Beyond Dogma: The Role of "Evolutionary" Science and the "Embodiment" of Archetypal Energies

carroy u ferguson, UMASS Boston

Available at: https://works.bepress.com/carroy_ferguson/5/
The Enteric Nervous System
About Milton Erickson
Humanizing a Creek
Spiritual Synchronicity & Loss

JOURNAL OF HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY

REVIEWS: REVOLUTIONARY DEISTS, EMBRACING ISRAEL/PALESTINE, MAGICAL THINKING
ASSOCIATION for HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY

ahpweb.org

...since 1962, kindred spirits on the edge, where human potential and evolving consciousness meet

AHP principles include integrity in personal and professional interactions, authenticity, trust in human relationships, compassion and deep listening skills, respect for the uniqueness, value, independence, interdependence, and essential oneness of all beings.

Humanistic Psychology is the science and embodiment of love.

PAST PRESIDENTS

JAMES F. T. BUGENTAL
SYDNEY M. JOURARD
E. J. SHOEBEN, JR.
CHARLOTTE BOHLER
S. STANSFIELD SARGENT
JACK R. GIBB
GERARD V. HAIGH
FLOYD W. MATSON
DENIS O’DONOVAN
FRED MASSAUD
LAWRENCE N. SOLOMON
NORMA LYMAN
STANLEY KREPPNER
VIN ROSETNHAL
ELEANOR CRISWELL
CHARLES HAMPDEN-TURNER
JEAN HOUSTON
GEORGE LEONARD
BILL BRIDGES
JACQUELINE L. DOYLE
VERGINIA SATIR
RICK INGRASCI & PEGGY TAYLOR
DENIS JAFFE
LAWRENCE LEISHAN
LONNIE BARBACH & JOHN VASCONCELOS
WILL McWHINNEY
FRANCES VAUGHAN
RUBEN NELSON
ELIZABETH CAMPBELL
MAUREEN O’HARA
SANDRA FRIEDMAN
ANN WEISSER CORNELL
ARTHUR WARMOTH
J. BRUCE FRANCIS
M. A. BAIRMAN
JOCELYN OLIVIER
KATY ELIZABETH BRANT
STAN CHARNOSKY
STEVE OLWEEAN
LELAND “CHIP” BAGGETT
STEVE OLWEEAN
J. BRUCE FRANCIS

AHP OFFICE & PERSONNEL

Member Services: ahpoffice@ahpweb.org
415/435-1604; fax 415/559-0030
AHP, 151 Petaluma Blvd. So., #9227, Petaluma, CA 94952
CEC Coordinator: Sylvia Mignon, (617) 287-7384
Journal of Humanistic Psychology Editor: Shawn Rubin, shawn@shawanrubin.com
AHP Perspective Editor: Kathleen Erickson, EricksonEditorial@gmail.com
Web Developer: Kiana Karimi, kiana@kianadesign.com

AHP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Co-President: Carroy U. “Cuf” Ferguson,
(617) 287-7382; AHP Liaison

Co-President: Leland “Chip” Baggett,
AHP Perspectuve Liaison

Treasurer: M. A. Bjarkman, MABahp@aol.com
Events Committee
Secretary: Bob McGregor,
Bob@humanpotentialcenter.org
Stan Charnofsky, Stan.Charnofsky@csun.edu,
Consulting Perspective Editor
Ginger Clark, GingerClark1@gmail.com
Events Committee
Koorosh Rasseh, kooroshr@gmail.com
Events Committee
Hiro Sasaki, kooroshr@gmail.com
Events Committee

AHP BOARD AFFILIATES

Monique Chibara, ahpweb.org and AHP event coordination
Bonnie Davenport, Membership consultant, Perspective proofreader
Ken Ehrlich, kehrlich@skyweb.net, (973) 779-7793
Don Eulert, Perspective Consulting Editor, farmprod@pachell.net
Lauren Ford, AHP Webmaster
Sandra Friedman
John Harnish, International Team, harnish@wildblue.com
Deb Oberg, AHP Events Chair, DKOberg@aol.com
Samuel Bendeck Sotillos, samuelbendeck@yahoo.com
Bruce Francis, bruce.francis@capella.edu

AHP COMMUNITIES

Ontosophy Community, Bari, Italy, contact Francesco Palmirota, ontopalm@gmail.com; (39) 080/763006 - 3294521246 - 3886532077
http://www.solino.com/
Oregon Community, Strengthening wisdom, cooperation, positive action, contact Siderius@pobox.com
Monthly meetings: personal sharing & potluck (503) 244-3620
Student Communities, Campus groups dedicated to the ideals of humanistic living/psychology and active in their application, contact Stan.Charnofsky@csun.edu

AHP PERSPECTIVE

Consulting Perspective Editor

Liaison

Editor: Shawn Rubin,
shawn@shawanrubin.com

Web Developer: Kiana Karimi, kiana@kianadesign.com

AHP PERSPECTIVE Member Benefits

JOIN AT AHPWEB.ORG OR CALL 415/435-1604

AHP PERSPECTIVE

Free bimonthly newsletter.

JOURNAL OF HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY Quarterly journal, free to Professional Members, 75% off subscription price for regular members

AHPWEB AHP’s online publication at ahpweb.org, with Articles, Bibliographies, Bookstore, Calendar of Workshops, Web Resources . . .

DIRECTORY OF HUMANISTIC PROFESSIONALS Free online Directory listing for Professional members with description of your work

CONFERENCE DISCOUNTS Member Discounts on some conferences/events (See Calendar of Events on page 4 and on ahpweb.org.)

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS CECS on many AHP events.

AHP SPONSORSHIP OF YOUR APPROVED EVENT Listings in Perspective & on ahpweb CECs, mailing lists, Sylvia.Mignon@umb.edu

PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE group plan
American Professional Agency 800/421-6694

HEALTH AND LIFE AND DISABILITY INSURANCE group plans
Marsh US Consumer Group 800/323-2106; www.personal-plans.com/ahp
NASRO: 800/638-8113; info@nasro-co-op.com

BOOK DISCOUNTS 20% discount on books from Sage Publications

AHP MAILING LIST RENTAL Member discount on AHP Mailing Lists

ADVERTISING DISCOUNTS Member ad rates for Perspective & ahpweb ads. Rates on p. 23.

AHP AUTHORS Your books listed in the AHP Humanistic Bookstore, on the AHP Authors Page.

AHP MEMBERSHIP

connect with conscious community, enhance quality of life, and advance awareness & skill in humanistic principles & practices

AHP MEMBERSHIP DUES

Individual Regular Membership includes 6 PDF issues of Perspective magazine & 4 online issues of Journal of Humanistic Psychology $ 69

Professional Membership includes print Journal of Humanistic Psychology & PDF Perspective magazine, and your entry in the online Directory of Humanistic Professionals $ 110

Joint ATP–AHP Professional Membership includes both print Journals, PDF AHP Perspective and ATP Newsletter, entries in both online Professional Directories

Student/Senior benefits are the same as Individual Membership

Print Journal added to Individual or Student membership

Lifetime AHP Membership

* Without AHP Membership, the $190.
NEWS & COLUMNS

4 • CALENDAR OF EVENTS

5 • AHP VISION STATEMENT

6 • AHP BOARD OPENINGS

6 • PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
Beyond Dogma: The Role of “Evolutionary” Science and the “Embodiment” of Archetypal Energies . . . Carry U. “Cuf” Ferguson

8 • LETTERS Cosmetically Speaking . . . Randall H. Niehoff
High School Graduation Speech, Huntingtown, Maryland, 2012 . . . Maurice Manuel Stanley Harris
Brac Rabbit, the Avenging Angel . . . Len Bergantino

10 • JOURNAL OF HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY
JHP 52:2 Spring 2012, Contents and Editorial Commentary . . Shawn Rubin

ARTICLES

12 • Acting from the Hara—The Enteric Nervous System . . . Zoltan Brys and Rebecca Castaldini

15 • About Milton Highland Erickson, M.D. . . . Len Bergantino

16 • Humanizing a Creek . . . Spyros Damascos

18 • Spiritual Synchronistic Events Related to Personal Loss . . . Bruce Southers

REVIEWS

19 • The 7 Laws of Magical Thinking: How Irrational Beliefs Keep Us Happy, Healthy, and Sane by Matthew Hutson . . . David Ryback

20 • Embracing Israel/Palestine: A Strategy to Heal and Transform the Middle East by Michael Lerner . . . David Lavra

21 • The 7 Laws of Magical Thinking: How Irrational Beliefs Keep Us Happy, Healthy, and Sane by Matthew Hutson . . . David Ryback

9 • AD RATES

JOINT MEMBERSHIP AHP–ATP
$159 includes all benefits of Professional Membership in both

