

A Comparison Study

Doctor Roberto Assagioli and Saint Ignatius of Loyola
(1888 – 1974) (1491-1556)

Psychosynthesis

The Spiritual Exercises

By

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Abstract

Deep in the heart of each human being there is a drive toward growth and development. Over the centuries many people have developed systems of transformation to help people realize their full potential and fulfill their purpose in life. Two major criteria are used to discern the value of a system of transformation: 1) does the system help the seeker feel less fear and more love? 2) does the system lead the seeker to knowing and fulfilling his/her life purpose? Two such systems that have great value are “The Spiritual Exercises” of St. Ignatius of Loyola and “Psychosynthesis” developed by Roberto Assagioli, M.D.

These two systems are described, explained and compared. Ignatius began developing his system in 1522 in Spain. Assagioli wrote his dissertation on Psychosynthesis in 1910 in Italy. This is a span of three hundred and eighty eight years. Yet, despite the difference in time and culture, the two systems have similar principles at their root.

The lives of Ignatius and Assagioli are discussed as well as the factors that inspired and shaped the thinking of each developer. Following the biographies, a detailed explanation and comparison of the world view of each is discussed.

In order to get the most from the transformational process, the seeker finds a guide or director to help him/her through the process. Each guide or director has learned specific methods and techniques to bring about the desired results. The methods and techniques of both the Spiritual Exercises and Psychosynthesis are described and compared.

In each transformational system, the seeker is led through the process by the trained guide or director. Each guide or director fulfills a key role in the process

and needs certain personal qualities and skills to be effective in helping the seeker transform his/her life. The role and qualities of the facilitator of each system are explained in detail and compared. Each transformational system is described in detail and compared. The process of “The Spiritual Exercises” begins with an introductory phase called “The Disposition Days” followed by four distinct phases called “weeks.” The process of Psychosynthesis is broken down into five phases beginning with the assessment phase and ending with planning for future growth after the formal therapy stops.

Suggestions are given as to how practitioners of each system could utilize and benefit by including various aspects from the other system.

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Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to compare and contrast the teachings of Roberto Assagioli as laid out in Psychosynthesis with the teachings of Saint Ignatius of Loyola as laid out in his Spiritual Exercises. The focus will be on the process of transformation/conversion and inner liberation.

The stimulus for the present study came from reading an article by David L. Fleming S.J. called *Ignatian Exercises and Conversion*. While reading the stages of conversion as presented by Saint Ignatius 500 years ago I was struck by the similarities to Roberto Assagioli's Psychosynthesis. The more I read about the Spiritual Exercises and Psychosynthesis the more I am impressed with these two approaches. I am impressed with the similarities and with the differences. I began to see how each approach could help the other in its effort to transform and liberate. The insights of Assagioli are invaluable for the Ignatian retreat director as she leads the retreatant through the Spiritual Exercises into an experience of liberation. Also the insights and meditations developed by Ignatius some 500 years ago can assist the Psychosynthesis guide as he leads his clients towards integration on the personal and transpersonal levels and helps the client move toward Self-realization.

From the time I began this project I have made two short Ignatian retreats and found the experience very enriching. Ignatius has so much to offer those on the journey toward transformation and liberation. I have also spent many hours with a Psychosynthesis guide and found the experience very enriching. Assagioli also has a great deal to offer. I recently discovered that some Ignatian retreat centers actually offer retreats in both The Ignatian Spiritual Exercises and Psychosynthesis. Loyola Hall Spirituality Center near Liverpool, England offers many Ignatian retreats and also a retreat entitled "What We May Be: An introduction to Psychosynthesis and The Unfolding Self."

The Scope of this Study

The little book called *The Spiritual Exercises* written by St. Ignatius sprang from his mystical experiences with which God gifted him during his convalescence at Manresa in Spain. The book outlines the things that Ignatius observed in his soul and found useful in his spiritual development. Ignatius thought that if these things were useful to him then maybe they would be useful to others and so he began writing them down. In his book Ignatius says the *Spiritual Exercises* are a way of preparing and disposing the soul to rid it of all inordinate attachments. Once the soul is liberated of attachments then it is free to seek and find the will of God in the ordinary events of life. (St. Ignatius, translation, 1964)

Therefore, the purpose of the *Spiritual Exercises* is to place the retreatant in a position to discern God's will clearly and to follow it generously. All of the exercises of the four stages (or weeks as Ignatius likes to call them) are structured in such a way that a well-disposed retreatant may become completely free for Christ and His mission in building the kingdom of God. To achieve this, the retreatant frees herself from all inordinate affections, worldly passions and illusions.

Roberto Assagioli's insights came from his intuition and creativity as he worked at understanding human beings. In the beginning, Assagioli came into contact with Sigmund Freud. At first he was quite excited about Freud's work and agreed with him about the importance of healing childhood trauma and developing a healthy ego. However, Assagioli came to believe that there was much more than this. Assagioli expressed his ideas in his dissertation on *Psychosynthesis*. He wanted to address human growth as it proceeded beyond the norm of the well functioning ego. Assagioli envisioned an approach to the human being that could address both the process of personal growth, (personality integration and self actualization) and transpersonal development, (the dimension of peak experiences of inspired creativity, spiritual insights and unitive states of consciousness).

Assagioli called these two dimensions of growth “Personal Psychosynthesis” and “Transpersonal Psychosynthesis.” He also realized that it was possible to develop a deep relationship with the Transpersonal Self and organize our entire being around that center. The goal of Psychosynthesis is to develop a well-integrated personality so that it can express the energies of the Transpersonal Self in the world. In other words, the person develops a good vehicle so that he can fulfill his purpose in life and offer loving service to others.

It is striking that these two approaches developed some 500 years apart have so many similar principles and goals. This study seeks to compare these two approaches and to cross-pollinate so that both approaches may be enriched.

The Procedure

I have chosen to write this study as an interview. I interview Saint Ignatius of Loyola and Roberto Assagioli and ask them questions about their approach. Each answer expresses their approach and that of their followers. In chapters one through four Saint Ignatius explains a part of his system followed by Dr. Assagioli explaining part of his system. Following these two explanations I reflect on the two approaches and compare them.

In chapter five Saint Ignatius explains the transformative process of the Spiritual Exercises. In Chapter six Dr. Assagioli explains the transformative process of Psychosynthesis. These explanations are followed by chapter seven which is a comparison of the two approaches.

Note: Because of the awkwardness of the use of pronouns in the English language I have chosen to use masculine pronouns when speaking about Psychosynthesis and female pronouns when speaking about the Spiritual Exercises.

I refer to the person taking the Ignatian retreat as the “retreatant.”

I refer to the person going through the Psychosynthesis process as the “client.”

Chapter 1

Biographies

Biography of Saint Ignatius of Loyola

Question: St. Ignatius, will you tell us something about your life?

I was born in 1491 in Azpeitia in the Basque province of Guipuzcoa in northern Spain and was the youngest in a sibling line of twelve. I had seven older brothers and four older sisters. My name was Inigo at that time. I changed it later to Ignatius when I was studying in Paris. My mother died when I was very young and I was sent to stay with a beautiful woman named Maria Garin. I remained with her until I was seven and then came home. My older brother Martin was now head of the household; he was the heir to the family estate. Madalena de Aroz, my sister in law, became a mother to me. She was devout, cultured and was formerly a lady in waiting to Queen Isabella.

