Vision For "A New Human Being" and A "Human Synergistic Movement": A New Humanistic Movement Aligned with Transformational Archetypal Energies

carroy u ferguson, UMASS Boston

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GOOD GRIEF

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Reviews

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Vision For “A New Human Being” and A “Human Synergistic Movement”: A New Humanistic Movement Aligned with Transformational Archetypal Energies

— Carroy U. Ferguson

In previous messages, I spoke of the “Path of the Bridger: AHP’s Role in Co-Creating a New Reality for Human Togetherness and the Evolution of Consciousness,” “The Voices of Transformational Archetypal Energies: The Psychic Energy behind AHP’s Mission,” and “The Gift and Challenge of Free Will: The Connection to Transformational Archetypal Energies.” I wanted to remind us of how and why AHP came into being as a “Mother Organization,” arguably to give birth to an organized focus on validating the dignity of the Human Spirit, maximizing Human Potential, and planting seeds for Well Being and the Evolution of Consciousness. In the wake of this organized focus, the Human Potential Movement emerged, along with a new field of psychology and research, numerous authors, practitioners, speakers, and like-minded organizations over the years. Some have often forgotten about their origins. It is now time for AHP to reclaim its place as “Mother” and to give birth to a new organized focus on evolving a New Human Being and what I will call a Human Synergistic Movement.

Synergy implies the cooperative action of seemingly discrete agencies such that the total effect is greater than the sum of the effects taken independently. Currently, numerous paradigms, theories, models, techniques, methods, research, authors, organizations, and events have and are emerging to assist Humanity in working more effectively with Consciousness and Energy. Yet, they appear to function as discrete agencies, without full acknowledgement of their synergy and without full recognition as being part of a Human Synergistic Movement to assist in the emergence of a New Human Being. The Vision and desired effect of a Human Synergistic Movement, therefore, is to foster and to nurture what I call Synergistic Vibrational Energy-Linking, at both the individual and collective levels.

AHP’s founders called attention to what was then known about the phenomenon of personal growth and they nurtured the ideas of Human Potential and evolutionary possibilities. On behalf of AHP, I now call attention to what we now know and are learning about the phenomenon of Multidimensional Consciousness and Energy, and I want to introduce the evolutionary idea of Synergistic Human Potential and a Vision for a New Humanistic Movement. A Human Synergistic Movement can be framed as a humanistic, Multidimensional Consciousness-Energy Movement, unfolding at both individual and collective levels. To some extent it is a Movement that seeks to make more “conscious” what already is so—i.e., how everything works together in terms of Multidimensional Vibrational Energy and how we can “more consciously” direct the flow of this Energy to create and co-create synergistically our Highest Good and Optimal Realities, individually and collectively. As such, it is both an inner and outer, personal and collective, Spirit and Matter, local and global evolutionary Movement, since it deals with Synergistic Human Potential with regard to evolving both Consciousness and Energy. It does not separate the person from her/his physical, social, and spiritual environments and the planetary eco-system. It is, therefore, a Multidimensional Planetary Movement, that can be viewed as emerging in and through what I have called our three life spaces that we simultaneously live in—personal life space, societal life space, and global life space.

What does this mean practically in terms of the relationship between Consciousness-Energy and the human experience? It means that perhaps a new framework for how to view ourselves as Human Beings is as Embodied Multidimensional Consciousness-Energy Vibrational Beings, with free will and unique individual and collective Consciousness, “playing” in a Vibrational Environment. In this context, The Human Synergistic Movement invites, affirms, and celebrates the synergy of Consciousness and Energy through human experiences like “increased synchronicity experiences,” “enhanced intuitive experiences,” “synergistic personal, societal, and global changes,” “synergistic personal and social healing activities,” “synergistic planetary and personal communality experiences,” and “synergistic inner and outer strategic collaborations between individuals and among small and large groups.” Simultaneously, however, this is also a Movement that values, validates, and celebrates human differences as unique
expressions of All-That-Is, at both the individual and collective levels. Indeed, human differences are viewed as synergistic opportunities to learn more about our Truer Selves, rather than reasons for defense. Simultaneously, however, this is also a Movement that values, validates and celebrates “human differences,” “choice,” and “various and varied paths for growth, work, and play” as unique expressions of All-That-Is, at both the individual and collective levels. Indeed, human differences and our numerous paths for growth, work, and play in the world are viewed as synergistic opportunities to learn more about our Truer Selves, rather than reasons for defense.

A Human Synergistic Movement is fueled by what I have called Transformational Archetypal Energies (i.e., Love, Acceptance, Inclusion, Harmony). These Higher Vibrational Energies “creatively urge” us to find communality and to find ways to work together. At an Energy level, they nurture synergy in both subtle and not so subtle ways, to remind us of our interdependent and multidimensional natures. For example, have you ever “thought” of someone and s/he called you at that very moment, or you called someone and s/he said s/he was just “thinking” of you? Have you gone some place in the world and someone you know or have not seen in a long time showed up? Have you ever talked to someone, believing her/him to be a stranger, and suddenly discovered that you both knew a common person? Have you ever encountered someone for the first time, and “felt” at an Energy level an immediate connection or a sense of familiarity or comfort with her/him? Have you ever desired to engage in a creative enterprise, and through your “intentional focus,” relevant ideas, people, circumstances, events, and resources began to show up in your life space, or you found yourself “attracted” to particular ideas, people, circumstances, events and resources? If you have, you have been experiencing aspects of the New Human Being and the Human Synergistic Movement.

In Consciousness-Energy terms, The Human Synergistic Movement invites a multidimensional, transcendent, integrative, interdependent, and synergistic approach to understanding Human Consciousness, Energy, and the human experience at individual and collective levels, without being wedded to dogma. And, it is a Movement that is contextualized by affirming choice and free will. In Consciousness-Energy terms, then, a New Human Being emerges as a Truer Self that is capable of recognizing individual and collective vibrational connectedness through logic and intuitive guidance. From this perspective, a Human Synergistic Movement fosters synergy through Vibrational Energy-Linking.

In the above context, a New Human Being may exhibit some of the following characteristics (this is not intended to be an exhaustive list):

• S/he empowers one’s Self and others in what s/he does and says.

• S/he knows who s/he is, why s/he is here, and what her/his Higher Purpose is.

• S/he is conscious of the Energy around her/him, deciding when to be transparent to it, harmonize with it, or transmute it to a Higher Order.

• S/he may consciously experience expanded intuitive and psychic abilities, with enhanced sensitivity to Energy, mentally, emotionally, and/or kinesthetically.

• S/he is aware of her/his Energy and the effects other people have upon it.

• S/he creates with Energy first before s/he takes physical action.

• S/he explores new possibilities and choices and continually expands her/his Vision of what is possible.

• S/he has the tools to draw to one’s Self the opportunities, people, and events s/he needs to create one’s life purpose.

• S/he knows that through her/his understanding of how Energy works s/he can consciously create what seemed like miracles when s/he had less understanding of the way Energy works.

• S/he is able to create what s/he wants at a speed impossible at earlier levels of growth.

• S/he knows s/he can create whatever s/he wants by working with the Higher Vibrational Forces, and the Universal Energy Laws of Attraction, Polarity, Neutrality, Consequences, Intention, Allowing, and Universality, directing her/his thoughts, emotions, and intention toward her/his goals.

• S/he creates change by working at the highest Spiritual level rather than at the personality level.

• S/he stops before s/he takes action, goes within, and receives guidance from her/his Higher Self about what action to take.

• S/he uses discernment, and is not judgmental, in decision-making.

• S/he operates from her/his heart, and trusts her/his inner messages and takes action upon them.
With such characteristics, the Vision for a New Human Being, in Consciousness-Energy terms, recognizes and validates “possibilities” for synergy in both “inner” and “outer” realities, allowing perhaps for the “possibility” of Humanity evolving into a telepathic species. In terms of an expansion of nonverbal communication, this means that we become more “open” and “sensitive” to the electromagnetic properties of thoughts and emotions. In practical terms, however, the world of a New Human Being may be filled with, and mirror, synchronicity and synergistic experiences as natural, everyday occurrences, individually and collectively.

Here are some unfolding synergistic activities, fueled by the Transformational Archetypal Energies connected to AHP that are intended to nurture the emergence of a New Human Being and a Human Synergistic Movement. This is a partial list.

- **AHP-ATP Historic Event**—on August 16, 2007, AHP and ATP reconected through a celebratory event and an AHP-ATP Professional Membership whereby joint members could benefit from both organizations at a reduced cost of $159. The synergistic reconnection was done using an Integrative Psychology Mission Statement. This historic event can be viewed as launching the Human Synergistic Movement, as it brought a new organized focus to two movements that prior to this point separated in order to independently explore various aspects of an evolving New Human Being.

- **Third Biennial National Humanistic Conference**—on June 6-8, 2008, AHP will host a synergistic national conference at California State University Northridge with the theme “Building Truth, Building Trust: A Humanistic Vision For Our Planet.” Please put these dates in your appointment books and plan to be there.

- **World Conference on Spirituality and Psychology in India**—This AHP cosponsored event, sponsored by ATP and Infinity Foundation, on January 5-8, 2008 was an international arena for exploring Synergistic Human Potential.