AHP Professional Member benefits:
• 6 stimulating, information-packed issues of our magazine, AHP Perspective
• Substantial discounts on AHP events, regional & Annual conferences
• 4 quarterly issues of the Journal of Humanistic Psychology
• Continuing Education Credits for Conferences and Events
• Listing in online Directory of Humanistic Professionals
• Discounts on AHP Perspective and ahpweb.org ad rates, mailing list rentals
• Eligibility for professional liability, group health, disability, and life insurance
• Opportunity to link your website directly with ahpweb, as a Memberlink
• Access to ahpweb’s “Members Only” section for news and opportunities

ATP Professional Membership Benefits:
• Subscription to the semiannual Journal of Transpersonal Psychology
• Access to all 35 years of Journal (JTP) articles and hundreds of audio and video recordings of past conference presenters
• A searchable Networking List of members
• ATP’s Listing of Professional Members
• Listing in the ATP Professional Members Guide, access to the listserv
• Reduced rates for Newsletter classified advertising
• ID and Password to Members Only section of atpweb.org, with full-text archives of the Journal of Transpersonal Psychology and audio archives of the past ATP conferences from 1990 to the present
VOICE DIALOGUE
DASSIE HOFFMAN, Ph.D., LCAT, ADTR, & BRIDGET DENGAL GASPARD, LMSW

In 2012, the New York Voice Dialogue Institute will present its Voice Dialogue Training Sessions. The price is $400 per weekend, but you may be eligible for a pre-payment discount. For those earning CECs, there is an additional requirement of 2 private facilitations. These workshops earn 39 CECs from the Association for Humanistic Psychology, 48 CECs from the National Association of Social Workers, and 42 CECs from the International Federation of Coaches.

LEVEL ONE–3 weekends • 39 CECs • Sat. & Sun. 10–6

LEVEL TWO–2 weekends • 39 CECs • Fri. 6–9, Sat. & Sun. 10–6
April 19–21, 2013, May 10–12, 2013 • New York City

New York Voice Dialogue Institute, New York City, 161 West 54th Street, Suite 804, New York, New York 10019
Contact: http://www.newyorkvoicedialogueinstitute.org; nyvoicedialogue@yahoo.com; Dassie: (212) 956-0432; Bridgit (718) 522-4009

VOICE DIALOGUE:
MIRIAM DYAK and CASSANDRA COSME DE PREE

LEARNING THE LANGUAGE OF ENERGY: A VOICE DIALOGUE
FACILITATOR’S TRAINING
SPONSORED BY AHP • CECs • AHP member discount of 15%
2013 dates to come • Redmond, Washington

ADVANCED VOICE DIALOGUE
FACILITATOR TRAINING
SPONSORED BY AHP • CECs • AHP discount
2013 dates to come • Redmond, Washington

The Voice Dialogue Institute, Sammamish, Washington; miriam@thevoicedialogueinstitute.org; http://www.thevoicedialogueinstitute.org/

GESTALT CONSULTATION
STUDY GROUP
THREE-DAY WORKSHOP
CYNDY SHELDON, MSW

CYNDY’ SHELDON, MSW, who trained with Fritz Perls and James Simkin, co-founded the original Gestalt Institute of San Francisco in 1967 and taught there for 25 years as well as in Europe for many years. Inspired to follow her bliss in search of a more spiritual orientation, she worked among the Navajos for 15 years. Now, in her 75th year, she is eager to share the integration of all of these experiences with those who are curious and interested. Currently she lives in Bellingham, Washington.

THREE-DAY WORKSHOP: This small study group will provide more detailed information about the history of Gestalt, the theory, methods, and practices, as well as on-the-spot feedback to participants practicing doing Gestalt therapy with one another.

SPONSORED BY AHP • 18 CECs • $300/section • 10–5 p.m.
AHP/student discounts
May 20, July 8, August 19, 2011 • Seattle, Washington
Contact: Cyndy Sheldon, 360 656 6207, www.cyndysheldon.com cyndysheldon@comcast.net

GESTALT AS A WAY OF LIFE
ONE-DAY WORKSHOP

This day-long program provides a beginning understanding of the practices Gestaltists teach their clients, many of which have similarities to Buddhism and Eckhart Tolle’s teachings. Also covered will be some of the theory and methods used. Mini-lectures and experiential exercises plus time for some personal work.

SPONSORED BY AHP • 6 CECs • $80 • AHP & student discounts • 10 – 5
Sunday, August 5, 2012 • Seattle, Washington
Contact: Cyndy Sheldon, 360 656 6207, www.cyndysheldon.com cyndysheldon@comcast.net

AHP Fall Conference
MIND/BODY CONNECTION: Empirically Supported Humanistic Approaches
GINGER CLARK, Koorosh Rassekh

October 6, 2012 • 8 – 5, Saturday • 6
CECs • Los Angeles • University of Southern California, University Park Campus,
Wong Conference Center, Harris Hall Room 101, Los Angeles, CA 90089
http://ahpfall12-es1.eventbrite.com/?srnk=1

AHP Winter Conference
50th AHP ANNIVERSARY: Phoenix Rising
February 22–24, 2012 • CECs • Los Angeles
Check ahpweb.org for more information as it unfolds
In its 50th year, the Association for Humanistic Psychology has reflected upon its mission, over the past half century, to facilitate the understanding of the Humanistic principles within the global community. Our success in this objective is reflected in the recognition of these principles in just about every realm of science and practice relating to human service and growth around the world. We see it in such arenas as medicine and parenting, where concepts like wellness, attachment, empathic communication, self-direction, and maximizing potential are assumed to be essential in promoting good health and adjustment over the lifespan. The principles of human rights, freedom of choice, wisdom of the self, fostering relationships and community, and spiritual growth are now deeply held ideals in many of the social sciences and services. It is even reflected in public policy, with social programs and school mission statements aimed at nurturing and educating the whole child. There is great satisfaction in seeing these concepts, which were previously criticized as indulgent and harmful by fields that were rigidly behaviorally, cognitively, or physiologically based, now being affirmed as elements of best practices in providing treatment and encouraging growth.

In its first iteration, AHP and Humanistic Psychology in general focused almost exclusively on the growth of the individual. While we believe that principle continues to be necessary, in the words of one of our founders it is no longer sufficient. We also recognize the importance of change and growth in relationships, families, communities, societies, and in a global context.

As a result of this progress, AHP is re-envisioning its purpose and responsibility to its members and supporters. It is now time to reach further into the awareness of individuals and communities, and to reach higher into the sphere of translating new knowledge, policy, and practice into humanistic terms. The impact of humanistic psychology will be strengthened through the use of social media and other technologies that will allow AHP to increase its visibility and accessibility to the public; helping them to integrate humanistic ideas into their lives on multiple levels. This approach will also provide a platform for the creation of online learning communities designed to enrich the humanistic work of groups and communities, professional networks, and government organizations. Our primary focus will be in bringing together new knowledge and practices from a variety of emerging fields (science, policy, education, politics, the arts, therapeutic/healing practices, community and cultural growth, and personal and spiritual growth), and translating those new ideas through the lens of Humanistic Psychology. These interpretations will help all of us to understand and influence our ever-evolving world, from a Humanistic stance. The Humanistic approach encourages a proactive stance of activism, advocacy, and social justice that promotes awareness, wisdom, purpose, respect, interdependence, and peace.

AHP NEWS


AHP NEWS

AHP VISION STATEMENT—50th ANNIVERSARY

Beyond Dogma: The Role of “Evolutionary” Science and the “Embodiment” of Archetypal Energies

— Carroy U. “Cuf” Ferguson

At individual and collective levels (locally, nationally, and globally), humanity is currently entertaining many challenges and opportunities for growth. In my view, these challenges and opportunities are connected to Energy shifts that are taking place on the planet, and the inability of some to move beyond dogma in relating to these Energy shifts. By its pre- and proscriptive nature, dogma fosters limiting beliefs that often interfere with how best to relate to these Energy shifts as vibrational beings in an evolving, vibrational world. Here, I want to briefly identify some of the limiting effects of dogma, and the role of “evolutionary” science and the “embodiment” of Archetypal Energies as guides for moving beyond these limiting dogmatic effects.

Some of the Energy shifts call attention to our relationship with the planet itself (e.g., Global Warming and tectonic plate shifts), while other Energy shifts call attention to our relationship with one another as human beings (e.g., global economic challenges; religious and political conflicts; power and intimacy tensions linked to race, class, gender, ethnicity, and culture; wars). When dogma becomes the lens through which these kinds of Energy shifts are viewed, the result is a stagnant, or reactive, or non-progressive state of affairs. Out of fear, what gets mirrored at local, societal, and global levels are the limiting effects of a “dogmatic conservative stance,” unconsciously idealizing a past that never existed and fueling a climate with limiting ideas under the guise of trying to address what is not working for us as human beings. In such a state of Being, we allow dogma, the so-called authoritative scripts, to frame how we think and act, to fuel our individual and collective activities, and to direct what we focus on in our individual and collective Consciousness. We do not allow ourselves to be forward-moving, proactive, and progressive.