My father, Beltran, wanted me to become a priest. It was customary at that time to give your youngest to the church. Being a priest was the last thing I wanted to be and I think I got that message across loud and clear during my adolescence. I wore my hair long, dressed in bright clothes, and had my share of trouble with the law.

As a young teenager I left home and rode off on my horse to serve as a page to Juan Velazquez de Cuellar. He was a royal treasurer. It was here that I began my preparation to become a soldier. I was so proud of my position and began to gamble, brawl, fight duels and flirt with women. For a number of years I went about in the dress of a fighting man, wearing a coat of mail and breastplate, and carrying a sword and other sorts of arms.

In 1517 Juan Velazquez de Cuellar died and left me without a master so I rode north looking for a new master. I enlisted in the army of the viceroy of Navarre and was promoted to the rank of an officer. Soon we were defending the fortress of the town of Pamplona against the French, who claimed the territory as their own. We were terribly outnumbered and the commander of the Spanish forces wanted to surrender, but I convinced him to fight on for the honor of Spain, if not for victory. (Bergan, 1991, p. 14ff)

During the battle a cannon ball struck me, wounding one leg and breaking the other. Because the French admired my courage they carried me back to recuperate at the castle of Loyola, rather than to prison.

My leg was set but did not heal, so it was necessary to break it again and reset it, all without anesthesia. Although I was told to prepare for death, on the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, June 29, I took an unexpected turn for the better. The leg healed but my right leg bone became superimposed at the knee, I ended up with a protruding kneecap and my right leg shorter than my left. This caused me to limp.

During the long weeks of recuperation, I was extremely bored and asked for some romance novels to pass the time. But there were none to be found in the castle of Loyola, but there was a copy of the life of Christ and a book on the saints. I was desperate for something to do so I began to read them. The more I read, the more I considered the exploits of the saints worth imitating. I used to imagine myself behaving like a saint and I experienced joy and was at peace and felt very satisfied. However, when I finished my long daydreams performing acts of chivalry and winning the hand of a noble woman, I would feel restless and unsatisfied.

Not only was this experience the beginning of my conversion but also through careful reflection I came to understand how to discern spirits. I began to recognize

that not only my intellect but also my emotions and feelings could help me come to an understanding of the action of the Spirit in my life.

In March 1522 completely converted from my old desires and plans of romance and worldly conquests, and well enough to travel, I left the castle. I had decided that I wanted to go to Jerusalem to live where our Lord had spent his life on earth. As a first step I began my journey to Barcelona. I first proceeded to the Benedictine shrine of Our Lady of Montserrat. It was there that I made a general confession and an all night vigil on my knees before Our Lady's altar. This was in keeping with the rites of chivalry. For me it was like becoming a knight in the service of Christ. I left my sword and knife at the altar, went out and gave away all my fine clothes to a poor man, and dressed myself in rough clothes with sandals and a staff.

I continued towards Barcelona, but stopped along the river, Cardoner, at a town called Manresa. I stayed in a cave outside the town, intending to linger only a few days, but I remained for ten months. I spent hours each day in prayer and also worked in a hospice.

I read a book called the "Imitation of Christ" by Thomas Kempis. This book had a major impact on me for the whole of my life. During this time I began to feel great anxiety and had thoughts of suicide and was unsure if I could bear the pain. I would worry about losing my soul and I went to confess at Montserrat but to no avail; I fasted but to no avail; and finally, I returned to my practice of "Discernment of Spirits," and peace returned.

It was here on the banks of the Cardoner River that I had a vision, which I regarded as the most significant in my life. The vision was truly an enlightening experience. I would say that I learned more on that one occasion than I did in the rest of my life. I never revealed exactly what the vision was, but I can say it was

an encounter with God. I saw all creation with new eyes and I acquired a new meaning and relevance for life. This experience enabled me to find God in all things. This grace of finding God in all things was one of the central themes for the rest of my life. It was from this experience of enlightenment that I got my ideas for what is now known as the Spiritual Exercises.

All the previous founders of religious orders instructed their members on the time for prayer. I never wrote in the rules for my followers (The Jesuits) that there should be any fixed time for prayer. Actually, by finding God in all things, all times are times of prayer. I did not, of course, exclude formal prayer, but I differed from other founders regarding the imposition of definite times or duration of prayer. One of the reasons some opposed the formation of the Society of Jesus was that I proposed doing away with the chanting of the Divine Office in choir. This was a radical departure from custom, because, until this time, every religious order was held to the recitation of the office in common. For me, such recitation meant that the type of activity envisioned for the Society would be hindered.

I finally arrived at Barcelona, took a ship to Rome Italy, where I met Pope Adrian VI and requested permission to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. I wanted to be a pilgrim in the Holy Land but when I arrived I was told to leave by the Franciscan superior. He had authority over all Catholics in the Holy Land. At the time, the Turks were the rulers of the Holy Land and it was not safe for me to be there. I refused at first but when threatened with excommunication, I obediently departed.

At this time I was 33 years old and was determined to study for the priesthood. However, I was ignorant of Latin, a necessary preliminary to university studies in those days. So I started back to school studying Latin grammar with young boys at a school in Barcelona. After two years I moved on to the University of Alcala. There my zeal got me in trouble, a problem that continued throughout my life. I

would gather students and adults to explain the Gospels to them and teach them how to pray. My efforts attracted the attention of the Inquisition and I was thrown into jail for forty-two days. When I was released I was told to avoid teaching others. In the eyes of Inquisitors, anyone who was teaching and was not ordained was suspect.

Because I could not live without helping souls, I moved on to the University of Salamanca. There, within two weeks, the Dominicans had thrown me back into prison. Though they could find no heresy in what I taught, I was told that I could only teach children and then only simple religious truths. Once more I took to the road, this time for Paris.

At the University of Paris I began school again, studying Latin grammar and literature, philosophy, and theology. In 1532 I received my BA, in 1533 my Licentiate and in 1535 my MA.

It was also at that time in Paris that I began sharing a room with Francis Xavier and Peter Faber. I greatly influenced a few other fellow students directing them all at one time or another in what I called the Spiritual Exercises. Eventually six of them and myself decided to take vows of chastity and poverty and to go to the Holy Land. If going to the Holy Land became impossible, we would go to Rome and place ourselves at the service of the Pope for whatever he would want us to do. We did not think of doing this as a religious order or congregation, but as individuals.

For a year we waited, however no ship was able to take us to the Holy Land because of the conflict between the Christians and Muslims. It was during this time of waiting that I was ordained a priest, but I did not say Mass for another year. I wanted to say my first Mass in the Holy Land where Jesus himself had lived.

I, along with two of my companions, Peter Faber and James Lainez, decided to go to Rome and place ourselves at the service of the Pope. It was a few miles outside of the city that I had my second significant mystical experience. At a chapel at La Storta where we had stopped to pray, God the Father told me "I will be favorable to you in Rome and I will place you with my Son." I did not know what this experience meant for it could mean persecution as well as success since Jesus experienced both. I was deeply moved by the experience.

When we met with the Pope, he very happily put us to work teaching scripture and theology and preaching. It was here on Christmas morning, 1538, that I celebrated my first Mass at the church of St. Mary Major in the Chapel of the Manger. It was thought this chapel had the actual manger of Bethlehem, so, if I was not going to be able to say my first Mass at Jesus' birthplace in the Holy Land, then this was the best substitute.

During the Lent of 1539, I asked all of my companions to come to Rome to discuss our future. We had never thought of founding a religious order, but now that going to Jerusalem was out, we had to think about our future and decide if we would spend it together.