- **AHP, ATP, and Division 32**—There is now in place Synergistic Human Potential among these three organizations, represented by three Presidents who know and respect each other and value collaboration (Maureen O’Hara, President of Division-32 and past AHP President; David Lukoff, ATP President and Division 2 Board member; and myself).

- **AHP Website**—It gets about 3 million hits per year. So, we will expand its use by providing advertising opportunities for synergistic events, organizations, and individuals to present their “gifts” to the world on the AHP website.

- **AHP Perspective**—Each edition contains a wealth of ideas to nurture the evolution of Consciousness and a New Human Being. We want to make the Perspective more accessible to non-AHP members. So, soon, for a very modest cost, non-AHP members will be able to access Archived past AHP Perspectives from our website. Of course, AHP members are given a choice of a PDF or print version of the current AHP Perspective as a member benefit. For the PDF version, AHP members should make sure that Bonnie in the AHP Office has your correct e-mail. I personally like the print version.

- **Your AHP-sponsored event**—To assist you in getting your synergistic work out into the world, AHP would like to sponsor your events, workshops, online courses, and evolutionary work. As AHP members, you can get these approved activities listed in the Perspective and on our website, as well as get assistance with mailing lists and CECs. Contact Deb Oberg at DKOberg@aol.com

- **AHP Online Mentoring Program**—As a way to synergistically engage and nurture youth, particularly at-risk youth, in becoming New Human Beings, we are currently exploring the creation of an AHP Online Mentoring Program, whereby AHP members will have an opportunity to serve as mentors to these youth.

- **AHP Intercultural Certification Initiative**—One of the most challenging human experiences is how we deal with the culture-in-Self as we relate to the culture-in-the-Other. To assist in becoming a New Human Being in this regard, AHP is exploring the establishment of a workshop series to address intercultural dynamics. The current idea is to offer this workshop series for both CECs as well as for certification toward graduate credits. New AHP Board Director Dina Comnenou has expertise and long experience in this area. This may also be viewed as part of AHP’s world and international work. At its August 2007 meeting, the AHP Board established an International Membership category for the first time, and established a process for testing its relevance and effect in Russia.

Following are some special AHP fundraising initiatives to help with further launching of a Human Synergistic Movement and to support the evolution of a New Human Being.
• Each One, Reach One Initiative—To nurture “connectedness,” I invite all AHP members to entertain the idea of sharing your connection to AHP, the Human Synergistic Movement, and becoming a New Human Being, with at least one other person. That person could be a family member, colleague, friend, or loved one. You may also want to “gift” an AHP membership for that person. Remember, you do not need to be a psychologist or practitioner to be an AHP member. We are an extended family of evolving souls.

• GoodSearch.com—This synergistic activity has been established for you to assist AHP with its transformational work by doing something you do everyday. When you do an Internet search and use www.GoodSearch.com, a donation automatically will be made to AHP. On the site, you will see “Who Do You GoodSearch For?” Simply type in “Association for Humanistic Psychology” and do your search. Bookmark this page for future Internet searches. That’s how easy it is.

• AHP Website—ahpweb.org—there are a number of tax-deductible donation opportunities. You can access these opportunities by clicking on “Support AHP’s Work.” They include: “Transformation Mission” General Fund; AHP Endowment Fund; Student Membership Sponsor; Luke Lukens Memorial Fund; Professional Development and Projects Fund (e.g., The Archives Project; The Right to Choose Project); Webolution Fund (Expanding Web Opportunities).

The effect of the above and other AHP synergistic activities, along with those of like-minded individuals and organizations, is part of the total effect of a Human Synergistic Movement. This is a new Humanistic Movement, aligned with Transformational Archetypal Energies. The outcome of these evolutionary activities is a New Human Being, with awareness and understanding for how Consciousness and Energy work together for the good of all.

In this context, Consciousness may be viewed as the “inside” of Energy, and Energy as the “outside” of Consciousness. They are not reducible to one another, but Energy can be directed by Consciousness through an enhanced understanding of Universal Energy Laws. In giving “form” to Synergistic Human Potential, a New Human Being may come to understand authentically a Truer Self as a Reality Creator.

— CARROY U. FERGUSON

OBITUARY FOR MIKE ARONS

Mike’s are powerful shoulders to stand upon. He was a passionate and compassionate presence who invited and inspired us to celebrate our uniqueness and our humanness as inextricable. Mike lived for the extraordinary in the ordinary. He discovered possibilities where others may only have found realities, and realities where others may only have found possibilities. He dared to articulate the unsayable, to illustrate the unexplainable, to cut through boundaries of convention, revealing genuine traditions which bind and sustain us. Mike stood up for what is worth living for. A torch has been passed. Thank you, Mike. We love you.

— ANDREW BLAND

ANDREW BLAND AND MIKE ARONS
Every decade or so, AHP opens up to the general membership a lifetime membership offer at a greatly reduced rate, but limited to only 50 new memberships at this time.

31 new memberships still available at $1,000

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It’s the mid-1950s, the Cold War is in full swing, and you’re one of the most prominent psychologists in the U.S. You are approached by a front organization of the Central Intelligence agency and you are given top security clearance, along with a few other prominent psychologists, to participate in a large-scale investigation of “psychological and physiological variables in personality change.” It is the aftermath of the Korean war and the North Korean brainwashing experiments on thousands of U.S. soldiers, the Soviet Union is perceived by many as a very grave threat—you are Carl Rogers, a genuinely discerning and caring humanist in need of continuous funding for research. What do you do?

This question was front and center for Rogers, one of our most cherished humanistic pioneers, and the article in which it is raised, “Carl Rogers and the CIA,” is one of the most provocative pieces of investigative journalism in JHP’s long history. Although the authors Stephen Demanchick and Howard Kirschenbaum are careful not to provide pat answers, they do elucidate critical concerns, not only about Carl Rogers and the early formation of psychotherapy, but in the wake of Abu Ghraib and interrogations at Guantanamo Bay about the contemporary implications of government-sponsored, CIA-influenced psychology.

From these thickets of inquiry, we next move to a more prosaic but nevertheless noteworthy line of investigation. Joe Reilly and Veronica Restifo revisit the classic videotape of Carl Rogers working with “Gloria,” a woman whom he subsequently befriended. The investigators recently asked 97 undergraduate students in general and cognitive psychology classes to evaluate the film, and the results are gratifying—both for the film and the legacy of...
Carl Rogers.

Next, we turn to two commentaries on the status of radical psychiatry. The first, by Gavin Miller, freshly examines R. D. Laing’s use of hermeneutic methodology to understand and explain the origins of schizophrenia. Miller makes the case that Laing quite effectively employed his methodology, and that attempts to discredit it must not draw on the standards of natural science, which involve a disparate set of criteria. Miller concludes by calling for alternative, nonhermeneutic tests of Laing’s findings.

In a parallel reflection on art and mental disturbance, Elliot Benjamin finds solace in many of Laing’s conceptions. Foremost, Benjamin analyzes the literature on “natural” (i.e., self-motivated) as opposed to “normal” (i.e., conventional) forms of creative self-expression and finds that artistic sensibility cannot be confined by social status but must be affirmed in those we (mis?)label “mentally ill” as well. Benjamin makes a strong and passionate case for a new “artistic theory” of personality functioning. This theory affirms the profound creative yearnings (and sometimes talents) of many of those we shun, and as a result, fosters the flowering of a more just and creative society.

In the next, related article, Matthew McDonald cast his investigative net far and wide to discover the essential nature of epiphanies, the “sudden and abrupt” illuminations that lead to positive life change. To carry out his research, McDonald interviewed five people using a narrative approach to inquiry. The stories he reports and the findings he derives are compelling testaments to the power of unexpected transformation, particularly when it is coupled with sustained existential pluck.

Finally, in our last article, Tammy Hanks unveils a greatly underappreciated African dimension of humanistic psychology called “The Ubuntu Paradigm.” The Ubuntu paradigm accentuates the relational aspects of both individual and collective growth. Hanks articulately elucidates the nature of this relational purview, considers ways in which it complements contemporary humanistic inquiry, and illustrates how it can be applied in some of our thorniest mental health settings.

In closing, please welcome Dr. John Galvin to our editorial board. I have known John for over 25 years, since we were students together at Saybrook Graduate school, and had the wonderful opportunity (with another board member, Dr. Ilene Serlin) to conduct a video interview of Rollo May together. John has an extensive and unique background in multicultural experience (having lived in Hong Kong for 8 years), as well as a superb grasp of existential—phenomenological philosophy and psychology—he will be an outstanding addition to our “family.”

— Kirk Schneider
NOT HUMANISTIC?

— John Rowan

A discussion of the article “Healing the Mind from a Non-dual Perspective” by Nouk Sanchez and Tomas Vieira in the October/November 2007 AHP Perspective.

This article raises some questions for me. It seems clear from everything in it that it speaks from what Wilber calls the Causal level for the most part, with occasional forays into the Nondual.

Now the trouble with most people who go into these matters is that they pay no attention to the differences and distinctions which Wilber makes. They tend to adopt what I have called the “one, two, three, infinity” method of counting, where the body is one, the emotions are two, the intellect is three, and everything else is just one vast mishmash called “the spiritual” or “the transpersonal”. When the authors talk about “the One infinite Self”, they seem to think they are talking about the Nondual, when it would be clearer to say that it represents the perennial wisdom about the Causal. And I think they make the classic mistake of contrasting the Mental Ego with the Causal as if they were the only options. The Centaur, the Psychic, and the Subtle disappear completely, as if there were no intermediate steps or stages at all.