I suggest, however, that we can create an “alternative mirror.” To do so, we can use as guides “evolutionary” science and the “embodiment” of what I have called Archetypal Energies to help us script Optimal Realities for our personal, societal, and global experiences.

What I call “evolutionary” science employs the scientific method to unleash the flow of Creative Energy and Creative Thought to explore all possibilities related to all of our human potential as ever-evolving human beings (e.g., mind-body science; bioresonance research). To better understand and to constructively align with the various Energy shifts, “evolutionary” science does not seek to be pre- or proscriptive or to promote a final authoritative voice, for there is always more to discover and understand. “Evolutionary” science evokes the Archetypal Energy Vision to constantly pull us forward and upward through scientific inquiry. Indeed, there are no limits to scientific inquiry into our individual and collective human potential. “Evolutionary” science, therefore, invites research into creatively examining the nature of our individual and collective interdependence and the nature of our ever-evolving human experience. It is the kind of science that invites research into how we can best enhance our interdependence and ever-evolving nature. As such, “evolutionary” science facilitates a movement beyond the limiting effects of a dogmatic approach to our individual and collective human experience.

In other writings, I have defined Archetypal Energies as transcendent, Higher Vibrational Energies that have their own unique purpose and function. They operate deep within our psyches, individually and collectively, moving us toward our Optimal Realities. We tend to experience them as “creative urges.” I use easily recognized terms to evoke a common sense of these Higher Energies (e.g., Love, Harmony, Acceptance, Inclusion, Vision, Oneness, Understanding). They lend themselves to “uncovery” through practices such as meditation and mindfulness and to study through, for example, adapted HearthMath and Bioresonance technologies. Implied in this description is that we already “embody” Archetypal Energies in our own unique ways. As such, in our own unique ways, we need only to allow ourselves to get in touch with them, to align ourselves with them, and to give them unique expression and “form” in our individual and collective life spaces. In doing so, we consciously embody them and act in accord with them, in our own unique ways, to move us beyond the limiting effects of dogma and to socially construct Optimal Realities.

Why is it so important to move beyond dogma and its limiting effects? By definition, “dogma is the established belief or doctrine held by a religion, or a particular group or organization. It is authoritative and not to be disputed, doubted, or diverged from, by the practitioners or believers. Although it generally refers to religious beliefs that are accepted without evidence, they can refer to acceptable opinions of philosophers or philosophical schools, public decrees, or issued decisions of political authorities . . . [in other terms] . . . as a possible reaction to skepticism, dogmatism is a set of beliefs or doctrines that are established as undoubtedly “in truth.” They are regarded as truths.
relating closely to the nature of faith. The term dogmatic can be used . . . to refer to any belief that is held stubbornly, including political and scientific beliefs” (Wikipedia, 2012). To stubbornly hold onto beliefs, without question, ultimately results in disempowerment, in being blind to vast aspects of our human potential. Further, it leads to a limited understanding of the many Energy shifts taking place. To differentiate the role of science here from a stubborn stance, I therefore use the term “evolutionary” science.

What then are some of the limiting effects of dogma? First, I suggest that beliefs are not truths. Beliefs are simply thoughts reinforced by emotion and imagination. Yet, beliefs are powerful in that they structure reality at individual and collective levels. If, then, we use stubborn, fear-based, dogmatic beliefs to structure reality, individually and collectively, we are engaged in a process of socially constructing a limiting reality, not to be questioned, whereby little or no Creative Energy is invested in critical thought for creatively relating to the many Energy shifts taking place on the planet or for manifesting new Optimal Realities, individually or collectively.

Second, in today’s socially constructed reality, the limiting effects of dogma can be seen in many forms, expressed through underlying, limiting beliefs linked, for example, to religion, politics, economics, culture, race, class, gender, and the like. Such a state of Being keeps humanity “stuck” in old, dualistic paradigms and shortsighted worldviews, ultimately stifling human growth and the evolution of human Consciousness.

For example, underlying limiting beliefs like “My God is the only true God,” “My God and religious practices are better than your God and religious practices,” or “With regard to values, God is on our side, and not yours” have been linked to dogma and religion. They have the effect of fueling a climate of inhibiting the social construction of a worldview that all religions are simply various ways of attempting to relate to ALL THAT IS. What is at play here are human projections about ALL THAT IS, framed by dogma and justified by taking limiting ideas out of context or by quoting a presumed authoritative person or an out-of-context passage from a translated, authoritative text.

Underlying limiting beliefs like “Political ideology is the only thing that matters and we must prevail at all cost,” “Given our political ideology, we will not compromise or collaborate in any way to prove that we are right,” or “The only problem is government, and we are separate from the government” have been linked to dogma and politics. They have the effect of fueling a politically stagnant state of affairs or fostering ongoing win–lose counterproductive power games. At present, such stagnation is mirrored in U.S. Congress, as so-called Tea Party political figures play out uncompromising, non-collaborative stances. On the world stage, the effect is often war or uprisings when an authoritative figure aggressively displays power in an attempt to get others to bend to political ideology (e.g., Syria; Egypt; Libya). Political dogma, therefore, invites mistrust and a lack of collaboration.

Underlying limiting beliefs such as “Money is the root of all evil,” “People should pull themselves up by their bootstraps,” or “The poor are just lazy” have been linked to dogma and economics. They have the effect of fostering a myopic perspective about how our individual economic circumstances are also linked to the global economy. In such a context, dynamics related to race, class, and gender also get intermingled. And, outdated approaches like “trickle-down” strategies for economic growth or austerity strategies without future-oriented investment strategies are entertained. One result of these kinds of limiting economic strategies is that the flow of money does not circulate well and ends up going to a few at the top.

Dogma tends to become more salient during times of perceived stress, as people look for pre- or proscriptive solutions to address their personal and collective fears. To move beyond dogma, therefore, “evolutionary” science invites us to be critical thinkers about ourselves as ever-evolving human beings in an ever-evolving world in relation to Energy shifts taking place on the planet. Archetypal Energies, on the other hand, as creative urges, help us to maneuver through the dualistic world that we inhabit, to make wise choices that can lead to our Individual and Collective Well-Being. In a dualistic world, dogma, in its various pre- and proscriptive forms, has the effect of contracting the flow of Creative Energy. The Archetypal Energies, such as Understanding for example, expand Creative Energy and assist us with contextualizing the Energy shifts that are taking place.

Both “evolutionary” science and Archetypal Energies remind us that we are the creators of the interdependent human games we play, and that we must play these games more wisely. We have forgotten, for example, that we made up the “money game” as a form of Energy exchange to constructively get what we desire. We have forgotten that we made up the “political game” as a way to constructively dialogue about various points of views about the world when played well. We have forgotten that we are the creators of “institutional practices and cultural games” and hold them in place with our beliefs. We have also forgotten that we made up our “spiritual games” as methods to maintain a perspective about our experiences beyond our Ego realities, individually and collectively. And, we have forgotten that we made up all the disciplines, scientific and otherwise, that reportedly provide “objective” data, theories, and rationales to explain, justify, and/or expand our Understanding of our human experiences. We are also the creators of dogma, and it is time to move beyond our dogmatic creations, individually and collectively. Currently, they are not serving and do not serve us well in relating to the Energy shifts taking place on the planet. I suggest, therefore, that an underlying issue confronting us as ever-evolving human beings, which slows us down or keeps us from moving forward at this point, is an attitude problem generated by dogma.

— Cuf Ferguson
Cosmetically Speaking

Coasting along on my bicycle, I rounded a gentle curve on the Sanibel Island “multiple-use path.” That’s the official and proper name for the paved mini-street that serves walkers, runners, baby strollers, dog-jockeys, and, of course, bikers. I braked to a stop in order to dismount and get a drink of water at the “multiple-use fountain.” That’s the one with three user-friendly bubblers—one mounted chest-high, the next waist-high, and the last ground level for pets. Seeing a shady spot to park my bike and cool down, I stepped off the path into the welcoming shade of what I thought was a thickened branched tree. On closer examination of the leafy bulk, I discovered the hidden trunk and root-ball of a huge Australian pine that Hurricane Charlie had blown over in August of 2004.

The trunk and branches had been cut up and trucked away soon after the storm, but the 15-ft. diameter mound was left lying there. As time went by, Mother Nature lavishly decorated the little mountain with native greenery. The sight reminded me of the haunting image of a Mayan ruin draped with lush jungle vegetation. It seems that not only does nature abhor a vacuum, but nature loves to redecorate—to disguise the unsightly by adorning it with living “bling.”

Human beings have the same urge to refashion what lies around them. Outside, we yearn to landscape the lot and trim the tree. Inside, we love to redesign the living spaces, remodel the rooms, and rearrange the furniture. When it comes to our bodies, we are the only species to have created the science of cosmetology and the economy of cosmetics.

After all, the word cosmetic comes from the Greek root verb kosmeo, which literally means “to order.” A well-mannered citizen was often described by the adjective kosmeo. Philosophers and teachers observed the logical processes of nature and called the world a cosmos.