After many weeks of prayer and discussion, we decided to form a community, with the Pope's approval, in which we would vow obedience to a superior general who would hold office for life. We would place ourselves at the disposal of the Holy Father to travel wherever he should wish to send us for whatever duties. A vow to this effect was added to the ordinary vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

The following year on September 27, 1540 Pope Paul III gave formal approval of our new order. We referred to ourselves as the Company of Jesus, and became known as the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). I was elected on the first ballot of the

group to be the superior. I begged them to reconsider, pray and vote again a few days later. The second ballot came out as the first, unanimous for me, except for my own vote. I was still reluctant to accept, but my Franciscan confessor told me it was God's will, so I acquiesced. On the Friday of Easter week, April 22, 1541, at the Church of St. Paul Outside-the-Walls, we pronounced our vows in the newly formed Order.

My great love was teaching catechism to children, directing adults in the Spiritual Exercises, and working among the poor and in hospitals but this was not to be. For the next fifteen years I directed the new society. I worked out of two small rooms, my bedroom and my office. I spent years composing the Constitutions of the Society and would write thousands of letters to all corners of the globe to my fellow Jesuits dealing with the affairs of the Society and to lay men and women directing them in the spiritual life. From my tiny quarters in Rome I lived to see the Society of Jesus grow from eight to a thousand members. The Jesuits founded colleges and houses all over Europe and as far away as Brazil and Japan. Some of my original companions were to become the Pope's theologians at the Council of Trent, an event that played an important role in the Catholic Counter Reformation.

In 1548 Pope Paul III approved my Spiritual Exercises. I was so thrilled that now I was assured that this precious fruit of my personal experience of God would be available to help others. Perhaps the work of the Society of Jesus is best known for its ministry in education. This is interesting because I had no intention of including teaching among the Jesuits' ministries. Our mission was foremost to be at the disposal of the Pope to go where we would be most needed.

By 1548 I opened schools in Italy, Portugal, the Netherlands, Spain, Germany, and India. These schools, however, were intended primarily for the education of the new young Jesuit recruits. Ten such colleges built within six years indicated the rapid growth of the Jesuits.

In 1548 at the request of the magistrates of Messina in Sicily, I sent five men to open a school for lay people as well as Jesuit students. It soon became clear by requests from rulers, bishops and cities for schools that this work was truly one of great importance. I figured that education was one of the most effective ways to correct ignorance and corruption among the clergy and the faithful. Education would also help the Church as it faced the Reformation. Being educators would also fulfill our motto, "Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam,"—"to the greater glory of God."

I believed that choosing ministries that would influence those who have the most influence on others was in keeping with God's will. I believed that from among those who were now merely students, in time they would graduate and play diverse roles--one to preach and carry on the care of souls, another to govern the land and administer justice and others to other callings. I believed that since young boys become grown men, their good education in life and doctrine would be beneficial to many others, with the fruit expanding every day. With this vision in mind I helped to establish Jesuit schools and universities all over the world.

I know that many people picture me as a soldier, stern, iron-willed, practical, showing little emotion. They do not see a very attractive or warm personality. It is true I have many of these warrior qualities. I think they helped me in my leadership role. But far more important than these qualities was my love. I was always rather inclined toward love. I also know I am loved by most people and I particularly felt love from my companions and I loved each one of them deeply.

Ever since I was a student in Paris, I suffered from stomach ailments and they became increasingly troublesome in Rome. In the summer of 1556 my health grew worse. My physician thought I would survive the summer. I had survived many physical ailments before but this time I thought my end was near. On the afternoon of July 30th I asked Polanco, my secretary, to go and get the Pope's

blessing for me, suggesting by this to Polanco that I was dying. Polanco, however, trusted the physician more than me and told me he had a lot of letters to write and mail that day. He would go for the Pope's blessing tomorrow.

Shortly after midnight I took a turn for the worse. Polanco rushed off to the Vatican to get the papal blessing, but it was too late. I turned my gaze to God and rendered my soul into the hands of God on July 31, 1556. (Rev. Norman O'Neal, S.J.)

Biography of Doctor Roberto Assagioli

Question: Dr. Roberto Assagioli, will you tell us a little about your life and how you came to develop Psychosynthesis?

I was born in Venice February 27, 1888. My mother was Elena Kaula and my father was Leone Grego. My father died in 1890 when I was only two years old. My mother later married Dr. Emanuele Assagioli and I took his surname. I was brought up in a cultured upper middle class Jewish family. I was influenced by my mother's Jewish practices as well as her interest in Theosophy. At home we spoke Italian, French and English. Later I would study German, Latin, Greek, Russian and Sanskrit. As you can see I was influenced by a variety of philosophies, cultures and religions.

At the age of sixteen, my family moved to Florence so that I could study Medicine. I specialized in neurology and psychiatry and graduated in 1910 at the age of twenty-two. I had been introduced already to the work of Sigmund Freud, and was discussing with my professors his ideas of psychoanalysis. I was one of the first Italians to be involved with his psychoanalytic insights.

I was quite excited about these new insights but, upon careful reflection, I realized that there was more to the human being than psychoanalytic theory suggested. In 1910, I wrote my dissertation, and laid the groundwork for Psychosynthesis by critiquing psychoanalysis. I saw that psychoanalysis was only a partial picture of the human being. Although Freud's insights were brilliant, he neglected what may be called "the farther reaches of human nature."

In 1912, I was practicing psychiatry, and founded a bimonthly scientific periodical called *Psiche*. The periodical folded in 1915 due to World War I. During the war, I was a lieutenant doctor. After the war I fell in love, and married Nella Ciapetti. She was Roman Catholic and a Theosophist like my mother. We were married for forty years and had one son Ilario who was born in 1923.

In 1925 I founded the Istituto di Psicossintesi with the purpose of developing, applying and teaching various techniques of psychotherapy. In 1926, I published a book called "A New Method of Treatment Psychosynthesis."

In 1930, I wrote two articles that later became the first two chapters in my book "Psychosynthesis." The articles were entitled "Dynamic Psychology and Psychosynthesis" and "Self Realization and Psychological Disturbances."

During the Second World War, the fascist government closed my institute in Rome. Likely, this was due to my Jewish background and my humanistic and international views. They later accused me of being a pacifist, and locked me in solitary confinement for a full month. I was frightened but I made the best of it. I turned it into a spiritual retreat, focusing on meditation and my inner life. I now count it as one of the great gifts I received. It was a blessing in disguise. When I was released, through the help of some powerful friends, I dedicated myself to the task of helping men and women free themselves from inner prisons. It was in that dark silent prison that I discovered my life purpose.

My goal was to create a scientific approach that encompassed the whole person including creativity and will, joy and wisdom, as well as impulses and drives. I wanted a system that was more than just theory. I wanted my approach to be practical, not merely an understanding of how the human being lives, but an aid in helping people to live better, more fully, according to the best that is within each person. I named my approach "Psychosynthesis."

After the war my son got tuberculosis and died in the early 1950's. This was a great blow to me, but I accepted it and moved on. I opened an institute in Florence where I stayed for the rest of my life. (Firman, 2000, p. 9 -17)

Although I felt my work was very important and I had the support of many people, I also felt alone at times. My views ran counter to the prevailing mechanistic conceptions of the time. I had hoped people would be excited, as I was, about the discoveries I was making, but people just didn't get it. However, this did not discourage me because the impulse to study, to learn, and to experiment was coming from a place deep within me. I don't think I could have stopped even if I was outwardly persecuted. My work was really an expression of my inner self.