And of course this runs right through the article. There is a persistent “either/or” which comes back again and again. Either we are living at the old Mental Ego level, or we have moved to the Causal. Nothing between exists or is worth thinking about.

The worst aspect of all this, it seems to me, is that it basically says that psychotherapy is unnecessary. All we have to do is to enter the Causal, and all will be well. In other words, spirituality can substitute for therapy. I don’t believe this, and in his Chapter 6, Wilber spells out the reasons at some length (Wilber 2006). Using phrases like Quantum Forgiveness is mystifying, too, and reminds me of the complete bullshit of What the Bleep Do We Know? Using quantum physics this way is not a justifiable or legitimate pursuit.

When we go through a decently thorough programme of therapy, we deal with our pain, we deal with our Shadow, and we deal with our compulsions. We come out at the end a person who has emerged from the consensus trance and who is capable of dealing with the world in an authentic way. This is the humanistic discovery of the fully functioning person (Rogers), the self-actualised person (Maslow), the authentic person, (May), or the Centaur (Wilber).

I think it is wrong or at least questionable to say, as this article seems to do, that the correct spiritual attitude casts out fear, and that going into our biographical events is a waste of time. This is the “either-or”, which I think is always dangerous. In my opinion, we need to do both. Therapeutic work is genuinely valuable, and the spiritual path is genuinely valuable, too; we don’t need to choose one or the other.

The authors avoid all this by paying no attention to the Psychic or the Subtle. (There is a whole further argument here which I will not go into.) They write as if the whole mess can be avoided by jumping straight into the Causal. But let me put this to them: it is easier to deceive oneself that one has entered the Causal than it is to actually enter it. A person can start to speak and even think in Causal terms, but the stuff which has not been dealt with in therapy can come up and smite them, and those around them.

They seem to be ignoring the rather obvious truth that one is either ready to forgive or one is not. To pretend that one can forgive when really one cannot is a big mistake. And that readiness only comes, in my experience, when the basis for the inability to forgive has been genuinely worked through in therapy.

“There must have been a point of ‘turning away’ from the Source, and the mass of imagined guilt was immediately unbearable”—this statement, on which so much of the article hangs, is questionable. No evidence is given for it, and it seems highly implausible. It is unwise, in my opinion to turn the ego into an enemy or an opponent who has to be eliminated. Wilber said: “The only one who wants to get rid of the Ego is the Ego.”

The clincher for me was not in the article but the book written by the same authors, Take me to Truth: Undoing the Ego. Anyone who talks about Truth in this way, as if it were some given reality only needing to be seen and experienced, is a victim of black-and-white thinking. With all-good Truth on the one hand and all-bad Ego on the other, we are faced with a ridiculous dichotomy which has no place in today’s world. I am surprised that the editors accepted this article. To me, it has no place in a humanistic perspective.

JOHN ROWAN, Ed.D., is the author of The Transpersonal: Spirituality in Therapy and Counseling (Routledge, 2nd ed.).
Verano finally comes. The sun is intense. The city prepares for the influx of visitors and their words. When I think of poetry, I think of Dublin, but the International Poets' Festival in Granada, Nicaragua, is claimed to be the biggest in the world. People come from many parts of the world for a week-long festival. The park fills with book and artesania vendors. Tres Mundos cultural center bristles.

Clusters of poetry reading events occur in the Parque Central, in the Convent at Iglesia San Francisco, the Atrium of Iglesia La Merced, but this year brought something new. A memorial for a treasured poet of many years and an opening ceremony took us to Parque Sandino nearly a kilometer from Parque Central. Later in the week poets traveled out to other cities and villages as far as Leon. On another day poets traveled to parts of the city to read, including deep into the public market to bring it to la gente. Poetry goes to el pueblo.

The poets presented in groups of six to eight poets followed by other groups of six to eight in several events. Poetry came in several languages and translated to Spanish so we heard many poems in two languages. The themes were similar whether from China or Chile or Iceland. It is about our human experience. It is about pain and poverty, love and joy, peace and war, silence and thunder, maríasposas and murciélagos, family and friends. I heard the words cielo (sky), nubes (clouds), lluvia (rain), Flores (flowers), aves (birds) often. I heard passion, saw gestures, some loud, some soft.

Different cultures have different styles that spice up the festival.

We heard rap styles from the Carib and Los Estados (USA). We heard the tonal sing-song of Far East Asia. We were treated to Carib and African style music and dance. We heard traditional Nicaragüense songs and music. We enjoyed a local folk singer with acoustic guitar. And we heard a local rock band another night.

Poetry comes to el pueblo pero del pueblo tambien. The microphone was open to local poets not officially registered. Two hours on Wednesday, two hours on Thursday, three hours on Friday, and Saturday the mic was open for the “jóvenes” from 9 to 15 and almost all of this time was filled. Poetry reading was weaved into the festival on Thursday, as the parade stopped at every main intersection for more reading. The parade was part of the regular religious and cultural event including many colorful costumes, characters, and marching band. We heard many enthusiastic and heartfelt poets from the local area but also from as far as Bluefields and Matagulpa.

In the Nica tradition, everything started late but “no problema.”

The poems warmed our souls (almas), and many poets began with “Viva la Poesía”, “La Poesía es la esperanza” (poetry is hope). The spirit of the festival is alegre and fuerte. One of my favorite poems was about color. The lady was able to deliver silly-sounding expressions using names of colors to create an image that was profound. But the colors also remind me of the varieties of styles of expression. The man from Barcelona, for instance, was a contrast to the woman from Sevilla, yet the messages were surprisingly similar. Sharing poetry brings us closer together.

Vice President Morales (Nica) presented both at the opening in Sandino Park (also called Parque de la Poesía) and at the closing ceremony in Parque Central. I was surprised that his message was not political or trite. And it was the Sandinistas who gave birth to poetry in Nicaragua twenty-some years ago.

Morales’ closing sentence began with “La amor, la vida, y la esperanza” (love, life and hope).

The last time I had these sensations was at an AHP “Gathering” in Seattle, and yes, I was deeply moved by notions and emotions of hope.

If you want a refuge from the cold of winter and a frantic, aggressive routine, come to Granada for the festival. The festivals never end here. The city is safe but inexpensive. It is the oldest European-built city in the Americas. You will love it.

David C. Lavra is a long-time AHP member and former social worker who now lives in relaxation.
Our world is more pluralistic now than in any other time in the history of humankind. We are more multicultural, more mobile, and exposed to a wealth of experiences and information through improvements in technology. Consciousness, both individual and cultural, is also changing. We are more complex than ever before. We are becoming more aware of our relationship with the earth and our responsibility to it. We are becoming increasingly educated about the mind–body connection, and how our psychological and spiritual well-being are reflected in our physical health. We have had to challenge our sense of morals and values because we are in more contact with other people... and hence different worldviews... than ever before. We are affected by multiple systems such as work, education, financial systems, health and managed care, and nature.

People are changing and evolving, and the aforementioned influences are affecting our sense of emotional, psychological, spiritual, and interpersonal wellness. As a result, mental health treatment has had to acclimate to these changes. But this has been a slow process. Over the past couple of decades, there has been a pull toward empirically validated treatment models, which has thrown the qualitative dynamics of therapy into the corner. The “art” of therapy has become secondary. This is unfortunate because the two could really support each other and give a much richer picture of human functioning. But I digress! That is an article for another day.

So, the traditional pure form orientations, Psychoanalytic, Behavioral, and Humanistic, (or The Big Three), have experienced the pressure to expand their theories. In other words, with all the changes in our culture, psychological treatment has become more sensitive to diversity. It has been forced into an expanded repertoire, and that can be difficult within such a large and established system such as psychological therapy. We see this in the literature and in research... and in the therapy room. Clinicians are finding that “one size does not fit all.” So, while one client may be better suited for a more structured treatment, such as with Cognitive-Behavioral therapy (which is an integrated model of psychology as well—Behavioralism and Cognitive Psychology combined), another may be more suited to a Humanistic approach. It is therefore difficult for a therapist to maintain one type of treatment model for all clients.

As the field of clinical psychology continues to evolve, theories in assessment and treatment are becoming increasingly more complex in nature. Theories are being combined in assimilative, accommodative, and complementary (or integrated) ways, supporting recent research that has revealed the need for a more flexible and inclusive model of human functioning. However, the result of integrated models simply being merged has not created a theoretically coherent construct in its own right. As a result, integrated models are often dismissed as “flaky” or unrefined. On the other hand, the field of Integrative psychology has aimed at creating a transtheoretical model that not only incorporates psychological theories and interventions, but also suggests that one can create an integrative psychological theory of human functioning that is its own independent orientation, reaching beyond the scope of pure-form and integrated-psychology theory models.