To notice, search for, record, and cooperate with order is what we do. To want to reorganize and rearrange is who we are. It is a mark of our human worth and dignity, or some would say our calling, to create order and harmony around and within us from the vast spaces of the universe to the nearer places around us, culminating with the most personal boundaries of our being—how we look and how we dress.

It is good to be a cosmetician—to be skilled in bringing order to our chaos and beauty out of disarray. Cosmetics is the motive, the means, and the marvel of making music and art; it is the driving force behind science and technology; it is the lure for personal growth; it is the promise of healing for body, mind, and spirit; it is the hope for man’s recovery from mean feelings and alienation.

RANDALL H. NIEHOFF recently retired after 41 years of parish ministry. This is excerpted from the column Gulf Coast Zeitgeist in Times of the Islands magazine, 17(4), June/July 2012, p. 18.

Braer Rabbit, the Avenging Angel

Trained by Milton Erickson from 1977–1980, I learned to tell stories therapeutically for hours on end at a very slow pace (see article on Erickson on p. 15 of this AHP Perspective issue). James S. Grotstein, M.D., a training analyst known for his book Projective Identification, and his book Do I Dare Disturb the Universe? about Wilfred R. Bion, the great British psychoanalyst, wrote that my storytelling was “reverse analysis.” Erickson said I had “pinpoint accuracy” when I tell stories from my unconscious mind to the unconscious mind of the client or the group at large.

In 1977 Charlie Kovowitz, M.D., internist to the stars, referred a man to me who was second in command at a major television network and who had already had analysis. He came to me because he was highly stressed from what I sensed to be a politeness that prevented him from demanding what he needed to function at his job in a more stress-free manner. He began seeing me once a week for fifty minutes. I wrote themes for the session in my unconscious mind for five minutes and then told stories for the remaining time at the “Ericksonian” extremely slow pace based on the themes I identified at the beginning of our session.

The fifth week he walked in and said “You are not going to believe what happened. I walked into the President’s meeting with executives and after ten minutes slammed my fist down on the table as hard as I could yelling out ‘Braer Rabbit!’ Everybody thought I was completely nuts and that I had lost it. And I got everything I needed at the meeting.”

After this experience, he was so pleased with the results that he started seeing me four days a week for this slow-paced storytelling. He went on to become President of two major...
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

movie studios. He was able to therefore to have a copy of the movie Song of the South made for me, as it is no longer available to the public. Naturally it featured my first therapist, Braer Rabbit! He often referred to me as his avenging angel.


High School Graduation Talk

You only live one . . . you only go through this adolescence at one point in your life. By the time we reach the end of our high school careers, we have been through literally a lifetime of school, and many of our memories are school-related. At points school may have gone by in the blink of an eye, while other days it seemed to be the longest seven hours of our lives. Adversity truly stared us in the face at moments, but we all remained resolute and gave adversity a nasty glare back. We burned the midnight oil studying for the countless tests (at least some of us did), we tried to stay awake through those first-period classes, and we even had fun once in a while. None of it would have been possible without the consistent dedication we displayed throughout our high school careers. What my lacrosse coach Pete Kerwin said before every season, “Every action you do and every decision you make will affect everything that you do in the future,” is relevant to us today. . . . for every action there is a repercussion based upon that action. . . . The repercussions for our efforts were the successes and satisfaction of being able to partake in the grand scheme of things. The act of receiving a diploma has proven the character that developed in each and every one of you. Through all the adversity and almost drastic change that has occurred in the past four years, one thing is truly evident: Moral character and pride were strengthened and will be further developed as we go on.

A bang for your buck. This is what I thought of when I first started to write my speech. I’m the last one today to speak at one of the biggest moments of your lives, so I thought it had to be something good. I fell upon significant advice from Steve Jobs that I urge you to consider. “If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?” When the answer to that one question was “no,” then something was wrong and changed. I won’t guarantee the success that Steve Jobs had, but I can guarantee that if you ask yourself this every morning you will gain much in little time. That question goes back to the motto Carpe Diem, Seize the Day. With both Jobs’ question and the attitude of the motto in mind, the chance of success (or maybe death for those thrill seekers) increases. I’ve seen it with my own eyes: the state records and titles, the academics, club participation. Success will continue on into the future as long as you pursue it. If you join the military and decide to serve your country, success will come when you rise to the next rank. If you enter the workforce, it will lead to that promotion down the road. If you seek higher education, it will be graduating from college with flying colors. If you seek a higher education and decide it’s not for you, you might be the next Steve Jobs. . . . In any path you seek, I wish you the best in your ventures, no matter what the pursuit (well, as long as they are in the legal confines of society). I’m sure happiness will find a way into all our lives if we bear in mind and remember the motto: You only live once.

Despite all our differences, we have at least two things in common: 1) we all have the potential for success, and 2) we were and always will be Huntingtown Hurricanes. I’m proud to congratulate the Class of 2012 and am honored to be part of it. Thank you.

MAURICE MANUEL STANLEY HARRIS, a recent graduate of Huntingtown (Maryland) High School, is Past AHP President Stan Krippner’s grandson.
Lincoln and May: Destiny Visible in the Life of the Great Emancipator . . . Michelle M. Merwin

Primum Non Coercere: Private Personal Services and Public Social Services . . . Thomas Szasz

Camus’ Challenge: The Question of Suicide (Is Life Worth Living?) . . . Kathleen O’Dwyer

The Hakomi Method: Defining its Place within the Humanistic Tradition . . . Robert Bageant

The Relationship of Hardiness and Some Other Related Variables of College Performance . . . Salvatore Maddi

Richard H. Harvey
Deborah M. Khoshaba
Mostafa Fayel
Nephthys Resurreccion

An Investigation of the Relations between Altruism, Empathy, and Spirituality . . . John Thomas Huber II
Douglas A. MacDonald

Parents’ Conception and Experience of Calling in Childrearing: A Qualitative Analysis . . . Justin Coulson
Lindsay Oades
Gerard Stoyles

EDITOR’S COMMENTARY

This issue opens with another eloquent application of the legacy of Rollo May by Michelle Merwin (see her earlier paper in *JHP Vol. 51*(1), January 2011). In this fascinating inquiry, Merwin presents the life of Abraham Lincoln as an exemplar of Rollo May’s conceptualization of destiny. May employed the term *destiny* to refer to the talents and limitations fated to us. In Lincoln’s case these talents and limitations were formidable and he grappled with them throughout his short life. For example, find out how Lincoln’s depressions not only hampered him but also actually spurred him to the greatness that we now commemorate.

Thomas Szasz has also graced our pages on numerous
occasions; and most recently, John Breeding wrote a stirring tribute to him on the occasion of his 90th birthday (see JHP, Vol. 51(1), January, 2011). In this incisive essay, Szasz continues his relentless battle with organized psychiatry and the legal system. He argues that the age old maxim of “primum non coercere” or “first do no harm” is precisely the antidote to today’s “involuntary coercion” by mental health authorities. Drawing on diverse testimony, both historical and contemporary, Szasz makes the compelling point that coercion, no matter how well-intentioned, is rarely if ever in the best interest of the coerced.

Expanding on the question of human dignity, Kathleen O’Dwyer looks to Albert Camus. In her superb reflection “Camus’ Challenge: The Question of Suicide,” O’Dwyer revisits the classics that contain Camus’ “answer”—not just to suicide but to life. Find out why Camus is one of our most important spiritual existentialists, and how meaning bestrides the abyss.

It is high time, suggests Robert Bageant, for humanistic psychology to take a closer look at the Hakomi method, and I must concur. I have been urged from time to time by both students and clients to consider the parallels between these respective disciplines, and Bageant’s article does just that. In a concise and lucid fashion, Bageant helps us to learn how the Hakomi method and humanistic psychology can complement one another, and in so doing, enhance the effectiveness of both.

Thanks to Salvatore Maddi and his colleagues, JHP is becoming a “hardier” forum, and we are very pleased with the result. In their latest installment, “The Relationship of Hardiness and Some Other Related Variables of College Performance,” the researchers show that grade-point average, sense of well-being, meaning in life, and hardiness are collectively intertwined. Although I’m sure the researchers would make room for a few exceptions to their findings—for example, I found life richly meaningful since childhood, but did not blossom academically until graduate school—their points are nevertheless both timely and elucidating.

John Thomas Huber II and Douglas MacDonald have done us all a noble service with “An Investigation of the Relations between Altruism, Empathy, and Spirituality.” This extraordinary paper found that in a sample of 186 university students, nonreligious spiritual cognitions and spiritual experiences are the most potent predictors of empathy and altruism over and above both religiousness and existential well-being. There are many interesting nuances to this research, but taken as a whole it furthers our understanding of the complex relationship between transcendent consciousness and prosocial action.

In our final piece, Justin Coulson, Lindsay Oades, and Gerard Stoyles highlight a time-honored though little-appreciated dimension of parenting: the experience of being “called.” Find out how the sense of being called to raise children may not only enhance the parent–child bond, but also may foster a more fulfilled childhood.