My intention was to create an open system that would be open to new discoveries on many different levels. I was a searcher, and I wanted my followers to be searchers as well. We needed to continue to look for new ideas that would benefit the human race. I did not want to hand on a dogma that was set in stone. This approach would only kill creativity and exploration. Instead of offering all the answers, I offered a vision and encouraged my followers to be creative, to explore and incorporate new ideas into the Psychosynthesis framework.

We live in a context, and this context is alive, growing, and changing. The context is constantly evolving. I believed I had to be in tune with this evolutionary process and my ideas reflected my openness to change.

As I look back on my work, I have to say that I was a bit of a thief. Of course I was not a thief in a material sense. What I am referring to is my studies.

Psychosynthesis was not created out of nothing. I studied various bodies of knowledge, and spoke to many learned people from different backgrounds and cultures as I developed the theory and practice of Psychosynthesis.

I would like to share with you some of the people and traditions that influenced me as I developed Psychosynthesis. My search lead me to the scientific community as well as the esoteric and spiritual community. This was a delicate balance because, at that time, the Western world was deeply rooted in materialistic scientific values, and would not accept anything that could not quantified and referenced. I wanted to bring together the spiritual and the scientific to get a more wholistic view of the human psyche.

I will speak first about my study in the scientific community. As I mentioned earlier, as a young Doctor I was involved in the psychoanalytic movement, and was familiar with the work of Freud and his followers. I read Janet, Adler, Rank, Horney, Sullivan, Lewin and Sorokin.

I found the work of Freud and his followers very interesting, but always felt it was lacking. Freud was purely scientific, and I was getting interested in esoteric and spiritual subjects. I understood why Freud cut out the spiritual. It was because he could not quantify the spiritual references, so he just avoided the issue. This was why I broke with Freud, but I took the ideas that made sense to me.

I felt strongly that if you cut off the spiritual, the whole person was not being addressed. As Freud discovered, we have a basement of the past, but I believe we also have an upstairs of potential, of future possibilities. So this was my task in formulating Psychosynthesis, to put the basement and the upstairs together. This

was a difficult task because the scientific community was not open to the spiritual. I had to hide the roots of my reflection and present it scientifically.

I wanted to deal with all aspects of analysis, deep personal psychotherapy, as well as gaining access to, and expression of, creative and spiritual energies. I hoped that Psychosynthesis would be the medium for communication between the scientific and the spiritual communities, and hopefully offer a platform for their synthesis.

Two other people who were making their mark in the scientific community were Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow. I resonated with Roger's ideas of unconditional positive regard, congruence and empathy. Abraham Maslow the founder of Transpersonal Psychology was studying what he called the further reaches of human nature. Maslow was a great researcher and was also influenced by esoteric thought. He came up with the idea of hierarchy of needs starting with deficiency needs moving towards the being needs. These ideas were a great help to me in developing my ideas of personal and transpersonal synthesis.

As you know by now I was not only interested in theory, but also in practice. I wanted to develop active techniques that would help people co-operate with their innate drive to grow. I studied Baudoin's methods of hypnotism and autosuggestion. I studied autogenous training with *Das Autogene*. I studied the rational approach of Ellis. I learned meditation techniques from Happich and I learned Psychodrama from Moreno. I also studied art and music therapy.

As I developed Psychosynthesis, I included many methods of dealing with the difficulties of life and living, which include psychic deficiency, feeling hurt, shame, pain, fear, and anger. Work on this level I called "personal Psychosynthesis." I also included ways of dealing with "being" needs, finding the meaning of life and fulfilling your potential. I called this level of work

“transpersonal Psychosynthesis.” Working with personal issues happens in parallel with transpersonal issues.

My search for the truth, also lead me into the spiritual world. I looked at Christian Mysticism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Neo Platonism, Gnosticism, Hermeticism, Egyptian Mysteries, Growth Movement, Classical Greek, Theosophy, Alchemy, Jewish Mysticism, Kabbalah, Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry.

With Christian mysticism, I was particularly fond of Saint Ignatius (1491 – 1556) and the Jesuits thinkers, as well as Saint John of the Cross (1542-1591) and Meister Eckhart (1260-1329). But my favorite was Dante. I saw Dante’s Divine Comedy as an archetypal description of the process each person goes through in their developmental journey through life. In fact, the central symbolic meaning of Divine Comedy is a wonderful picture of a complete Psychosynthesis.

I was impressed with Buddhist concepts, especially the Tibetan approaches. I was also drawn to the practical aspects of Hinduism and the many branches of Yoga. I practiced Hatha and Raja yoga.

I enjoyed reading the classical Greek philosophers, especially Plato. He spoke of the possibility of awakening to reality. This is a big part of Psychosynthesis.

I looked at the Gnostic Tradition by reading Justin the Martyr, Hefesippus, Clement of Alexandria, Iraneus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Origen and Epiphanius. As well as the Gnostic Gospels discovered in 1945 at Nag Hammadi. Another Gnostic group I liked studying was the Cathars. They believed that each person had to find his own connection with God; each person had to find his own vision and values. Perfection was found in being just what you are, with your gifts and limitations. I found this to be a liberating teaching.

I was greatly influenced by Jewish mysticism, and the Kabbalah, the Tree of Life, impressed me immensely. (Parfitt, Will, 2003 p.133) So much wisdom is expressed through something apparently so simple. The Kabbalah is a method of personal and spiritual development based on a map called “the Tree of Life.” I developed many of my ideas for the egg diagram and the process of Psychosynthesis from the Tree of Life.

I studied the teachings of the Rosicrucians and Freemasons who have close links with hermeticism and magic. I am deeply touched by the symbol of the Rose. A symbol used by the Rosicrucians. The rose and the cross symbolizes the important concept that the suffering of life is borne through the knowledge that it is the suffering itself that leads to the opening of the heart, the blossoming of the rose.

One of the main influences on me was Theosophy. I had a great friendship with Alice Bailey who wrote extensively and I received a great deal from her teachings. I actually became a Theosophist, primarily because I thought it was the best attempt at a synthesis of Eastern and Western approaches to spirituality. From my involvement I came to a deep understanding of the “will – love” dynamic. I also developed a typology, “the teaching of the seven rays.”

In the nineteen sixty’s and seventy’s the materialist scientific culture was losing its grip and the spiritual traditions began to reveal their secrets. This was an exciting time; I enjoyed studying the teachings of the Sufi’s, Gurdjieff and his followers, and associating with great masters like Sri Aurobindo.

I also studied Alchemy and Hermeticists. Alchemy offers a precise and clear insight into the process of Psychosynthesis. The Hermeticists pointed out two important powers of the human psyche, will and imagination, which need to be tempered with love. I used these ideas in Psychosynthesis.

All of these contacts and deep study helped me make Psychosynthesis a system that could contain the breadth and the depth of both Eastern and Western methods of human growth.

From this long list of studies it may seem that I am an academic, and that I am in one sense, but I not only studied this material, I also practiced what I learned and I gained a great deal from it.

I encourage my followers to continue to study and to experiment in different fields of thought so Psychosynthesis may continue to grow and enrich human kind.

I am joyful that I did live long enough to see my work become popular. In the 1960's people began to take notice, I was in my seventies by then. I realized that all those years of studying and listening to my deepest Self had paid off. I came to a beautiful understanding of the human psyche. I also realized that it was not complete. People would follow me and add to my insights. Many new disciplines were developing. I know they will contribute to the understanding of the human being. In 1961 I systematized Psychosynthesis into five different fields, Cultural, Psychotherapeutic, Education, Interpersonal Relations, and Group Work.