Integrative Psychology aims to provide a new paradigm in assessment and treatment of clients in an increasingly pluralistic society. Integrative Psychology is an orientation that embraces not only traditional pure-form psychological orientations, but incorporates alternative modalities of treatment that are empirically supported to be safe and effective, such as meditation, yoga, Eastern medicine, and nature-based therapy. Integrative theory is a transtheoretical model that expands current concepts of how individuals develop, what influences human behavior, and what techniques are available to improve quality of life. For example, Ken Wilber’s (2000) Integral Psychology theory includes knowledge of four distinct, but interdependent, perspectives (quadrants) of each client: the client’s experience of his/herself (the individual viewed subjectively/ from within), the client’s behavior and physical functioning (the client viewed objectively/ from without), the client’s culture, ethnicity, and interpersonal relationships (the client’s system viewed subjectively/ from within), and the client’s social systems in which they are embedded (the client’s system viewed objectively/ from without). Should one of the quadrants become crippled, it will negatively affect functioning in all others. For example, stunted or damaged development in interpersonal relationships (subjective experience of relationship) can adversely affect one’s psychological development and understanding of one’s self (subjective experience of self). Conversely, if functioning...
improves in one quadrant, all other quadrants are affected in positive ways. For example, if one’s spirituality (a developmental line found in the client’s subjective experience of self) evolves, one’s behavior (observable behaviors from without) can improve, which in turn can positively affect his or her interpersonal relationships in the familial unit (subjective experience of relationships) and work productivity (observable functioning from without). However, even this theory is incomplete. It is missing some important components, especially the relationship between the individual and nature, the role of Positive Psychology, Critical Psychology, etc. The good thing is, however, that Integrative Psychology is still evolving, leaving room for more inclusions. For the sake of this article, I choose to use Wilber’s (2000) Integral model of psychology as a template because I feel it is the most comprehensive model to date.

THANATOLOGY
Like Integrative Psychology, the field of Thanatology (the study of grief and bereavement) is also becoming increasingly pluralistic in nature. Issues surrounding cognitive, emotional, behavioral, physiological, and spiritual responses to any kind of loss are being identified from a broader perspective. However, these types of responses to loss are often researched and discussed in isolation from one another. At other times, influences on the bereavement process are combined loosely, limited by the topics the theorist or researcher has identified, such as exploring how culture and spiritual facets of human functioning are related and which in turn affect the grieving process. Since the integrative model transcends this dilemma, combining assessment of bereavement with the Integrative psychology model can provide clinicians with a much more thorough evaluation of their clients. Why should a clinician use an Integrative model to identify, assess, and treat a person who has experienced a loss? Because a more integrative approach to bereavement theory can help develop a common language to further support ongoing research, theory, and treatment of grief. It also will improve clinicians’ conceptualization of how one category of grief responses affects the others. Since bereavement is a universal condition that affects all human beings, and many of the clients seen in therapy come with symptoms associated with loss (whether loss of a friend or family member, divorce, self-identity, developmental shifts, etc.), it is essential that clinicians become familiar and comfortable with an integrally informed bereavement assessment and treatment model. Marquis writes:

*The more information a counselor obtains, the more likely it is that the client will be deeply understood by the counselor, thus increasing the likelihood that an appropriate course of counseling will be taken, ultimately increasing the likelihood of successful outcome.*


Clinicians are not informed that treatment of the bereaved is as much of a specialty as treating an eating disorder or chemical dependency. I cannot tell you how many times I have had a client come into my therapy room and tell me about an intervention or statement a previous therapist made, albeit with good intentions, that were not only clinically inappropriate, but also distressing to the client. This is a failing of the educational system for clinicians.

GRIEF AND CELEBRATION

for Leanna

While we glide to high summer’s melody
the mid-August sunset too early startles us
into time, the mourning dove a silent dark arrow into the glow of this day’s passing

love the chill breeze at the light’s edge cuts
suddenly we are naked and alone in grief.

Grief surrounds us we shall whisper examples
and scream your own into the collective howl

Every day we lean into the work of gratitude
else otherwise we curse the sweet air

we breathe the life that cycles through us
including the dying of a self or of a summer.

Once heartbroken I climbed the west face
of Sandia mountains above the dark mouth
of caves where families lived 20,000 years ago

attended to two pines at the mountain’s crest
ancient windswept stubs burnished to a glow
by the fury and rub of the wind’s long hands

they comforted me. May you find your way.
I lost a friend once over my inordinate attention
to celebration. When you return from the depths
we could simply roast chilies over an open fire
or chop ripe tomatoes cucumber squash and onions

crumble feta cheese, top with a Mafia of black olives
muscling their pleasure into grief’s neighborhood.

— Don Eulert
bereavement models have been developed. Some general models began in the 1940s, although they were not really treatment theories but were more theoretical and basic. More models recognizable as being for treatment began in the 1960s with Elizabeth Kübler-Ross’ (E. Kübler-Ross, 1969, On Death and Dying, Macmillan) Stage theory, which was actually based on her research with dying people and not meant for the experiences of the bereaved. Other models include task and phase models. Each has its strengths and weaknesses, the specifics of which are well beyond the scope of this article. There have been no attempts to use an Integrative, or transtheoretical, model to fully incorporate all currently known stage, phase, and task theories. However, jumping into an Integrative Bereavement Model is identification of what issues and responses to loss can be conceptualized within the integrative perspective. The remaining part of this article aims at identifying those precursors.

Following is a description of “uncomplicated” or “normal” responses to bereavement (“complicated” responses are beyond the scope of this article). Then I put these responses into specific quadrants (see Diagram 1) of topics, which should be covered in an intake of a client presenting with bereavement issues (see the lists of questions).

**Cognitive Responses**
Topics to be covered during intake: memory problems, poor concentration, poor decision-making, confusion, auditory or visual hallucinations, denial, poor attention, calculation difficulties, seeing an event repeatedly, sensing the deceased, intrusive or obsessive thoughts, disbelief, poor sequential processing, non-reality, blaming others, disruption of logical thinking. Where are these found? In the Upper Left quadrant as well, as it is the individual’s emotional responses to the loss.

**Behavioral Responses**
Behavioral responses include wearing deceased person’s clothing, suspiciousness, changes in communication, crying, keeping the room of the deceased intact, carrying a picture of object, absentmindedness, distancing from others, loss of interest, dreams, avoiding painful reminders, frequent sighing, intolerance of noise, appetite changes, hypervigilance, excessive humor, excessive silence. Where are these found? Well, this one is a little trickier. Many of these responses influence the individual’s relationships (such as distancing oneself from others). Therefore, any behavior that affects relationships with others is found in the Lower Left quadrant—the one that identifies how groups of people (the “We”) experience each other. Other behavioral responses can be objec-

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**Diagram 1. Wilber’s Integral Model (2000) and Bereavement Response Categories**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upper Left [UL] Quadrant: Individual – Interior, Subjective Experiences</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cognitive Responses</td>
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<td>Emotional Responses</td>
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<td>Spiritual Responses</td>
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<td>Behavioral Responses</td>
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<th>Lower Left [LL] Quadrant: Collective – Interior, Subjective Experiences</th>
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<td>Behavioral Responses</td>
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**BEREAVEMENT ASSESSMENT**

Spiritual Responses

Spiritual responses include loss of sense of meaning, anger toward higher power, loss of a sense of "soul", loss of belief in higher power, existential complications, increased spiritual beliefs, spiritually "empty". Where are these responses found in the Integrative model? Most are found in the upper right hand quadrant, where one would experience his or her sense of consciousness and spiritual beliefs. However, loss of meaning is a construct that is developed in relation to other people. Therefore, that response is found in the Lower Left quadrant (subjective cultural experiences). Additionally, any behavioral changes that result from these spiritual responses, such as no longer attending church, synagogue, ashram, etc., is located in the Lower Right quadrant. This is where the social systems that have an influence on the person are found. These influences, however, are those that can be observed by others.

Physiological Responses

Physiological responses include headaches, fatigue, choking sensation, muscle weakness, dry mouth, empty or fluttering feeling in stomach, bodily pains, tremors, dizziness, insomnia, nausea, appetite disturbance, shortness of breath, heart palpitations, chest pain, loss of motor skills, sweating, chills, vision problems. Where are these responses found in the Integrative model? In the upper right hand quadrant because they are measurable and observable (objective) and relate to the individual.

Now that the responses to a loss have been identified and placed within the Integrative model, a brief review of what topics should be evaluated in a bereavement case using the Integrative model can be discussed. This will be done by placing the assessment topic into each of the quadrants (this is not an exhaustive list). I am focusing on losses associated with death, but keep in mind that there are many losses (i.e., loss of a limb, divorce, transition in life, etc.) that can be evaluated using this model with some alterations.

**Upper Left (UL) Quadrant:**

**Cognitive, Emotional, Spiritual Responses**

1. What are the emotional responses to the loss? Are they "uncomplicated" or "complicated"?
2. What are the person's psychological coping style and skills?
3. How has the person's sense of spirituality been impacted?
4. How is the person's developmental level (i.e., emotional, cognitive, spiritual, interpersonal, moral, values, etc.) affecting the way they understand and respond to the loss?
5. Does the person have any history of mental health disorders?
6. What is the person's belief about the "preventability" of the loss?
7. Has the person had any "experiences of the deceased"?
8. How emotionally stable is the person?
9. What are the cognitive responses to the loss? Are they "uncomplicated" or "complicated"?
10. What does the loss mean to the person?
11. What is the person's level of maturity? Intelligence? Consciousness?
12. What are the person's spiritual/religious beliefs? What are his/her beliefs of an "afterlife"?
13. What are the person's philosophical beliefs?