As a final note, I’d like to bring your attention to a few signal developments in the humanistic–existential community—the exciting initiatives and works being featured at the revamped Society for Humanistic Psychology website (see http://www.apadivisions.org/division-32/), the sparkling new website hosted by Saybrook University on the “New Existentialists” (see http://www.newexistentialists.com/), and the landmark article in the American Psychological Association “Monitor” on the growing interest of mainstream therapists in existential–humanistic bases of practice (see the November 2012 issue at http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/apa/monitor_201111/#/62).

— Shawn Rubin
Breath-taking developments of the last 20 years in brain research have brought numerous and astonishing discoveries. While neuroscientists still emphasize how little we know about the brain, neuro-gastroenterological studies suggest that the human enteric nervous system (ENS) and the brain–gut axis (BGA) may play a profound role in human physiological and psychological operation. The ENS seems to be a far more complex and a more independent nervous system than was previously thought. Most probably all psychoactive drugs have an effect on the ENS. Furthermore, current research about the ENS seems to have found correspondences to the ethnomedical concept of the lower Dantian (traditional Asian medicine), Swadhisthana (Hindu Trantrism), and the Sacral orange-colored chakra (New Age).

**NEUROSCIENCE**

Neuroscientists are fascinated by and slowly starting to understand the plasticity of the brain cortex, which seems to be retained over an entire lifetime, and not, as formerly thought, simply during childhood. Neuro-imaging studies show that psychotherapy, cultural influences, long-term behaviors, and many other forms of ongoing stimuli have measurable effects in specific brain areas (volume increase in certain Brodmann Areas, and increased activity of specific areas and networks were identified, etc.) Brain scientists are now exploring many newly identified compounds and mechanisms that play a vital role in our brain, such as the endocannabinoid system, Trace amine-associated receptors (the metabolic derivatives of classical biogenic amines), pacemaker cells, etc. Still, the role of many endogenous compounds inside the brain, such as the endogen N,N-dimethyltryptamine and other members of the tryptamine family, have not yet been fully understood.

Meanwhile, developmental psychology has identified many micro-mechanisms at work during human cognitive development—including representational capability, development of social cognition, development of iconic memory, details of language acquisition, etc.

The interpretation of research results in neuroscience is, however, a difficult task, as many times the causative relationships are disputable, and therefore it is often hard to meet refutability criteria. Some scientists believe that there are many over-simplifying and “over-biologizing” and hence unscientific interpretations in existence today, which has been labeled a side effect of “Neuromania.”

**NERVOUS SYSTEM**

Due to the strong connections among these elements, the central nervous system (CNS) is usually considered to comprise the brain, the spinal cord, and the retina. The center for cognitive processes is searched for in the brain. Some non-mainstream researchers emphasize the importance of the axons, and strongly articulate that some cognitive processes (e.g., memory) are actually being calculated and stored inside them. Currently we have no tool to validate that hypothesis, but it is certainly an interesting and valid speculation.

Candace Pert proposes that the whole human body is being used in our psychodynamic operation.

The Penrose-Hameroff OR (orchestrated objective reduction) model of consciousness theoretically connects the nervous system to a subcellular (microtubular) network, which extends far beyond the brain’s neuroaxonal system. According to this theory, consciousness (awareness) is more than a function of temporary (brain) hemispherical activity.

Since the focus of the mainstream neuroscientist and of theoretical speculations has been about the brain, it implicitly denies that any actor outside the brain can play a major role in human cognition and feelings. Modern ENS research seems to open up the possibility for an important and “extra-cerebral” actor.
ENTERIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

The ENS controls the gastrointestinal system in humans. It contains 100 million neurons, and the brain contains ~100 billion (±20%). It is located in the gastrointestinal area. The ENS can be considered part of the collective whole called the autonomic nervous system (ANS), but also as an independent system of its own. The ANS affects various systems, including the circulatory, respiratory, digestive, endocrine, urinary, reproductive, and integumentary (hair, skin, nails)—all of which are considered to function below the level of consciousness. The CNS and ENS are in strong communication with one another (via the BGA, brain–gut axis), and similar neurotransmitters can be found in both. The neuroplasticity of the ENS has not yet been studied.

Medical studies of Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) analyze the role of the brain–gut axis (BGA) in detail. It seems that the BGA is involved in various important physiological processes (regulation of glucose and fat metabolism, insulin secretion and sensitivity, and even in bone metabolism). Recent studies have revealed that even if a major neurological communication line (vagal nerve) is injured, the ENS continues to function; therefore it may be seriously considered as an independent system. Some provocative theories have proposed that the ENS may be a kind of metacontroller of the CNS. One surprising finding that supports this hypothesis is that most information travels from the alimentary canal (gut) to the brain, rather than the other way around. The correct interpretation of this discovery is not a trivial issue.

Approximately 90% of the body’s serotonin is actually utilized by the gastrointestinal tract (alimentary canal) to regulate intestinal movements (the remaining 10% affecting mood, sleep, etc., at the CNS). A significant amount of dopamine is also located in the gut. There are a few studies to date that have analyzed the effects of serotonergic antidepressants on the ENS system. It is known that serotonergic antidepressants have many gastrointestinal side effects including loss of appetite and weight, urinary retention, nausea, and renal failure, and that they commonly cause sexual dysfunction (Ravera et al. even question the driving safety of SSRIs—selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors—because of the reported adverse effects of anxiety, agitation, sleep disturbances, headache, increased risk of suicidal behavior, and deliberate self-harm).

Neuro-gastroenterologists have certainly proved that the ENS affects mood, and further study of the ENS may help us to understand various diseases in detail. The role of the ENS is certainly stronger that we thought 100 years ago—bio-behavioral scientists also now postulating that emotional well-being is more dependent on signals coming from our ENS. Anxiety, Parkinson’s disease, and many other diseases have symptoms at the gut level, too.

ACTING FROM THE HARA

Many Eastern esoteric and spiritual practices give particular importance to the area just below the navel for its role in energizing the physical body, so that it can function at optimal health on the earthly plane.

In Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Thai ethnomedical systems, this area is known as the lower Dantian, which is also referred to as The Golden Stove or Hara. Hindu tantrism calls this area the Swadhisthana, and attributes it to the function of unconscious desires, sexuality, and emotion. Lataif, the Sufi energetic system, calls this area nafs. It incorporates all the elements of
This “bowl” of the body serves to process “information” or energy in the form of the food and other substances we put into our body, and then to expel what is not needed.

CHAKRAS IN MODERN MEDICINE

Criticism regarding the chakras points out the limits of the introspective and intersubjective methods along with the contradictions among the various chakra systems. Phenomenological discoveries certainly have value, but require openness and plausibility on the part of all kinds of researchers.

According to some integral theorists, chakras are located only in the psyche as they are a kind of mental light-buoy for meditative practice—hence it makes no sense to look for them inside the human body. Another idea is that the chakras represent the endocrine glands, as they are fairly close to the chakras anatomically and their physiological role also shows some similarities to the general chakra-concept. (However, it would require slightly different chakra systems for men and women.)

Others believe that certain neurological–chakral correlates can be and will be found in the future. In addition to the somewhat independent ENS, from neurocardiology we know that the human heart also has ~40,000 neurons and can process information independently from the CNS.

So far we have not unequivocally found the neurological correlates of the chakras. However, our current neuro-imaging tools have a strongly limited capacity to examine the CNS, and we are even more limited in the research of the peripheral nervous system.

With the future development of optogenetics along with more intensive development of neuro-imaging and neurochemistry, we will probably find corresponding functions in the complex and amazing operations of the human body and psyche.

REFERENCES


ZOLTAN BRYS is a medical editor at Literatura Medica (Budapest, EU).

REBECCA CASTALDINI is a transpersonal psychologist in Adelaide, Australia.
My professional life may be divided into BME (Before Milton Erickson) and AME (After Milton Erickson). I read the original Jay Haley version of *Uncommon Therapy: The Psychiatric Techniques of Milton H. Erickson, M.D.* by Norton Press (1986). I was so taken with the miraculous work that I wanted to see if Dr. Erickson was still living and I might go to Phoenix, Arizona, to study with him. So I called information and they had one Milton H. Erickson, M.D., with two addresses, one on 7th and one on 12th. He was known for his confusion technique, “Into every person’s life should come a little confusion and a little enlightenment.” It started with the two addresses for one person. I had never encountered that before, nor what he did in session. I called and said “I’m looking for a Dr. Milton H. Erickson, M.D.” He said “yeeees.” Already I was taken off balance. I told him I wanted to study with him but I wanted to read Haley’s Advanced Techniques book first (Advanced Techniques of Hypnosis and Therapy: Selected Papers of Milton H. Erickson edited by Jay Haley, Pearson, Allyn, & Bacon, 1967). He said “That will be fine,” and immediately hung up. I got a quarter of the way through the book, and without direct experience realized that I was at a stuck point, so I called him back and said with some trepidation, “I want to come and see you the weekend of September 11th [1977].” Dr. Erickson said “Come, you will get what you want” with such certainty that I was again taken off balance, as I was not sure what I wanted.