Dr. Roberto Assagioli died peacefully and quietly on August 23, 1974 at the age of 86. (Hardy, Jean, 1987, p. 9-20) Psychosynthesis will continue to grow and develop. It will help many people come to a deeper relationship with the Transpersonal Self, and thus, come to a place of service for all of humanity.

Reflection: On the Biography of Roberto Assagioli and Saint Ignatius

The first thing that strikes me is the fact that St. Ignatius was born four hundred and ninety seven years before Roberto Assagioli. This fact had a significant influence on the life work of the two men. Ignatius was born into a medieval

culture. Although Ignatius traveled in Europe and the Holy Land, he was confined, in general, to his time and culture. Roberto was born into a Victorian culture with a Jewish background. However, Roberto studied many languages, cultures and religions. This activity had a profound influence on his work.

Both Ignatius and Roberto lost a parent as young boys. Ignatius lost his mother and was raised by a wet nurse until he was seven. Roberto lost his father when he was two. It is unclear how these events affected their lives.

Both were men ahead of their time. The Spanish Inquisitors oppressed Ignatius. They watched him closely. I believe this limited his work. One Ignatian commentator stated that Ignatius used the words “Holy Spirit” very few times in his book. This was because the inquisitors were very suspicious of mysticism, which could be linked to the working of the Holy Spirit. Roberto was oppressed by a mechanistic scientific view of the world. Although Roberto studied widely in mystical writings, he maintained what he called “a wall of silence” around this activity. He feared exposure of his activity in this area of study would cause significant people to reject his work. Today, we are very comfortable with eastern religious ideas coming into the field of psychology. For example, the mindfulness based stress reduction groups that draw heavily from the Buddhist tradition are covered by the Ontario Hospital Insurance Plan. This would have been unheard of twenty years ago, let alone when Roberto was developing Psychosynthesis.

Both Ignatius and Roberto lived during times of war. Ignatius was a Spanish soldier fighting the French, and Roberto survived World War II. Also, both spent time in prison, Roberto in a fascist prison under Mussolini, and Ignatius in a Spanish prison accused of heresy.

Both Ignatius and Roberto were men who knew how to go “inside” and contact the higher recesses of their being. Both were open to inspiration, intuition, and

peak experiences. A great deal of the content of both the Spiritual Exercises and Psychosynthesis came from these deep experiences. Neither Ignatius nor Roberto were simply academics creating ideas with their minds. Both men had a spiritual practice and received a great deal of information from their personal experience of the Divine. Both exhibited a great deal of courage to put forward their ideas despite grave opposition, thus fulfilling their life purpose.

Both were well-educated men, Roberto with a Doctors degree at the age of 22 and a voracious appetite for learning. He continued studying the rest of his life.

Ignatius got an MA from the University of Paris. He wanted to be a priest, and therefore studied Latin, Philosophy, and Christian Theology. Roberto was very diverse in his study delving into many different disciplines, while Ignatius was very focused on Christianity and confined his study to the teachings of the Church.

Both men left a legacy. In a report given in January 2004, the Society of Jesus, founded by Ignatius, has 20,170 members worldwide and 35 retreat centers in the USA alone. Roberto also has a great number of followers, although it is difficult to estimate just how many there are. However, it is known that there are 37 Psychosynthesis Centers in the USA alone.

Chapter 2

World Views

Saint Ignatius of Loyola's World View

Question: St. Ignatius, will you explain your vision of human nature and the universe?

My view of human nature can be summarized in what I call “the principle and foundation.” In this statement I outline two major principles (a.) Human beings are created to praise, reverence and serve God and (b.) All other things are created to help humankind achieve this end. I call my vision foundational because these brief statements are the foundation that supports the whole edifice of the spiritual life. (Pavulraj, 2002, p. 37)

Listen carefully to my statement of the Principle and Foundation.

“You are created to praise, reverence, and serve God your Lord, and by this means to save your soul.”

The other things on the face of the earth are created for you to help you in attaining the end for which you are created.

Hence, you are to make use of them in as far as they help you in the attainment of your end, and you must rid yourself of them in as far as they prove a hindrance to you.

Therefore, you must make yourself indifferent to all created things, as far as you are allowed free choice and are not under any prohibition.

Consequently, as far as you are concerned, you should not prefer health to sickness, riches to poverty, honor to dishonor, a long life to a short life.

The same holds for all other things. Your one desire and choice should be what is more conducive to the end for which you are created. (Ignatius of Loyola, 1991, p. 130)

Let me elaborate on this statement and put some flesh on these bare bones. The first principle defines the origin and destiny of humankind. The second identifies the purpose of the rest of creation.

You are created to praise, reverence, and serve God your Lord, and by this means to save your soul.

God created us out of love but that does not mean that God created us and left us on our own. No, God is continually creating us; all things grow through phases and stages throughout life. God creates all things at every moment for God is always and everywhere, the creator of all things. We often think that "God made us" implies that God made us in the past but the truth is that God's passionate creative love burns at the core of our being.

God created us out of love and wants to share His love with us. Our response to that love is to love in return with a full and generous heart. The best way to respond to God's love is to freely live out the purpose for which God created us. The creator places in each person a dynamic original purpose. (Tetlow, 1989, p. 202)

If the retreatant, the person doing the Spiritual Exercises, fulfills her original purpose and grows to be the person God has been hoping she would become, she manifests God's power at work. God's glory is a human person fully alive. This

makes concrete and visible the glory of God. In creating, God shares with the retreatant His divine qualities and even His divine Self. (Tetlow, 1989, p. 203) In order for the retreatant to manifest God's glory and to do the will of God she must be conscious and accept the right relationship with God. The attitude I am referring to here is "God is God" and the "retreatant is creature." The retreatant needs to have an experience of God creating her. She is totally dependent on God. He calls each retreatant to live in a definite time and in a specific place, a culture, a nation, a locale, and a historical epoch. He summons each retreatant to be a child of this mother, father, with this brother and sister.

God plants in each retreatant the concrete qualities and characteristics and abilities that make up her personality. And no matter what those gifts are she is born of passionate love. The retreatant needs to discern these gifts, and to discern God's will, and then return that love by fulfilling God's will.

Experiencing God in this way and doing His will is difficult because of Original sin. There seems to be a compulsion towards sin. The sin may take different forms for different retreatants. The Church identifies these patterns as the seven capital sins. The retreatant's task is to overcome and free herself from these inordinate attachments.

So in order to have spiritual freedom and be able to experience the Love of God, discern His will, and respond generously to His will the retreatant must become indifferent. Some people today may call this experience detachment. (Veltri, 1998, p. 602) The retreatant has to be "free from" disordered attachments in order to be "free to do" God's will. Detachment denotes freedom "from." It can be said that the retreatant is detached, indifferent or spiritually free, when she is grasped so completely by the love of Christ Jesus that the desires of her heart and the actions, affects, thoughts, and decisions that flow from these desires are oriented toward God and fulfill His will. In these moments she desires to return love for love

through her service and praise made manifest by cooperating with God's desires for our planet and His people. The director of the Spiritual Exercises asks the retreatant "Do you believe that God your creator and Lord cares enough and in great enough detail to have hopes or desires about what you will do with your life?" God creates the retreatant purposefully and gives her those desires such that if she freely follows them and enacts them they will lead her to live a purposeful life, filled with deep meaning based on love. This is what it means to do God's will. The will of God is hidden deep within the retreatant's authentic desires. Living out the will of God fulfills her deepest desires and yearnings and brings in the reign of God. (English, 1982, p. 35ff)

It is difficult to discern which desires are from God, which bring in His Reign and which ones lead her away from God's love. Not all desires lead to God. Therefore, the retreatant will enact some desires, but others she will suppress. But how will the retreatant know which ones to act upon and which ones to suppress? The retreatant is created by the passionate love of God for love. Therefore, she chooses what leads her to love; love of God, those around her and herself. She refuses to act on desires, which lead her away from love.