**Upper Right (UR) Quadrant:**

**Cognitive, Physiological, Behavioral Responses**

1. What are the behavioral responses to the loss? Are they "uncomplicated" or "complicated"?
2. Is there any substance abuse?
3. Alcohol abuse? Has that changed since the loss?
4. Is the person sleeping well?
5. Is the person on medication?
6. Is the person eating well?
7. Is the person exercising?
8. What is the individual's age?
9. What was the age of the person who died?
10. How much time was there for the individual to prepare for the loss?
11. Was there a long illness associated with the loss? What type of illness was it?
12. What are the number, type, and quality of the secondary losses?
13. How is the individual's general health?
14. What other losses have there been in the person's life?
15. How long has it been since the loss?

**Lower Left (LL) Quadrant:**

**Behavior and Spiritual Responses**

1. What is the person's culture?
2. How acculturated is he/she?
3. What was the nature of the relationship?
4. What is the person's ethnicity?
5. What remaining relationships does the person have?
6. What role did the deceased play in the person's life?
7. What are the new roles the person must take on?
8. What are the dynamics between the person and the loss?
9. What is the person's sex-role conditioning?
10. What are the person's social roles?
11. What was the unfinished business between the person and the deceased?
12. Is there anything "unspeakable" about the loss (drug-related, divorce, abortion, AIDS, incest)?
13. Did the person attend funeral rituals?
My Road Map for Grief

When my big brother was shot dead in Canada that February who called me in Charleston with the news? I don’t remember that part I do remember my belly dropping to forever crawling to my bed curling into fetal posture fingers clutching tufts of textured bedspread where slow tears began to gouge a ditch midmorning sunlight glowing orange on the Libra scales painting changing patterns of dim and bright on the rug sharp shadows on the hardwood floor

How long did I lie there 35 years ago clenched and moaning Where was my toddler daughter What happened next?

That loss rearranged me Fragments of me hover there still. Over time that dreaded belly-dropping knowledge of vanished happiness has become a trusted scout in all the bereavements whispering, you know my name, you know how to do this.

Now I’m remembering a graveside service in freezing North Dakota winter for my Dad’s cousin Joel who molested me I remember my body shaking, teeth rattling, from more than cold

My big brother, 17 with ten more years to live, comes to stand behind me places his palms on my shoulders, saying you can calm down and I did.

— Karen Hawthorne

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If you look at general religious and spiritual orientation of human beings over a several thousand year period, you can’t help but be struck by the two or three major spiritual dispositions that men and women have had. Obviously this is a generalization, yet interesting. One orientation finds salvation on earth, and the other orientation finds final salvation in heaven, and the third finds salvation in the union of the two. Many variations on these three themes, and I’ll use some characterizing words and I don’t mean to pigeonholo anyone.

The first approach is called paganism (it doesn’t mean all pagans use just that approach, many would use other approaches as well), but the first approach, paganism, does tend to celebrate body, life, earth, and earth’s vitality as basically what the spiritual life is all about, and sin is anything that despoils or hurts life, the earth, or hurts body or fertility. These tended to be the earliest religions, often in the eras called archaic or magic epochs. Not everything in these eras were archaic or magic, there were many profound shamanic visions and shamanic states in the gross, subtle, and causal realms.

But the general orientation was that the more you honor the earth, the more you find spiritual awareness. Starting around the axial period in both east and west, sixth century BC Greece and the West, there is almost a reversal of orientation of what constitutes the spiritual or realized life, one in which you have the most freedom and the most fullness, and these tended to be transcendental religions. First is immanent (pagan), this life, this body, this earth. And the second is transcendental, it’s a kingdom, not of this earth, not of this body, not of this lifetime. A very otherworldly orientation, just as the first orientation (pagan) is this-worldly.

A lot of what we think of as the world’s great traditions, traditions that have come down to us in influential ways, tend to be of the ascending variety such as the monotheistic religions of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and a large part of world’s religions tend to be ascending with an otherworldly heavenly orientation. In India, you find this archetypal form of this ascending type of spirituality in the early forms of yoga and early Buddhism which basically equates this entire manifest realm of Gaia and senses and body with samsara, which means illusion, fragmentation, or sourness. And realization is the Nirvana, the pure formless realm, which is entirely other worldly, [where] there is no manifestation at all. The whole goal of this life is to get out of this life and off this round of rebirth. The earth is at best a runway, a takeoff for the real life that occurs in another realm or a natural heaven.

So the traditional ascending religions are generally not very friendly to the earth, or friendly to the body, and tend to be puritanical, repressive to some

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**LIVING YOUR FATE**

Nietzsche was the one who did the job for me. At a certain moment in his life, the idea came to him of what he called “the love of your fate” (Amor fati). Whatever your fate is, whatever the hell happens, you say, “This is what I need.” It may look like a wreck, but go at it as though it were an opportunity, a challenge. If you bring love to that moment—not discouragement—you will find the strength is there. Any disaster that you can survive is an improvement in your character, your stature, and your life. What a privilege! This is when the spontaneity of your own nature will have a chance to flow. Then, when looking back at your life, you will see that the moments which seemed to be great failures followed by wreckage were the incidents that shaped the life you have now. You’ll see that this is really true. Nothing can happen to you that is not positive. Even though it looks and feels at the moment like a negative crisis, it is not. The crisis throws you back, and when you are required to exhibit strength, it comes.

—Joseph Campbell
SPIRITUAL ORIENTATION

The Beautiful Leg

She had a beautiful leg
She had a very lovely face
She moved so gracefully
Youthfully across the park
She had such a beautiful leg.
I am thankful I have my eyes.

As she crossed the park
Her eyes sparkled
Her hair solong, black, clean, silky
Her figure most seductive.
I am thankful to sit in the park.

She sat on the bench so elegantly
Her skin so smooth and brown
The breeze caresses where the sun has baked
She was awaiting, perhaps....
I am thankful that I can feel.

Her leg is so perfect
Extending from that skirt so short
She has but one
I am so fortunate to have two.

The journey to the bench must be arduous
All those things we take for granted
Absorbed in my study fumbling through my book
She passed at the boundary of my awareness.
Her grace physically vanished from my experience.
Still a model for us all.
— David Lavra

nature, cloud or sky or Gaia, that entire
world of form out there and you think
that is the ultimate reality, then that’s
the pagan, descending orientation or the
orientation that celebrates life on earth.

If on the other hand, the pure wit-
ness, the transcendent self that has no
qualities at all, if you think that is
the ultimate reality, then you tend toward
being an ascender, because you want to
identify with consciousness, you don’t
want to identify with objects in con-
sciousness. A transcendent self, a self
that is empty, a self identified with nir-
vana—so you want to get into a state of
awareness where there are no objects
arising at all. These Samadhi states of
awareness are a goal found in
Theravadan Buddhism
and Patanjali’s yoga sutras.

If on the other hand, you
are aware of the witness
right now and aware of all
these objects arising mo-
moment to moment, and all of
a sudden this sense of a wit-
ness stance disappears, and
you are one with everything
that is arising moment to
moment, and yet there is
still that sense of freedom,
or spaciousness you have,
that is an experience of the
nondual state, a union of
emptiness or self inside with
all form arising out there,
so that honors both sides of
the equation, as on the one
hand that experience is with
all forms that are arising,
thus it honors the earth, but
it also rests in the empty
freedom that is the transcen-
dental witness itself. So it
honors heaven or nirvana or
the formless, and the union
of emptiness and form is
the nondual. Often one has
a taste of what is involved
through years of meditation.

The great nondual or tan-
tric traditions attempted to
take consciousness which is
pure emptiness and unite it
with all form and that means
unite it with earth, unite it
with body, unite it with
sexuality, and with gross, subtle, and
causal bodies, so a nondual orientation
is an example of attempting to unite the
ascending and the descending currents
into a nondual embrace....
It is very basic knowledge that everyone these days knows that if you are feeling depressed or overly anxious, then there is medication you can take that will make you feel better. All you need to do is to visit your local psychiatrist or medical doctor, and if you are lucky enough to have access to or be able to afford good health insurance, then it appears that your pills to happiness are on their way. While your pills may be on their way, “medication happiness” is a deceptive approach by our greedy materialistic technological society. For the preposition “your” implies that there is a “you” inside there; i.e. a real live authentic person who exists in the world. This “you” is without doubt faced with overwhelming unavoidable existential conditions, the most challenging of which I believe is your eventual death.

But this “you” may very well also have access to some bona-fide transpersonal wisdom, such as the possibility of deep spiritual awareness. I like to think of the combination of existential reality and transpersonal awareness blended together in the realm of humanistic personhood, as envisioned by the founders of the humanistic psychology movement in the early 1960s: Carl Rogers and Abrahani Maslow (A. Maslow, 1962, Toward a Psychology of Being, Van Nostrand; C. Rogers, 1961, On Becoming a Person, Houghton Mifflin).

Humanistic psychology places emphasis upon a person’s feelings, thoughts, desires, ambitions, dreams, fears, etc., in the context of a nurturing, authentic, therapeutic relationship that facilitates both personal awareness and personal growth. Rogers talked about “unconditional positive regard” and Maslow talked about “self-actualization” (Rogers; Maslow). As formulated by Carl Rogers, from an inner exploration of the self in the presence of a caring and genuine therapist, perhaps feelings of depression and anxiety could lead to awareness that one’s present life choices are not congruent with one’s deeper potential of self (Rogers). The extension of this humanistic perspective into a broadened Humanistic/Existential/Transpersonal perspective could even be combined with the dominant current American psychology focus of Cognitive and Behavioral psychology to formulate a creative and integral blend of effective psychotherapy, an example of which I believe can be found in Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, as formulated by Steve Hayes (Hayes, Strosahl, Wilson, 1999). In Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (abbreviated as ACT Therapy), the main premise is that difficult feelings such as depression and anxiety need to be accepted while the deeper self and higher values are contacted, complete with a behavioral plan to achieve one’s higher level goals in life.