Erickson told stories for between four and six hours at a time at a very slow pace that Margaret Mead told him she had only heard in a rare African tribe relatively free of disease. Oddly enough this was the same pace of Wilfred Bion, the great British psychoanalyst. After 1 1/2 hours, patients gave up resisting and customarily gained access to their unconscious minds where therapists and patients alike had been consciously controlled and customarily made commentaries about what they were aware of. After working with Erickson, the unconscious mind which you came to trust implicitly gave you flashes that were like red neon signs showing your moment-to-moment course of living. Essentially, it was hard to get lost after Erickson.

Erickson saw me individually, after another of his six-hour sessions, and said, “What can I do for you young man?” I said, “Dr. Erickson, you are the foremost psychotherapist in the world! When I get out of here I want to be as good as you are!” (This was the kind of comment that had many people who had trained me wanting to crush my skull, and is also a point that sons hardly ever resolve with their fathers.) Erickson matter of factly said, with no bones to pick, as if he didn’t care one way or the other, “Where do you think you stand now?” Very bulldog-like, I challenged him saying “The top of the average.” He said, “Why don’t you be the best top of the average you can be then. You will never be Milton Erickson.” This freed me up to be whatever I could become, and seven years later while doing live demonstrations in Australia my work was described as “a kind of mental precision that electrified the Australian therapeutic community and had lasting therapeutic impact.”

Erickson worked with a woman named Barbara in front of the training group. He loved to take on negaters or those severely resistant. He asked her if she wanted to be hypnotized. She said “yes.” Twenty minutes later he asked her if she thought she was hypnotized and she said “no.” He leaned over from his wheelchair and flipped her right arm upward and there it stood. Then he looked over at me and said, “Old Dr. Bergantino over there, he believes in magic. He doesn’t know all I do is pay attention to details.” I spent the remaining three years with him learning to pay attention to “minimal cues” that would let me call my shots as best I could, which resulted in my success in Australia.

One of Erickson’s better students was a clinical social...
Humanizing A Creek

A n occasional respite in a park, preferably near a creek, can absolutely be a soothing experience from the daily responsibilities and the trials of life. Momentarily, pause, let one’s mind blend with the flow of the creek while gazing at the serenity of a perfectly shaped bubble lethargically wandering on the surface of the water. The bubble might remain a single entity or bond together with other bubbles, creating a kaleidoscope of shapes and color reflections through the rays of the sun. A bubble’s fleeting presence is an integral part of a creek’s soliloquy, so to speak, as it is meandering through a park, a forest, paying homage to the absolute beauty of nature, her enchanting mysteries, her imposing grandeur.

A creek, en route to uniting with a larger body of water—lake or river or ocean, besides irrigating and beautifying the landscape, also enhances the life of many a human being coming to its banks seeking a tranquil refuge to rest, admire, commune; or in the case of a fellow “cousin” animal, quenching its thirst and satiating its hunger from the bountiful vegetation flourishing on a creek’s banks.

With me, he did it this way: “So you’re a clinical psychologist, heh!” Me: “Yes.” Erickson: “I’ll bet you don’t even know why I am wearing purple.” Me: “I guess it’s just part of Dr. Erickson’s style.” Erickson: “Heh! I’m color blind. It’s the only color I can see!”

Erickson is known for brief therapy, but he got results because he had extraordinary dedication. There was one patient at Wayne State Hospital who spoke only in word salads. Erickson went to the hospital’s park bench where the patient spoke three hours of word salad, and Erickson took down every word; then he went home and wrote out a word salad of his own which he took back to the park bench and read to the patient. He did this for two straight weeks, reading his own word salad to the patient each time. After two weeks, the patient said, “Hey Erickson, why don’t we go down to your office and talk.”

LEN BERGANTINO, a Clinical Psychologist licensed in California, Arizona, and Hawaii, and Diplomate in Family Psychology, American Board of Professional Psychology, is currently willing to work with families in their homes or telephonically 310/207-9397.
and maintaining that elusive balance between being a free, self-governing, self-determining, self-reliant individual with our very own goals and aspirations, while simultaneously being an essential member of a family, community, country; being a unique individual and at the same time only a speck of the mosaic comprising the society of man.

This balance could be accomplished by how we use the distinctive among all animals attribute we possess, the power of our intellect. This very intellectual ability to reason enlightens decisions and choices we make. Certainly intellect cannot shield us from errors of judgment, but it can remedy the consequences of such errors and engender the wisdom to avoid repeating them.

The onset of mental unrest, disturbance, turbulence, might be set in motion when a mind's horizon stops expanding by a mental blockage, such as the impasse of a single thought, a mania, a hammering, a pounding obsession. Very much like when something stops, blocks, the flow of a creek; eventually, the water will overflow, burst through wildly and forcefully over the blockage.

Detecting and alleviating mental barriers is the convolute, complex, diligent work of psychotherapy.

Assisting individuals to gain insight into what might be causing disorder in their lives can be the beginning of improving their way of thinking, relationships, work environment enhancement, and personal code of conduct.

Humanizing a creek, a pond, a lake, takes little personal investment, only our presence in magnanimity, respect, reverence, appreciation. Continued ennoblement of ourselves is far more difficult a task than humanizing a creek. Despite loss, setbacks, defeat, catastrophe, we have been building, progressing, and moving forward and we can continue despite the dark side of our collective behavior as a species to further enhance civility, humanism, relationships, and ethos, foremost respecting the sacredness and sanctity of life.

Anyone interested in experiencing even a mere glimpse of how the perfect, the true ideal which only exists in time and space might possibly look, needs to search no farther than one's immediate environment. Literally and meticulously pore over the colors, shapes, hues, pigmentation of a house plant, a flower, the fur of a pet, the mystical tincture of the sky at dawn, sunrise, sunset; symmetry, placidity and fury, precision, ethereal beauty, and the subtlety of a touch in the form of a passing breeze are but a few of nature's fundamental components of "her" absoluteness.

Moreover, Mother Nature's remarkable ability to sustain herself concurrently with providing life to one and all myriad species depending on her for survival and thriving, can very well be a tangible manifestation of divinity; but, she is certainly not holy, per se. Her splendor should be esteemed, be a source of inspiration; but, without a doubt, not worshipped, especially not idolatrously.

Nonetheless, nature's admirable guiding principle, modus operandi, of balancing independence, individuality, and togetherness is exemplary; we might attempt to emulate it, as we strive toward further humanizing ourselves.

Perhaps one of our most demanding challenges is attaining country; being a unique individual and at the same time only a speck of the mosaic comprising the society of man.

HUMANIZING A CREEK
Recent personal events are proving to be an evolving story, and one that my family and I are learning from on a continual basis. How we view these events, and more importantly, how we proceed in our lives after these events, is the key to determining if we are to grow or remain stagnant. In July 2010, my one-year-old son, Keegan, died from heart failure after a lengthy hospital stay. Keegan was born with Congenital Heart Disease (CHD), diagnosed with cardiomyopathy (heart failure) when he was eight months old and passed away with his family by his side. While his death was not completely unexpected, we had not allowed ourselves to comprehend what could and would likely happen. As a parent, you fight for your child and do not give up unless you have to. Nonetheless, after he died, it was a situation that we were forced to deal with.

SPIRITUAL SYNCHRONICITY
I have always been what I consider a “spiritual” person, with a faith in God and a belief that spiritual events occur around people all the time. But when significant events occurred to me specifically, I have always tried to glean some information from it to learn from the situation and openly accept it. One example happened on the evening of Keegan’s passing when his twin brother (born without any health issues), woke up approximately fifteen minutes after Keegan’s death and said Keegan’s name for the first time. He was in a playful mood, and considering this was approximately 4 a.m., this was an odd event to say the least. This was the beginning of several occurrences that I describe as “spiritual synchronicity,” all related to the passing of our young son. Jung noted that the synchronicity principle is founded on meaningful coincidences of two or more events “where something other than chance are involved” and that are “connected by simultaneity and meaning” (C. G. Jung, 1973, Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle translated by R. F. C. Hull, Princeton, NJ: Bollingen).