All created things will be viewed in the same light. All things are good in so far as they lead her to God's love and service. Desires are to be avoided in so far as they lead her away from God's love. Disordered attachments need to be avoided. The destruction caused by disordered attachment can be seen easily when a retreatant is addicted to something. Take alcohol for example. When a retreatant is addicted to alcohol, the drink becomes the center of her life and all her feelings, thoughts, and actions revolve around the alcohol and prevent her from expressing the will of God.

Therefore she must learn to remain indifferent. Indifferent, detached, open, and balanced even when it comes to important matters such as vocation. The retreatant

asks shall I marry, remain single, become a nun or religious sister? I believe the retreatant needs to be indifferent as to whether she is rich or poor, healthy or sick, honored or dishonored, has a short life or a long life. When the retreatant is faced with difficult issues there is only one question to ask. Will the action lead to the Love of God and service? For one retreatant she can serve God better by being rich; for another retreatant she can serve God better by being poor.

The Principle and Foundation is a powerful statement. It is a constant point of reference. The retreatant can use them as she deepens her life, and responds to the love of God, and to service. To integrate and live from the Principle and Foundation the retreatant moves through three stages of growth: 1. To accept herself as a creature. 2. To become indifferent to all created things thus attaining spiritual freedom and 3. From this place of freedom she acts out her life purpose, doing God's will, which is buried in her deepest desires.

Question: St. Ignatius, this is a beautiful vision of human nature. I can see how a human being can live in harmony with God, self, with other human beings and creation. But as I look around the world I don't see many people living this kind of harmony. Would you say a few words about that?

Let's begin by looking in the Bible at the creation story in Genesis. The sacred writer teaches that the foundation of life and of identity resides in Adam and Eve's unique relationship with God. They enjoyed perfect order. Adam and Eve accepted God as God. They accepted themselves as creatures. They used all created things to support their relationship with God and in so doing they enjoyed union with God, with themselves, with each other and with all created beings and things.

However, the story continues and the sacred author reports that Adam and Eve damaged their relationship with God, themselves, each other and with the earth. In the beginning everything was in harmony and now everything is in disorder.

The serpent deceives Adam and Eve by promising to make them like God. On first glance it is difficult to see what the serpent is doing. His lie is very subtle. The serpent twists only slightly the reality of creation. When God created Adam and Eve He made them sharers of His own Divine life, which means they were already like God. He made them in his image and likeness and at their very core they had a God-given, God-created identity. They already had what the serpent was promising with one small but important difference. Adam and Eve were like God provided they were attached to God. The serpent was saying they could be like God without God.

The crux of the matter is that Adam and Eve cannot become like God without God. Adam and Eve did not need to usurp God's transcendent sovereignty in a spiritual coup; they already had what they were seeking. They did not understand an important spiritual law. Any expression of "self proclaimed likeness to God" creates disorder. Adam and Eve did not create themselves, God created them, and therefore, Adam and Eve cannot fulfill themselves, only God can fulfill them. To claim to be self-sufficient wounds the relationship with God and replaces it with a futile faith in a false self that can never exist. In other words, the order gets out of whack.

Adam and Eve's sin created the disorder in the world. Remember the right order, God is God, human beings are creatures in relationship to God and all created things support this right order. After the fall, human beings try to put themselves first. They feel empty and try to compensate through the misuse of material things.

For me, the spiritual life is a journey from disorder to order. The retreatant's task is to restore proper order. Once the retreatant places God as God and accepts her creature-hood and uses created things to support this right order, then she is free to hear and put into action God's will which brings her joy.

When the retreatant insists on being God without God she is choosing to reject God's way of becoming who God calls her to become, and in this rejection she loses her way. She loses the order between herself and God and she loses the connection with herself. By trying to become God without God she is really choosing a life outside of God's love and thus she chooses death. It is death because she creates herself into a person she wants herself to be, but who cannot exist because God does not know anything about this false self she has created. (Finley, 1978, p. 23 ff)

During the Spiritual Exercises the retreatant will begin by feeling the deep pain of her choices to be God without God and she will feel alienated from God. Often even with this pain the retreatant may not turn back to God, she may continue to try and be God on her own. The retreatant may try to ward off this pain by developing patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving that deceive her as an attempt to fulfill her desire for God. But because all this is done outside of God's love she only makes things worse.

In the Catholic Church, the Holy Fathers identified seven possible disordered patterns. The retreatant may use one or perhaps a combination of disordered patterns to try to find fulfillment. These patterns are often referred to as the seven deadly or capital sins. They are called deadly sins because they have the most serious impact on spiritual development. The sins that qualify as deadly sins have varied over the years. Different spiritual writers have developed different lists. John Cassian came up with a list of eight sins. They are gluttony, fornication, avarice, anger, dejection, sloth, vainglory and pride. Saint Gregory the Great

created what is considered to be the definitive list of seven, and they are: pride, envy, anger, dejection, avarice, gluttony, and lust. Each of the deadly sins is always accompanied by a series of related, minor sins.

If a retreatant has the sin of Pride, she simply has an excessive belief in her own abilities. Pride is a sin in that it causes the retreatant to fail to give adequate credit to God's powers. The retreatant must come to believe that God is God and that she is a creature and in order to feel fulfilled she must surrender to God's love and will. I believe pride is the root of all other sins.

Envy is an unacceptable desire to possess what others possess. This may include material objects, but it can also include character traits or gifts. For example, one retreatant may be envious of another's gift of healing or wisdom, or mystical experiences. This is a sin because the retreatant fails to come to know her own unique purpose in God's plan. When the retreatant dies and goes before God, He will not say to her "why didn't you express Sally's gift of healing?" He will ask about her specific gifts and help her look at how she used them in her lifetime.

Gluttony has traditionally been associated with eating too much, but it has a broader connotation and in fact includes trying to consume more of anything than you actually need.

Lust, one of the more popular of the deadly sins, involves the desire to experience physical, sensual pleasures (not just those which are sexual in nature, although they are among the more common). The desire for physical pleasures is considered sinful because it causes the retreatant to ignore her more important spiritual needs. It causes the retreatant to avoid the deep inner longing for God. It numbs the pain so the retreatant isn't drawn to look deeply within.

Anger, the fifth deadly sin, is also known as wrath. When anger is sinful it comes from the false self in an attempt to hold together the disordered image of reality. Sometimes this image is so important to the retreatant they will do all in their power to maintain the false image. Unless the anger is calmed, and the retreatant can look beyond into the darkness, she will never find the light.

Greed, also known as Avarice, involves the desire for material or monetary gain. This is similar to Gluttony, except that in this case mere gain, rather than consumption, is the point. It is also similar to Envy, except that in this case a retreatant wants to possess more and more, independent of whether or not others also possess similar things.