But what about the pill? What happened to the necessary medication to alleviate these dreadful unwanted states of depression and anxiety? According to ACT Therapy, these states need to be accepted as part of your life while you learn to put your deepest intentions into your highest callings, regardless of whether or not you are taking any medication for depression or anxiety (S. Hayes, K. Strosahl, K. Wilson, 1999, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: An Experiential Approach to Behavior Change, Guildford Press). Perhaps your depression and anxiety will diminish as you live your life more authentically; perhaps they will remain with you. But the point is that you are shifting levels of life awareness; shifting into a higher experiential level that borders on the transpersonal realms of deep meditation and experiential spirituality (K. Wilber, 1995, Sex, Ecology, Spirituality, Shambhala). This shift in the experience of the person is consistent with the pioneering visions of Rogers and Maslow, and is also consistent with the existential awareness visions of Rollo May, Jim Bugental, and Irvin Yalom (J. F. T. Bugental, 1965, The Search for Authenticity: An Existential–Analytic Approach to Psychotherapy, Holt, Rinehart, Winston; R. May, 1969, Love and Will, Dell; I. Yalom, 1980, Existential Psychotherapy, Basic Books), and the higher levels of consciousness visions of Ken Wilber, Roger Walsh, and Charles Tart (C. Tart, editor, 1975, Transpersonal Psychologies, HarperSanFrancisco; Wilber, 1995; R. Walsh, 1999, Essential Spirituality: The Seven Spiritual Practices to Awaken Heart and Mind, Wiley). We could say that a person can choose to trade in the pill for the sacred awareness of his/her own existence; or as Shakespeare said: to be or not to be.

However, I am in the process of learning that perhaps psychopharmacology does not have to be as contradictory to authentic personal awareness and growth as I have thus far portrayed it to be. Perhaps psychotropic medications can be utilized as temporary relief that enable a person to truly make headway in exploring the Humanistic/
Existential/Transpersonal realms that I have been describing. Perhaps what is most important here is that even though it is not my way of personal growth, it appears that the only possibility for the survival of Humanistic psychology is to blend itself into the psychological mainstream in truly integrative fashion, as initially described in the many insightful articles in *The Handbook of Humanistic Psychology* (K. Schneider, J. F. T. Bugental, J. F. Pierson, editors, 2001, *The Handbook of Humanistic Psychology: Leading Edges in Theory, Research and Practice*, Sage) and the descriptive case studies in *Existential-Integrative Psychotherapy* (K. Schneider, editor, 2007, *Existential-Integrative Psychotherapy*, Routledge). This extensive Humanistic psychology integration has incorporated various Behavioral, Cognitive, and Psychodynamic psychologies, and there have also been perspectives in the context of Ken Wilber’s Integral Theory applied to Integral Psychology and Integral Psychiatry that have included Psychopharmacology into a mix of psychotherapeutic treatments (K. Wilber, 2000, *Integral Psychology*, Shambhala; K. Bearer, 2007, *Toward an Integral Treatment Methodology for Schizophrenia*, *AQL Journal* 1(4), www.integralinstitute.org; D. Zeither, 2007, *Integral Psychology: Clinical Applications*, *AQL Journal* 1(4), www.integralinstitute.org).

As I continue to extend my present involvement as a mental health worker and counselor trainee in our current mental health medical model managed care system, it becomes more and more clear to me that the pill is here to stay, and the humanistic practitioner somehow needs to assimilate the pill without succumbing to it; in other words, the person must swallow the pill and still “be.”

To give a bit of personal motivation for my interests in this whole topic, I can remember how much impact the movie *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, based upon Ken Kesey’s book of the same title (K. Kesey, 1962, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, Viking), had upon me when I first watched it in the movie theatres nearly 40 years ago. As I have described in my book *Art and Mental Illness* (E. Benjamin, 2006, *Art and Mental Illness*, Natural Dimension Publications, ben496@prexar.com), my personal exposure to the dehumanizing effects of excessive psychotropic medication stems from my growing up with an older brother who spent most of his adult life in and out of mental hospitals, diagnosed with bipolar disorder and given a multitude of medications, restraints, and shock treatments. I often wondered how different my brother’s life may have turned out if he had been seen by a Humanistic therapist who related to him in a caring, authentic, non-medical therapeutic context when he was in his formative growing up years before his first severe depression and suicide attempt that led to his first mental hospitalization. My *Art And Mental Illness* book is dedicated to my brother, and my decision to do a late in life career change from mathematics professor to counselor and psychologist is largely due to the lifelong involvement I had with my brother. I somehow never could accept that my brother had a psychological “illness” that could be cured if one could just find the right medication to give him. And my inclination to not accept the traditional medical model of mental disturbance was tremendously reinforced when I came upon the radical psychotherapy ideas of Thomas Szasz and R. D. Laing (T. Szasz, 1962/1974, *The Myth of Mental Illness*, Harcourt, R. D. Laing, 1967, *The Politics of Experience*, Ballantine; E. Benjamin, 2008, *Art and Mental Disturbance*, *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 48(1). To give a very brief description of these ideas, one could say that Laing asked what sense it makes when a person’s creative potential (Laing, and Szasz has written numerous books over a span of nearly half a century to dispel the whole medical model that portrays mental disturbance as mental “illness” (Szasz, 1974). However, the fact remains that the present-day realities of the managed care mental health society in which we live operate completely by the medical model of mental disturbance, with a primary focus of using various psychotropic medications to combat mental “illness.”

I thus find myself in quite the mental health counseling dilemma. In my initial experience as a counselor intern this past summer, I witnessed children as young as 3 and 4 years old being given various medications based upon their DSM IV diagnosis of ADHD (Attention Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder) and Autism (American Psychiatric Association, 2000, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 4th edition, American Psychiatric Association). For older children, the list of medications they were taking were incredibly extensive and used in a number of different combinations. Within myself I questioned the necessity of all this medication being given to the children, but I realized that I was in no position to change the system, and the best thing I could
do was to accept the medication and diagnostic status quo while relating to the children therapeutically in a humanistic capacity as I was able to. My current community based mental health program, in which I am working once again as a mental health worker and counselor trainee, is heavily oriented toward a Behavioral psychology approach, but there is also a strong humanistic non-medical strength-based foundation of perceiving clients in a personally involving, caring, and growth-oriented context. The DSM IV diagnostic criteria is accepted as part of our jobs, a necessity of working with the state and getting paid, but our clinical supervisor continuously stresses that our clients are people first and that the DSM IV criteria should not be given undue emphasis. With regard to the prescribed medications that go along with the DSM IV classifications, my agency appears to take a neutral stance. The medication requirements are accepted, but we as mental health workers are not involved in discussing these medications with clients or their families, much less giving them out to clients. Rather our focus is upon behavioral programming in the context of humanistic caring. I see this as a good example of “Humanistic Behaviorism,” a category in which I would also put ACT Therapy.

Are there occasions where I believe it is appropriate to give clients psychotropic medications? I would answer “yes” there are circumstances in which medication as well as restraints are appropriate and necessary to ensure the client’s safety and the safety of those working closely with the client. However, I would also say that the underlying humanistic context of therapeutic caring and authenticity does not need to be compromised in these circumstances. I have described such a humanistic restraint procedure in my Art and Mental Illness book (Benjamin, 2006), and I recently witnessed an intensive episode that came very close to violence involving one of my current adolescent clients. In this situation I must admit that I was very glad to see that medication was a viable and effective option. I am therefore not saying that there are no circumstances in which psychotropic medications in mental health treatment may truly be beneficial to clients. I can well understand how medication can be effectively utilized to enable for example a client overwhelmed by anxiety, or a client obsessed with paranoid delusions, to enter a more conducive state of mind to be able to receive benefit from the kind of humanistic psychotherapy that I have been advocating. The main problem I have is with the excessive and indiscriminate use of psychotropic medications as a “substitute” for authentic growth-oriented psychotherapy. Taking a pill to “feel better” I do not believe is a justifiable end in itself. But taking a pill to enable one to work on oneself in a humanistic therapeutic context I believe is a reasonable therapeutic activity to engage in.

I would add that my own personal/professional perspective is that part of the therapeutic goal should be to eventually reach a point where this pharmacological assistance is no longer needed.

In conclusion, with regard to the person versus the pill, perhaps the situation has possibilities of peaceful coexistence after all. Perhaps the person can swallow the pill in such a way that it actually enables him/her to “be,” and to eventually reach a point where the pill may no longer be needed. Certainly in the mental health context in which I have now chosen to work I think this is a sensible and viable perspective for me to adopt. But in my own personal life I still have no interest in allowing Psychopharmacology to enter my way of being. I have always been on a path of self-awareness and spiritual exploration, and I do believe that this is in keeping with our natural human capabilities to accept the psychological challenges of life, relying upon our own natural inner strengths. But this is me; and I recognize that I am far removed from the mainstream of my society, and what works for me may very well not work for the vast majority of people living in my society. I can describe to people my own ways and I can be open to a modified view of medication (temporary if feasible) in the context of therapeutic humanistic growth. With a bit of luck, I will be able to walk the humanistic/medication tightrope and find my place in the world of professional humanistic psychotherapy in the context of our current mental health medical model managed care system in the society in which I live.

