At first it is as if we are called to cross a chasm that separates the new from the old, but even this hypothetical danger produces Joy because what is “unspoken” magically lights up the light on the Infinite.

N A M A S K A R A

This beautiful Indian salutation may be translated:

"I salute the Divinity in you"

This salutation has the purpose of evoking our essential divinity. If we use it constantly it helps us to remember to deal with each other as souls and not as personalities. It sounds a note of reverence and spiritual awareness which is inspiring.

We can direct it to our Self, as the salutation of the personality to the divine in oneself, especially upon awaking, at the noon and at the sunset recollections, and when retiring. Each time we meet friends, we can greet them with the word NAMASKARA instead of saying "Hello". Instead of saying only "Goodbye", we can add NAMASKARA. We can also use this salutation in letters by closing with NAMASKARA. As "energy follows thought", it helps us to contact the Self in ourselves and others, and to evoke it.

When possible, this Hindustani word should be said aloud, with the accent on the last syllable, NAMASKA'RA and not pronouncing the last "a". There are many occasions however, when it would not be wise to say it aloud; then it can be recalled silently. For example, when angry, impatient, critical of ourselves or others, when making new acquaintances, when at work with colleagues, superiors or subordinates, it helps to build an inner attitude which creates harmonious human relations.

As parents and educators, NAMASKARA puts us in touch with the inner reality of the child and adolescent, fosters our loving understanding of their essential nature, and favors their inner growth. In many situations, when we attempt to help a human being in distress or to resolve inter-personal tensions, NAMASKARA can serve as a silent salutation to put us in tune with the creative spiritual energies which stand ever behind the apparent disturbance.

NAMASKARA is also an apt way to develop and demonstrate in daily activities the dual life of functioning simultaneously and with full awareness at the two levels - that of the personality and that of the soul.

N A M A S K A R A