Sloth is the most misunderstood of all the deadly sins. It is often regarded simply as laziness, but it is more accurate to think of it as apathy. When a retreatant is apathetic, she no longer really cares about doing God's will, she has no desire to open to God's love and therefore she ignores her spiritual well being.

Question: St. Ignatius, how does the retreatant move from these disordered patterns into harmony with God's will?

In Christianity theologians use the word conversion to refer to the process of restoring right order. The word conversion has different meanings. For one retreatant conversion is a profound awareness of God's presence that sets her on a new path of life. For another conversion is a profound sin-forgiveness experience. Another retreatant may experience a startling event like the one that Saint Paul experienced on the road to Damascus. For many retreatants, conversion is a gradual redirection of their lives. In short, no matter how the retreatant experiences the conversion, it is always a redirection of her life. It is a surrendering more and more to the will of God.

The essential component of the retreatant's conversion experience is the freely made decision to open to the love of God and to respond to that love in surrender to God's will in loving service. (Veltri, 1998, p. 493)

I like to reflect on the conversion stories in the Bible. Take Saint Peter for example. Peter was not changed from sinner to saint all at once. Accompanying Peter's decisions to align to God's will are shifts in his heart and consciousness. Would you say Peter was converted when his brother Andrew introduced him to Jesus and Jesus changed his name from Simon to Peter? (John: 1:40) Or was he converted when he had the profound creature hood experience when Jesus asked him to put his boat out to sea after fishing all night and catching nothing? Peter complained but did it anyway? To his amazement he caught so many fish his nets were tearing. Peter fell on his face before Jesus (Luke: 5: 1-9). Or was it during that event when he was given profound insight and said to Jesus, "you are the Messiah, the son of the living God." (Matthew 16:16) Or was it when he experienced Jesus' forgiving love after having denied Him three times? (John: 21:15-17) Or was it at Pentecost when he was filled with the Holy Spirit? (Acts 2: 1 - 47)

All these spiritual experiences contribute to Peter's ongoing conversion toward deeper union with God and a desire to respond to that love in service. You could say each spiritual experience was a conversion producing a new worldview. These experiences mark a shift in his consciousness and prepared him in different ways for the decision to surrender his will to God's will.

Peter was called to surrender his image of creation, his image of how God acts in the world, and his image of God. (Acts 10) Peter believed that the Holy Spirit was only for the Jews, but Peter finally came to accept that God's Spirit could come to the Gentiles even before the Jews. (Veltri, 1998, p. 493ff)

As with Peter, the retreatant's own religious experiences such as acceptance, forgiveness, call, creature-hood, surrender, discipleship are also conversions in themselves and move the retreatant towards her more ultimate conversion.

The movement along the spiritual journey is really a movement through cycles of conversion. The retreatant needs to be converted on many different levels of her consciousness. What's important is not the phenomena of how the conversion takes place, but rather the interior freedom which allows the retreatant to make decisions in alignment with God's will in loving service. The conversion experiences may take place in more subtle, less dramatic ways, but nevertheless, it is a 'metanoia' -- a change of heart, a fundamental change of an attitude towards life, a new way of being, a re-birth, an interior freedom to align with God's will.

In every experience of conversion, whether a dramatic event or whether an ongoing process, there are some common elements. The general pattern of the conversion experience is often predictable. As a result, the movements contained within "typical" conversion experiences can be used as a model to understand, to interpret, and to discern the experiences.

Saint Paul had a conversion experience on the road to Damascus. He was overcome by a revelation of the risen Lord Jesus. When I reflect on the different aspects of this event in Paul's life, I can think of it as a series of moments bringing Paul more and more into order. I see the pattern of his conversion unfolding in the following manner.

1. Paul was overcome by helplessness;
2. Paul was enlightened and recognized himself as a sinner. He was deeply aware of his pride, self-deceit, how he persecuted others, and his own self-righteousness;

3. Paul experienced a freedom from bondage. This may come through a new way of thinking, forgiveness, or healing;
4. Paul experienced a new way of relating to Jesus;
5. Paul found a new way of being spiritual; he moved from loving the law to loving the person to whom the law points;
6. Paul, after having experienced Jesus' love, desires to respond in loving service;
7. Paul made a decision on how he would respond to Jesus in loving service.

The retreatant who quickly reads the account of Paul's conversion comes away with the idea that Paul's conversion was complete in an instant on that road to Damascus. The retreatant may imagine that Paul suddenly experienced union with God and enjoyed deep peace and joy. However, when the retreatant meditates in a careful manner she realizes that Paul went through the stages of conversion listed above. The retreatant often overlooks the fact that Paul went off to the desert for three years following this experience. (Osiek, 1968, p.92) I imagine that Paul suffered confusion, loss, fear, inner chaos, spiritual paralysis, terrifying feelings that his whole world was coming apart.

When I direct a retreatant and examine her life, I generally notice a similar pattern of experiences, which unfolds over time. The retreatant first begins to lead a prayerful life and allows God to touch her heart. She has a sense of God's presence. God communicates personally and speaks to her heart. This felt presence of God is usually accompanied by a sense of love, wonder and mystery. This is what I call "consolation."

As the retreatant continues to pray faithfully over some months or years, her prayer begins to dry up. Aridity is experienced; the felt presence of God disappears. Sometimes the reason for this aridity is that she is distancing herself from God's Spirit, resisting a further call or challenge. Perhaps God's word is penetrating a deeper level of her psyche that resists the surfacing of some less-than-conscious emotions or memories. Distractions come often during this stage and a sense of uneasiness takes over. The retreatant is often tempted to give up her practice of prayer, and often she experiences a lack of hope. I call this experience "desolation."

If the retreatant continues to remain faithful to her prayer and owns and expresses her feelings to God, the experience of desolation is recognized as being a kind of helplessness or darkness through which she is being called to surrender more deeply to God's love. By continuing to relate to God in trust and faith even when all the sweet sense of God's presence is gone, she is led, sooner or later, to a kind of enlightenment by God about her condition. In a loving way, God reveals the attachments of her self-centered desire for control. God reveals whatever has been blocking her openness to His initiatives.

When this enlightenment comes the retreatant experiences a certain freedom from bondage. It may be that she will finally be able to confront her co-operation with evil forces. It may be that she will recognize the effects that evil has had on her, evils such as violence, abuse, or deprivation. She may recognize how the aftermath of such evil has affected her life. Perhaps she will see how she created a thick wall of defense that protects her from pain but also shut out God and others. Although painful, these revelations bring hope. Recognition and acceptance are the first steps toward conversion. Thus, these are experiences of "consolation."

In a nutshell there are four experiential movements.

1. The first movement in the Conversion Cycle deals in some way with settling into the awareness of God's presence. In this movement, the retreatant can situate those preliminary moments associated with presence: God's desire to communicate, God's care for her personally, God's closeness, and God's acceptance. This experience can be called Rediscovering God's Love.

2. The second major movement in the Conversion Cycle is from aridity through helplessness. The retreatant experiences a certain struggle and helplessness; it could be a need for healing, a need for forgiveness, a need for freedom from spiritual blindness. This stage is associated with the experiences of resistance. This experience is summarized with the heading "Entering Brokenness and Resistance."

3. The third major movement in the Conversion Cycle is from un-freedom to enlightenment. When God is allowed to enter into the retreatant's brokenness and resistance, a need to face and surrender some aspect of life, to which she clings, surfaces. It's a challenge that most retreatants would like to avoid. It is a time to embrace her brokenness. It may be a memory of the past that she would like to forget. It may be the call to accept a mission that involves hardship. It may be a call to grieve the death of a loved one. The movement here is usually a paradoxical invitation to die to herself. Therefore this stage can be summarized as a "Paradox."