DIVERGENT PATHS
On two separate occasions after the passing of my son, friends of ours were in a large, local cemetery, filled with winding curving roads. On both of these occasions, each person ended up getting slightly lost while trying to navigate out of the cemetery and found themselves right in front of Keegan’s grave stone. His is the only Celtic cross in the cemetery and they had never been to his gravesite previously. The most peculiar aspect of these events was that each friend mentioned to us independently what happened to them and both felt that Keegan was leading them to his gravesite so that they could in turn share this with us to make us feel better about his loss. Judging by Jung’s standards, this appears to be synchronicity at work, with not one, but two similar events happening what seems to be randomly, but with a significant meaning behind both experiences. It is hard to describe the feeling that I had after hearing these personal stories involving my son, but I certainly felt a comforting feeling of knowing that Keegan was still in our midst. Several months afterward, my wife was going to visit the cemetery where Keegan is buried and wanted to stop by the grocery store across the street to buy flowers. She was feeling quite upset at the time and felt that visiting might help. While walking into the store, she was stopped by a woman and her four-year-old young daughter holding a single flower. Neither woman nor child was someone my wife had ever encountered in the past. The little child stopped and greeted my wife and proceeded to tell her that the outfit she was wearing was pretty. What happened next, however, was completely unexpected, as the young girl offered the flower in her hand to my wife as she wanted her to have it. Initially, the mother protested as she did not want her daughter to impose. But then my wife described that she was going to the store specifically for that purpose. My wife accepted the flower with a thank you and mother and child went on their way. While the event in their view might not have seemed significant, my wife was deeply moved by the incident, and as with the other incidents described above she felt that this was not just a random coincidence, but that she was “guided to ensure this happened.” All these experiences were with individuals heading on divergent paths, meeting in timely and meaningful ways.
A STORY OF HOPE AND PERSONAL GROWTH

Lastly, I want to share a positive story regarding hope and a desire for personal growth. Very shortly after my son’s death, I founded Keegan's Spirit Foundation, a nonprofit organization designed to help others with CHD in a variety of ways, namely a college scholarship and making special donations to the Cardiac ICU unit where my son spent 5 of his 12 months on earth as a patient. Our first scholarship, awarded in Summer 2011, was given to a surprisingly vibrant young woman named Hannah, who, as we came to find out was born with the same rare disease that Keegan was born with, Heterotaxy Syndrome. This syndrome, affecting the body’s organs, reversing them in most cases and causing potentially significant heart issues, affects approximately four in every 1,000,000 births. To have met someone dealing with the same rare disease was a very emotional moment for our family. At the time Hannah applied for our scholarship, we also learned that she had visited the foundation’s website and printed a picture of Keegan, posted it to her refrigerator and said hello to him every morning. She described this as a motivation for her to strive to do her personal best every day, saying that there was no way she could feel sorry for herself with her condition, while Keegan lost his battle with heart disease. This event, as with the other events described in the article, appears to be much more than “mere coincidence” and reflects a spiritual, meaningful encounter. Keegan touched so many lives while on earth and we started the foundation and scholarship to allow his strong spirit to continue to touch people’s lives in ways he never could have dreamed. We remain in contact with Hannah and her scholarship is up for renewal this year.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Spiritually synchronistic events like these described seem to bring us in contact with other people whom we were destined to meet. They seem to defy explanation in some cases and most certainly could not be considered “by chance.” However, this is only part of the overall picture. How we respond to these events will determine whether we will learn from them or simply brush them aside as insignificant or trivial. We have tried as a family unit to learn from these events and not take them for granted. It is possible that when some people are brought into our lives and leave the world much too soon in our eyes, that they are not random events and were put in our lives for a greater purpose. Nonetheless, whether these encounters are fleeting moments, like dust in the wind, or are the beginnings of lifelong relationships, I view them as special rest stops along life’s highway that, if we are blessed enough, we are able to understand and travel together.

BRUCE SOUTHERS, M.B.A., B.A. (Psychology), is a former drug/alcohol counselor now working in the financial services industry and is the founder of Keegan’s Spirit Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to providing hope to families impacted by Congenital Heart Disease. He has had a lifelong interest in Humanistic Psychology and lives in Kentucky with his family. www.keegansouthers.org.

REVOLUTIONARY DEISTS: EARLY AMERICA’S RATIONAL INFIDELS

By Kerry Walters

Reviewed by C. Norman Shealy

Having personally and independently evolved into a deist, I have long known that many of our Founding Fathers were deists. And of course deists are the religious, spiritual representatives of humanism. As Abraham Maslow said, “Only empirical, naturalistic knowledge, in its broadest sense, can serve us now.” Interestingly, it was the 19th century scientific abandonment of awe, wonder, mystery, morals, and ethics that led Maslow and the founders of Humanistic Psychology to reintroduce these concepts into the rather bleak field of psychology. Maslow was just as appalled at the Original Sin message of the Church as were Jefferson and others.

Indeed it was the revolution in religious and ethical thought that led eventually to the Revolutionary War and the founding of the United States. All of this spread from the Enlightenment’s emphasis on reason, natural philosophy, and experience. “Deism insisted that reality is the creation of a perfectly benevolent and rational deity—the ‘Supreme Architect’—whose divine rationality and goodness are reflected in his handiwork.” To all the true deists, the supernaturlalist doctrines of miracles and special revelations were violations of consistency and experience.

The American Colonies were
founded originally by Puritan fundamentalist religious outliers, who were intolerant of any other beliefs; and most of the American Colonies and early states had rigid Christian religious requirements for public office. The story of the unorthodox beliefs of many of our Founders is perhaps even more remarkable today than those beliefs were in the late 18th century.

Walters concentrates on six of the early deists: Benjamin Franklin, Ethan Allen, Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, Elihu Palmer, and Philip Freneau. Their individual stories are exceptionally fascinating, and their differences are often as compelling as their similarities. Most of us are at least familiar with all the names except Freneau, the only one who was not particularly politically powerful, but who was a great naturalist poet. Of perhaps the greatest interest is that Palmer is the only one of the six who was a minister; and he was the greatest crusader of all. The reaction of “Orthodox” churches was otherwise universally opposed to all aspects of deism. Interestingly, this book is perhaps the only one that deals with the broad field of American deism, even though there are books that address individual deists specifically.

Equally fascinating is the virtual abandonment of the deist movement within two generations, with the Christian churches now still capturing a huge majority of American deism, even though there are books that address individual deists specifically.

This is a long and intense book about a seemingly intractable dispute in a country of two peoples. As Lerner deduces, “each became blind to the Other’s legitimate needs . . . ” (p. 2). However, “their fate is intrinsically linked” (p. 1). They are caught in a “cycle of pain, mutual indifference, and cruelty” (p. 6). It is complicated by historical claims, refugees, settlers, and a daily threat of war. The author explores human fear and love, willingness and capacity, the history and the future in an example of a current cultural conflict. The title is a code, as “Embracing” is what the book is all about.

Michael Lerner is a powerful writer, and in this book he has shown a rare skill of balance. His research and personal experience shed light on the pain for both sides, but demonstrates the counterproductive actions and attitudes in their complexity on both sides as well. He speaks to the richness of both cultures, while stating the limits of his knowledge of Islam and of Palestinians. He demonstrates an ability to apply basics of the Jewish religion in contrast to many behaviors of the Israeli society, government, and settlers, particularly with regard to the Occupation. Rabbi Lerner reminds us “Over and over again, the Torah insists that Jews have no claim to the land of Israel if they don’t live according to God’s moral law” (p. 366). In the context of discussing the realities of the conflict between Palestine and Israel, Lerner applies his concepts of caring, generosity, and openheartedness. This book lays out the structure for a possible solution for Israel/Palestine, but he calls for changes by all of us to affect our relationships universally.

Lerner examines the larger picture of the conflict but from a new perspective that has evolved. Many of us who have read his editorials in *Tikkun* magazine over the years will note the changes, but the dynamics of the situation have also changed. The concept of Powerlessness, so important to
understanding human behaviors, was introduced by Lerner 20 some years ago—but is expanded in this new book. Concepts of listening to Others and empathizing, seeing Others as worthy of love and caring, the necessities of forgiving and generosity are highly developed in this book. (Many of these themes I remember from when they were introduced in his book Politics of Meaning: Restoring Hope and Possibility in an Age of Cynicism in 1997).

Another dimension of the struggle in Israel/Palestine (and universally) Lerner frames as the “Left and Right” hands of God. The dichotomy of a loving/punishing God is applied and expanded from his 2006 book The Left Hand of God.

For me Rabbi Lerner’s focus on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is a key concept in this book. The traumas that come together in the generations, the histories of gross abuse, intolerance, and discrimination, have left deep scars. Lerner points to the fact that many people in Israel are reacting to fears and insecurity inherited (and not necessarily in awareness). However, he provides accounts of how both sides have been traumatized. The continual threat, whether actual or perceived, keeps people on edge with traumatic stress, often leading to over-reactions. “Please keep in mind that PTSD is based on trauma that has led people to not trust, to not feel safe, to not believe that they really could ever have a world that is based on love and generosity. This pathogenic belief must be gently and lovingly challenged and dismantled from their psychic structure. A first step in the process of healing is to give people a chance to tell their stories” (p. 277).

While elaborating on global changes of spirit and thought, Lerner also provides concrete actions that can be taken. He describes actions at the personal level and the larger political/national changes. These changes are articulated in a more direct, uncomplicated manner than many other academic presentations.

Reading the more than four hundred pages and ten chapters is a task well worth the effort, and the photos tell a story of their own. To sum up, “What we need is a new global ethos that I call the Caring Society—caring for each other and caring for the planet” (p. 305).