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Living in a Cookie-Cutter World

— Gina E. Jones

During my 28 years as a flight attendant with Delta Airlines, staying in different cities on various overnight layovers, I began to notice something—here in this country and abroad. If you have traveled or moved lately, maybe you have noticed the same thing as well—we’re living in a cookie-cutter world.

In the past, each continent of the world had its own energy, a specific feeling that made it unique. The same could be said about different countries, states, and regions. Traditionally each area had its own unique flavor and distinct characteristics, and, as such, attracted individuals that matched that particular energy. People are attracted to specific regions because they match their own interests, family heritage, or personality. Huntington Beach, California, where I live, attracts a more relaxed, fun-loving type of person.

Traveling to various regions of the world, one could enjoy a variety of customs, clothing, money, foods, songs, dances, and spiritual traditions. Even the languages and dialects of certain places drew people in. Look at Europe where these differences provided you with entertainment and extraordinary culinary experiences and could affect you physically, mentally, and emotionally in different ways.

When I was in Rome, Italy, years ago for a brief 14-hour layover, I felt like I was home and yet I had never been there before and couldn’t understand a word they said! There was an indescribable connection there for me. One I can’t explain. But hey my name Gina is Italian, so maybe that means something!

Over the years I’ve noticed that much of this diversity is gradually dissipating—and, it seems, with careful planning. Languages are all assimilating slowly, slowly, into the one global language of English. Monies are being integrated into one global currency. Every town in the world now seems to have a McDonald’s or Burger King. And more recently, a Starbucks is popping up on every corner.

Small businesses, especially in this country, are quietly being affected. Take the office supply business for example. There used to be myriad small independent office supply stores where personal and individualized service made the shopping experience enjoyable for the customer and the employees as well. Then massive stores like Staples, Office Depot, and Office Max appeared on the scene. Small business could no longer compete price wise or efficiently offer the same volume of services as the national chain stores. Many of these neighborhood businesses had to close their doors. It should be no surprise to find out that these three mega-store chains are now having financial difficulties. Soon, one or two of these giants will bow out of the market and there will be only one and possibly two places left to purchase office supplies.

This scenario occurs over and over, one industry at a time. In agriculture, small farmers are slowly being replaced by corporate industry. It is becoming less and less feasible for people to go into business for themselves. Just opening up a business bank account takes a mountain of paperwork. Employee benefits and taxes paid by small businesses are consuming more and more of...
It was a privilege to review this fascinating book. I learned much about child development, a useful frame to view human interaction, and about questions raised by cross-cultural studies.

At the beginning of this book, the author describes how humans live socially, how we change, and he defines “distinctly human.” He presents the importance of culture in human development and how culture affects the goals of childrearing. He shows how our assumptions about child-rearing practices defy our other assumptions and beliefs. Then the author progresses into a discussion of our species’ predisposition for social engagement and relationship. This relatively slow development in humans and primates creates the basis for socio-emotional attachment and bonding through elaborate communication modes.

Most interesting for me in Tronick’s presentation was the description of the Efes in Zaire. Unable to compete and/or comply with complex and expensive state and federal laws, they soon cease to exist, leaving us with only large, faceless bureaucratic organizations. And most of corporations take on a depersonalized and desensitized view of the individual—employees and customers alike.

One of the more glamorous aspects of being a flight attendant is definitely the layovers. It used to be a thrill for the crew to shop for unique items in various cities around the country. However, today, one shopping mall looks like another. All have the same basic stores with little or no variety or local flavor. Even the food courts offer few choices where local foods and flavors can be enjoyed. Individuality and diversity are slowly dissipating. With everyone working nine to five or even longer, there is much less chance for individual creativity. One town looks like the next, one region is becoming more and more similar to the others, and each individual is becoming more and more like the next person. Welcome to our cookie-cutter world.

Here’s something else that makes these trends even more interesting. Throw in some emotional upheaval like September 11th and you get everyone’s thoughts flowing in the same direction. There have been numerous government-generated studies on physical and emotional health that can accurately predict how the public will react to a given a certain set of circumstances. They know what fear and fright do to people. They know how exactly the masses will respond.

“One” mind-pattern is much easier to control and manipulate. Most animals operate with a group mind, commonly referred to as a “herd mentality,” because most have not yet realized their individualized mind. Whatever one animal does, the others will automatically follow, without thinking. Creating a “herd” mentality among humans is the most effective way to control them.

We see this effect being demonstrated every day especially through television. Commercials run over and over, 24 hours a day 7 days a week. One commercial suggests that 7 out of 10 Americans are depressed, that 1 out of 3 cannot sleep, and that 1 out of 2 Americans are confused. Are you? Are your family and friends? Or is this what someone wants us to believe so we will buy their drugs or force our doctors to prescribe drugs we do not need? Think about it carefully. Are you in control of your own thoughts or is someone shaping them for you? Look closely at the circumstances around you and make your own decisions.

I would like to ask you these important questions. Did you come into this world as a uniquely radiant, multi-dimensional star-shaped cookie only to find out that only plain old flat, round cookies are acceptable? Throughout your life, have you tried to change, shape, and mold yourself into something that you are not? Have you cut off those magnificent arms that you once had from your unique cookie just to fit in? And if so, did you do this to please others or to please yourself? Maybe that is why people are depressed, unable to sleep, and confused!

It is more important than ever to choose to live our lives in freedom. Yes, we should think before we act, but always maintain our individuality. And celebrate, honor, and respect the individuality of others as well. Let’s set aside the judgments or programming of advertisers, big business, and big government. I invite you to step outside of the current cookie-cutter world and live the life you were meant to live. I invite you to live out the life of the brilliant star that you are and taste how sweet life really can be!

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His cited research described how women and girls band together to take over the nurturing of the infant, relieving the biological mother of her mothering duties for the first few months. Infant bonding is purposefully spread over a large section of the community. The success and healthfulness of this arrangement raise important questions about our culture-based assumptions about mother-infant bonding. Indeed, it stimulated many thoughts about benefits to the physical-mental-emotional health of mother and baby and attachments to the larger community.

This part of Tronick’s book stimulated comparisons of childrearing practices in the USA (that I have witnessed) to other societies that I have been in. The cultural and (economic) purposes that form these practices are complex, but generally children seem to benefit from continuous contact with a caring adult. Daycare centers are not designed for such arrangements despite their intentions. My observations in a culture where children receive continuous contact and attention from adults, mostly family, seems to bond the children more closely in their homes and in their general environment.

The author presents his Dydactic Expansion Model as an alternative to a contemporary psychoanalytic approach. In his model, a person either individually or in concert with another person creates new meaning from experiences of new input and exchange. This process is a disorganizing of old experiences and knowledge when creating new perceptions and understandings through the interaction of two people. This is more than two sets of experience, skills, and abilities as cumulative, because both are amplified by the interaction. It is the effect of one person on the other, the something new that is created.

Of particular importance for a number of professional practices is the application of research and his model to human development. The identification of health and the aggregates of pathology are examined. The probable causes and indications of developing issues among infants to others in their lives are explained via the Dydactic Expansion Model. Much of the research is based on depressed mothers, and the parental depression is shown to affect child growth, both physically and emotionally. The child often learns to be depressed and compensates by mocking the symptoms. In some cases the clinically depressed mothers are affectively neglectful of their baby. Neglect and grossly diminished communication with infants and young children leaves them without the dydactic relationship in which they learn.

In my own work, I have witnessed extreme forms of neglect and rejection of infants, in Post Partum Depression. The behaviors and characters of the children are often antisocial. However, where I currently live in Central America, I only observe these symptoms among street children who have been abandoned. The extended families provide support for children, and this seems to create conditions more like those in the Efe culture.

**REPAIRING MISCOMMUNICATIONS**

The adult-infant relationship is critical to development on several levels, and Tronick provides case studies, analysis, and explanations through the presenting of his model. He describes the emotional intelligence and mood development of infants based on several years of research by a large number of teams. For me his research model particularly and clearly demonstrated the interactive process between parent and child that leads to mastery of skills, namely “repairs” of miscommunications (in the affective mode). The importance of these repairs is stressed because in this kind of communication between infant and adult the goal is a match of affective message, a form of bonding perhaps. Connection through repairs (finding the correct affect) of understanding and intent is where growth takes place. Perserverence and willingness to work through these differences has intense meaning for the infant.

Continuous mismatches without corrections frustrate both partners, but the infantangers or withdraws or both because the infant’s resources are limited. Connection with the parent is vital.

Personality itself is believed to be based on deficiencies in the process of communication, and some of these are linked to extremes like conduct disorder and affective disorders. The extreme forms are related to chronic mismatches and neglect, but research shows that later deficits do not always occur. However, generally the research found developmental deficits due to failure to correct mismatches, and particularly the failure of parents to respond. The infant independently learns self-regulation, but the infant learns interactive regulation through communicating with the parent very early in life. Failure to learn, practice, and repair communication mismatches handicaps the child in their relationship with the world.

Tronick offers a review and analysis of research on depression in mothers, which he shows to be a serious condition that often has deleterious effects on the infant. Stress and mental disorders have similar disabling effects. In addition to general research, Tronick presents the results of longitudinal work with depressed mothers from which much insight is derived.

Depressed mothers were found to misread, and, worse, not respond to their infants frequently, which handicaps the babies in their social functioning. His research shows that many of these children later developed antisocial characteristics. Furthermore, Tronick describes how mother and infant learn to co-regulate one another’s affective dis-
plays. With chronic failure to elicit appropriate responses, the infant's sense of mastery is compromised. This deficit becomes more apparent as the child matures.

The author describes how moods, which are affective states of longer duration than a mere affect, develop in infants related to the quality of communication between infant and caretaker. Moods are co-created, and this has important implications for parent training and counseling. Terms such as mood are defined to help the reader to better understand the information.

CREATING COHERENCE

In relationship, the person and infant increase their coherence of self and others and what they do together. This increase in complexity and state of consciousness becomes a tool for further growth and functioning socially. This expansion of dyadic consciousness is achieved in exchanges using reparations of mismatches. When the infant is not attended to, communication stops, and the infant stops trying. The infant reverts to self-comforting or regulation, which is limited and does not satisfy the need to increase consciousness.

Tronick’s research and model offer great tools for prenatal parent training and counseling for mothers (and families). Awareness of the infant’s mode of learning and preparation for parenting offers prevention of deficits. The emotional state of the parent (generally the mother) “...is of fundamental importance to the infant’s emotional state.” (p. 169). Infants actively seek out affective information to supplement their understanding; but at times the infant changes his/her own perceptions of events. Rather than being passive recipients, infants are very active in relationships and learning. Most critical, infants need opportunities to evoke goals, evaluations, and strivings at the affective level. Therefore, it is parents who can learn to interact more effectively with their infants, and children as well.

DAVID LAFRA, an AHP member, is in retirement in a warm place.

EXISTENTIAL-INTEGRATIVE PSYCHOLOGY: Guideposts to the Care of Practice

Edited by Kirk J. Schneider

Reviewed by Daryl Paulson

This is a very informative book written in fourteen parts, designed for different purposes. Parts 1 and 2 are written by Kirk Schneider, and Part 3 is written by other authors. There is a short preface to each of the 14 sections in Part 3, and a short summary and conclusion by Schneider, and, finally, an index.

The general preface gives the book’s purpose: to update and expand The Psychology of Existence, as well as bringing others to awareness of the plea to wake up to the diversification of existential psychology in the field. Without existential psychology, which is the understanding of a person’s relation to being, psychology practices are merely adjustment rituals.

Schneider, in the introduction, focuses on Rollo May and the ambitious proposal presented in Mays’ book Existence.

Schneider states that quick fixes and easy solutions console but generally fail to genuinely confront and focus on human problems. This is displayed by the erosion of the environment, trickle-down economics, being “with us or against us,” and tremendous amounts of money spent on the military while funds dwindle for healthcare, the home-
This book is very well written, informative and, in my opinion, a masterpiece. It is useful for therapists, counselors, ministers, and end-of-life practitioners, not only for the information it contains, but also for joining these issues into larger platforms.

DAVID. PAULSON, Ph.D., is a scholar-at-large in transpersonal and integral studies. He is President/Ceo of Bioscience Laboratories, and the author of six books, including Caring Business, Competitive Business: An Integral Approach to the 21st Century, and Walking the Point, Male Initiation, and the Vietnam Experience.

THE SOUL GENOME: Science and Reincarnation
By Paul Von Ward

Reviewed by Tom Nielsen

Entering a growing catalog of scholarly research and reports on reincarnation is a new and different book by Paul Von Ward, author of Our Solarian Legacy and Gods, Genes and Consciousness. Whereas psychiatrists Ian Stevenson (Children Who Remember Previous Lives) and Jim Tucker (Life Before Life) have focused on investigating, analyzing, and reporting reincarnation phenomena from several thousand cases involving, primarily, young children, Von Ward has chosen to focus on developing and exploring a theoretical model, genomic constructs, and new technology (instruments and methods) for fathoming the phenomena of reincarnation as evidenced in a select number of adult lives, past and present.

Von Ward surveys a variety of unexplained phenomena and developments in frontier science in order to establish the matrix upon which he grows his ideas and thinking. He probes such phenomena as prodigies, precocity, anomalous (unsourced) knowledge, and unbidden images in dreams, visions, déjà vu, doppelgängers (look-alikes), and mimicked life events. He examines emerging theory and research in such fields as natural philosophy, physics, biology, genetics, psychiatry, psychology, biocommunications, and consciousness (e.g., Ervin Laszlo, Rupert Sheldrake, Savely Savva, Cleve Backster, Carl Jung, Dean Radin, Gary, and Stephan Schwartz). These provide the nutrients for his theory, hypothesis, and constructs of a soul genome.

Then Von Ward plunges into the realm of theorizing, hypothesizing, measuring, and testing an explanatory, Integral Model for reincarnation. The Integral Model consists of an "apparent reincarnation package." For the package, Von Ward coins the term psychoplasm—the soul-genome—which is similar to Stevenson’s hypothesized psychophore construct. Specifically, Von Ward’s psychoplasm is "a genome-like, energetic and information bio-field that embodies a single being’s knowledge, feelings, and behavior patterns that transcend space-time."

Five factors constitute this soul/psychoplasm which Von Ward labels Physical Phenotypes, Cognitive Cerebrotypes, Emotional Egotypes, Social Personatypes, and Creative Performatypes. Each factor is subject to illustration, illumination, investigation, and assessment by a set of instruments which Von Ward has developed and applied to profile the dimensions of evidence for specific cases of reincarnation. He examines in some detail the similarities in the lives of pairs of individuals, offering the evidence found along the factorial dimensions...
of the psychoplasm. In some cases the subjects are historically recognized figures; i.e., James and Dolley Madison, Paul Gauguin, Marilyn Monroe, and John Denver, while the persons with which their psychoplasm are associated are either not generally known or anonymous. Photos, biometric data, historical and personal facts and coincidentals, ratings on the scales developed by Von Ward to quantify the five factors, and analyses of the findings, are included to illustrate the evidence and support his hypothesis and Integral Model.

Von Ward has undertaken an ambitious and challenging project, venturing into a domain of inquiry fraught with controversial issues and challenging problems. For this reviewer, he presents with his Integral Model, methodology, instruments, and illustrative cases a profound and uniquely personal perspective of the soul and reincarnation. By extending the genome metaphor and applying biological and psychological constructs within the context of frontier science and thought, he offers us the opportunity to consider a scientific, conceptual framework for explicating and appreciating the reported and experienced phenomena associated with reincarnation and the soul.

TOM NIELSEN, Ed.D., has been a teacher and educational researcher, developer, and administrator in medical and higher education. He is currently working on a screenplay, Willow Crowe, concerning reincarnation, and has a website on cosmos, mind, and soul at www.enfolded.info. tom@enfolded.info.

101 THINGS I WISH I KNEW WHEN I GOT MARRIED: Simple Lessons to Make Love Last
By Linda and Charlie Bloom

Reviewed by Barbara Wolf Terao

Falling in love may be easy. Sustaining love, however, takes effort. And sustaining a marriage takes persistent effort. As the writer Rilke put it, “For one human being to love another, that is perhaps the most difficult of all our tasks, the ultimate, the last test and proof, the work for which all other work is but preparation.” That is where the Blooms’ book begins.

Charlie and Linda Bloom wrote this book to help couples strengthen and deepen their intimacy over time. Though each of the 101 suggestions is presented in a short section of only a few pages, the kernels of wisdom give substantial food for thought, not marital “fast food” or a quick fix. Many of us could reflect at length, for instance, on #37: Your opinion is not the truth. Or #42: Give what you want to receive.

Most of the lessons are illustrated with an anecdote, such as #54: The cheap thrill you get from putting down your partner isn’t so cheap. Using the example of Faye and Chip who come in for counseling to repair a marriage damaged by their corrosive habit of criticizing each other, we learn some lessons along with the couple. The main lesson is the idea of win–win. As the Blooms put it, “This is not so much a strategy of success, but an understanding of the essential reality that in any partnership there is no such thing as win–lose; if what you gain is at your partner’s expense, then you both have lost. Like two people riding a tandem bicycle, if one goes down, you both fall.” As in all their examples, the Blooms help each person make choices that help rather than hurt their relationship.

This book has grown on me. As my husband and I approach our twenty-fifth wedding anniversary, I find myself taking sustenance and encouragement from it more and more. Linda and Charlie Bloom have been married for more than thirty years and are both psychotherapists. Like most of us, they have struggled to change their conditioned patterns and habits. And they have had plenty of differences to work through between them. Their writing and teaching are based largely on those personal experiences.

As the title says, the lessons are simple. The hard part is living them. When you need a nonjudgmental brand of encouragement, turn to the Blooms. As they point out, “There is a difference between judging and being judgmental.” This is not a book that pretends to know everything, but it shows you enough to succeed in “the last test and proof” of love.

BARBARA WOLF TERAO, Ed.D., continues to learn the lessons of appreciating differences rather than cursing them, becoming attached to them, or reacting mindlessly to them, especially with her husband, Donald, who is a gem.
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