DAVID C. LAVRA, AHP member on location in the tropics (and former therapist), reader, writer, assistant medicine-man, is growing organic herbs. He teaches English for fun.

THE 7 LAWS OF MAGICAL THINKING: How Irrational Beliefs Keep Us Happy, Healthy, and Sane
By Matthew Hutson

Reviewed by David Ryback

Do you ever engage in magical thinking? Almost all the time, according to the author of this fascinating book—even if you’re not aware of it. Author Matthew Hutson begins by revealing his own inner confusion as a young man: “I looked for slivers of evidence to let me believe that we are not simply mortal, finite, arbitrary collections of organic molecules.”

The main function of our brain, he points out, is to stay alive and replicate ourselves, “which might involve telling us a white lie now and again.”

Here are his 7 laws of magical thinking:
1. We imbue significant objects with the meaning attributed to their past history with us.
2. We attribute causality to inanimate objects because our brains are wired for connecting with others and their effects on us, even if they’re not alive.
3. We become superstitious when we try to become lucky, attributing successful results to our quirky behavior.
4. We believe in extrasensory perception as well as transcendent experiences because our brains are wired to find patterns in everything that is meaningful to us.
5. We believe in the afterlife because it’s hard to accept our finite mortality.
6. We attribute human-like motivation to objects because that’s...
the only way we can explain how our emotions respond to mechanical entities that feed our feelings. (Recall “Wilson the basketball” in the Tom Hanks movie, Cast Away, when he’s marooned on an island.)

7. We attribute a manifest destiny to bad things happening to us so that our pain can be diminished. Remember how you had a relationship with your favorite doll or magic ring as a child? As adults, we become “paranoid optimists,” with positive biases toward what we want and oversensitivity to what we fear. We’re all above average, explained by the Lake Wobegon effect, where all the children are above average and all the men are good-looking. But, if we experience too much failure, we end up with learned helplessness.

Remember Rhonda Byrne’s best-seller, The Secret, based on the Law of Attraction? Just open your mind to it and it will come, it proclaimed. And the book took off, seducing so many into magical thinking. Coincidences, according to Jung, have great meaning. He referred to synchronicity to explain the meaning of such events. The simple truth is that coincidences do occur, just as accidents do. But giving a special term to this gives it meaning. Our brains evolved to give meaning to our perceptions. The more “meaning” we can discover, the greater the chance of our survival in the process of evolution, because such “meaning” helps us discover the patterns in events affecting us. And, if we know the patterns, we can adapt our behavior accordingly. That led to our need for mystical awareness. So “we have a need for the ‘numinous,’ the ‘transcendent,’ even the ‘ecstatic,’” according to philosophers. Skeptics refer to this fallacy of finding relationships where they may not exist as apophenia, for “seeing illusory patterns in information, or ‘patternicity,’” according to Hutson.

Dealing with loneliness is much easier when we can have invisible friends, whether such “friends” are Wilson the basketball, or friendly spirits or divine entities. We need to be with others, even when alone. We attribute very human qualities to our pets, even snakes and lizards, sometimes even to trees and clouds (known as prosopopoeia—for more on this, see Stewart Guthrie’s 1993 book Faces in the Clouds). Robots that take care of the infirm are experienced as loving friends. In fact, such magical thinking does indeed reduce blood pressure and ameliorate depression, so what’s the harm?

In the final analysis, such magical thinking is good for our health. It makes us feel better, enjoy life more fully, and live longer. According to the author, “a reduced sense of free will can make you dishonest, selfish, and lazy—a ‘useless jerk,’ as I put it . . . less healthy, motivated, optimistic, and successful than people who believe themselves to be in control of their fates.” So we humanistic psychologists are lucky to embrace such “magical thinking” as free will and mystical transcendence. We’ll live longer and happier as a result.

In the Epilogue of his book, author Hutson reminds us how lucky we are indeed. Magical thinking, he maintains, allows for a sense of control which “reduces anxiety and increases a feeling of agency.” A sense of the sacred, according to scientific research, “acts as a buffer against existential threat.” So you have a choice: Live sacred or live scared.

Those in the realm of humanistic and transpersonal psychology, with their emphasis on free will and spiritual transcendence, are the fortunate ones. Instead of blocking the human tendency to magical thinking, we enjoy every minute of it. As Isaac Bashevis Singer once said, “We have to believe in free will. We have no choice.” So why not enjoy it—and stay healthy, happy and sane!

David Ryback is the author of Con-nectAbility (McGraw-Hill) and his first novel, Beethoven in Love (Tiger Iron Press). He struggles with the dynamic between scientific causality and free will by understanding the former and enjoying the latter. He can be reached at David@EQassociates.com or 404/377-3588.
The 15th Annual Conference of the
International Society for Ethical Psychology and Psychiatry (ISEPP)
(formerly known as the International Center for the Study of Psychiatry and Psychology)

Co-sponsored by the
Foundation for Excellence in Mental Health Care

ALTERNATIVES TO BIOLOGICAL PSYCHIATRY: TREATMENTS THAT WORK

November 2 - 3
Philadelphia 2012

A CONFERENCE FOR CLINICIANS, RESEARCHERS, CONSUMERS, PARENTS, AND FAMILIES.

Presenters include:
Irving Kirsch, PhD
Author of The Emperor’s New Drugs

Gary Greenberg, PhD
Author of Manufacturing Depression

James Gordon, MD
Author of Unstuck

Grace Jackson, MD
Author of Rethinking Psychiatric Drugs

Howard Glasser, PhD
Author of Transforming the Difficult Child

Elio Frattaroli, MD
Author of Healing the Soul in the Age of the Brain

Peter Lehmann
Author of Coming Off Psychiatric Drugs

Tomi Gomory, PhD
Co-author (with David Cohen and Stuart Kirk) of Mad Science

Salman Akhtar, MD
Author of Quest for Answers and The Damaged Core

Deborah Luepnitz, PhD
Author of The Family Interpreted

Laurel Silber, PhD
Author of Ghostbusting Transgenerational Processes

Topics Include:
• Alternatives to medication for those in psychological distress, including approaches to both psychosis and depression.
• Comparisons of efficacy of drug and non-drug treatments.
• Consumer-centered interventions that help people move towards full recovery.
• What parents and families can do to help children without reliance on psychotropic drugs.
• Withdrawing from psychotropic drugs: Clinical indications, safety, and supervision concerns.
• Treating children and adults with integrative care.
• Non-drug approaches to helping children diagnosed with ADHD.

For more information or to register, go to www.psychintegrity.org
EXPRESSIVE ARTS
for Healing and Social Change: A Person-Centered Approach

This unique 16 Unit certificate program combines experiential learning, theory and practice in the person-centered philosophy of Carl Rogers and the expressive arts: movement, sound, visual arts, creative writing and psychodrama.

Participants come from around the globe wishing to use the expressive arts in counseling, teaching, mediation, social action and group facilitation, or to awaken personal growth and creativity. They attend six residential week-long courses over two years at a lovely retreat center in northern California. Starting January 4–10, 2013, provided enrollment of 15 is filled.

Shelley Davis, MA, REAT co-created the Saybrook Expressive Arts Certificate program and was co-director and faculty with Natalie Rogers at the Person-Centered Expressive Therapy Institute for 18 years. She also teaches Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy (PCEAT) training programs in Japan, South Korea and at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco.

Sue Ann Herron, Ph.D., left the corporate world to get her Ph.D. Psychology with special emphasis in Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy (PCEAT). She has facilitated workshops for women’s spirituality groups, bereaved children, and high school students. She co-facilitated a PCEAT training program for South Korean therapists with Natalie Rogers, and for Japanese students with Shellee Davis.

Natalie Rogers, Ph.D., REAT, author of The Creative Connection: Expressive Arts as Healing, and Emerging Woman has led PCEAT trainings internationally. Dr. Rogers practiced as a psychotherapist for 30 years and facilitated many workshops with her father, Carl Rogers. Natalie will be present one day at each of the 6 courses. She is a Distinguished Consulting Faculty at Saybrook University.

To Apply
- Saybrook students contact Aaron Hiatt at ahiatt@saybrook.edu or phone him at 415-394-6141.
- Non-Saybrook students contact Admissions: Faiza Bukhari (fbukhari@saybrook.edu) or phone her at 800-825-4480 ext. 1255. • For information about the content of the program please contact Natalie Rogers at nrogers@nrogers.com, Shellee Davis at colville@sonic.net, or Sue Ann Herron at sueannherron@comcast.net.

Course Titles
- Nourishing the Soul
- Client-Centered Expressive Arts for Counseling
- Wisdom of the Body
- Expression Arts for Social Change
- Expressive Arts Group Facilitation

For full course description go to www.nrogers.com

We Will Explore
- How the creative process connects us to body, psyche, soul and world
- How the person-centered approach enhances emotional intelligence, healing, relationships and manifesting our potentials
- The use of expressive arts in counseling, teaching and group work.