4. The fourth major movement in the Conversion Cycle is from reorientation to greater harmony. From the freeing experienced in the first three stages, there emerges an openness to the future, a new worldview, a deeper commitment to mission, and a sense of joyful trust. Even though this may involve hardship in implementing the call, she experiences a greater trust

in the presence of Jesus' Spirit. This stage can be summarized by the words "Reorientation/Greater Harmony." (Veltri, 1998, p. 503)

Although conversion is the work of God's grace, the retreatant can dispose herself to receive God's gift. She, with the help of her director, can prepare the soil through tilling, watering, and weeding, but the seed of the word comes from the Divine Sower. She does what she can to allow the seed to take root and grow. She cannot force authentic religious experiences. But she can open herself and develop a context that will help her to become more open to receiving God's grace. If she is aware of the typical pattern of conversion, she can learn to cooperate with it. The Conversion Cycle provides her with a dynamic model or framework that can be used to design experiences that can help her person co-operate with God's grace.

Summary

To summarize my worldview I would say that the purpose of life in a general sense is to praise and serve God. All created things are put on earth to help us achieve this goal. God created us out of love and wants to share His love with us. We experience God's love when we freely live out the purpose for which we were created.

Before the Fall, we human beings were in harmony with God, each other, the earth and ourselves. God was God and we accepted ourselves as creatures. We felt deep joy by praising and serving God.

However, after the Fall everything got turned upside down. A sense of disorder came into the world because we rebelled and wanted to serve ourselves. This caused us deep pain. We tried to compensate for this pain by developing distorted patterns of behavior in an attempt to feel good. The Church names these patterns

as pride, envy, gluttony, lust, anger, greed and sloth. However, these patterns of behavior do not relieve the pain we are trying to escape.

The way out of this pain it is to restore the natural order of things. It is possible to begin restoring this order if we embark on the spiritual journey. The spiritual journey is about restoring right order. It is a conversion or transformation process. A conversion is necessary to restore harmony. To guide the process of conversion we focused our attention on the Principle and Foundation. This statement becomes the rudder that guides us from disorder to harmony.

As I reflect on the process of conversion I notice a certain pattern. The conversion process does not always follow these steps but it does most of the time.

At first we become aware of God's presence. We experience God as wanting to communicate and be close to us. We feel accepted and cared for personally. Secondly, after we experience the love of God, we often enter into a period of struggle. We begin to experience ourselves as creatures totally dependent on God. This is a very frightening experience. We are letting go of our false sense of control and security. During this phase we experience ourselves as helpless, broken and in need of healing.

In the third phase, we move darkness to enlightenment. We begin to allow God to enter into our brokenness and resistance. We are given the grace and strength to embrace our brokenness and die to our false self and all the distorted ways we employed in trying to feel okay.

In the fourth phase, we have the benefit of feeling the freeing energy of the first three phases. We become open to God's love and desire to follow his will for us. We are able to let go and trust God even though it may involve hardship.

Although conversion is the work of God's grace and we can do nothing to make it happen, we can dispose ourselves to receive God's gifts. We can prepare the soil to receive God's seeds of love. We do what we can to allow the seed to take root and grow.

The Conversion Cycle provides us with a dynamic model or framework that can be used to design experiences that can help us co-operate with God's grace.

Dr. Roberto Assagioli's World View

Question: Dr. Assagioli, will you explain Psychosynthesis and describe your vision of the human person?

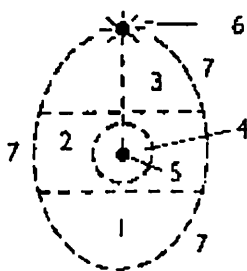
I would be pleased to explain to you my understanding of Psychosynthesis. You may hear people say that I developed or created Psychosynthesis. This is not true. Psychosynthesis is a natural process that can be observed in every human being. I simply named this natural process Psychosynthesis. In each and every human being God created a tendency toward growth. As I studied human beings, I noticed a tendency to harmonize and synthesize various aspects of their being at ever-higher levels of organization. It is this harmonizing and synthesizing process that I call Psychosynthesis.

I also observed that there are things a person can do to aid this synthesizing process and I developed numerous exercises, which can aid Psychosynthesis. Therefore, my main work in Psychosynthesis has been two fold: first, to name the particular elements and the process of synthesis so that we can have a comprehensive understanding of the growth process, and second, to develop techniques that support and aid this process as it unfolds.

From the very beginning, I wanted an open framework so that the concepts of Psychosynthesis would continue to develop. New ideas related to the Psychosynthesis concepts and techniques will come forth through research in psychology, education, religion, anthropology, physics, and many other disciplines.

The best way to explain Psychosynthesis to you is to show you a number of diagrams I developed to help explain the concepts I am speaking about. I will show you the “Egg diagram”; the “Star diagram”; the “Personality Vehicle map”; “The Subpersonality map”; and the “I” - Self map.”

Let’s start with the “Egg Diagram”: (Assagioli, 1965, p. 21)



1. Lower Unconscious
2. Middle Unconscious
3. Higher Unconscious
4. Field of Consciousness
5. Personal “self” or ‘I’
6. Transpersonal Self or Self
7. Collective Unconscious

The Lower Unconscious

I see the lower unconscious as containing the elementary psychological activities, which direct the life of the body, its emotions and intellect. It holds the fundamental drives and primitive urges; many complexes charged with intense emotion, dreams and imagination of an underdeveloped kind; un-evolved and

uncontrolled para-psychological processes; various pathological manifestations such as phobias, obsessions, compulsive urges and paranoid delusions. (Assagioli, 1965, p. 17)

In the process of growing up, a person sorts his characteristics and behaviors into groups: those that work to solve problems in his family and society, and those that don't work to solve problems. This process is necessary for humans to grow and develop into mature adults. In healthy development, a child's characteristics are not viewed as "bad" per se, but are understood, modified and transformed into healthy adult behaviors. In unhealthy development, such characteristics are repressed and seen as negative. In such instances, these "unacceptable" characteristics only collect in the dark corners of the lower unconscious. When these characteristics have been hidden long enough they take on a life of their own. (Johnson, 1991, p. 4) People often say 'time heals', or 'let sleeping dogs lie' but the truth of the matter is that none of this repressed emotional energy is lost, and time alters nothing.

When this unconscious material rises to the surface there is an immediacy to the material. Unresolved characteristics manifest as physical or psychological symptoms, or subpersonalities. The task, in such cases, is to befriend these aspects and integrate them into the personality in a healthy manner.

It is important not to think of the lower unconscious as negative. In some older worldviews, the lower unconscious was seen as the beast from which evil sprang because the teachers of these worldviews did not know how to manage, or transform these drives. However, the lower unconscious is not negative. It does contain unresolved issues that need to be integrated, but it is not the enemy. It also contains all the beauty, love, and joy of one's past. (Johnson, 1991, p. 42ff)

The Higher Unconscious

I noticed that intuition, aspirations, artistic creativity, ethical imperatives, urges to humanitarian action, and urges to heroic action, come from the higher unconscious. The higher unconscious is the source of feelings, such as altruistic love, of genius, states of contemplation, illumination, and ecstasy. Also in this realm are latent intuitive functions and spiritual energies. (Assagioli, 1965, p. 17 – 18)

The higher unconscious is a reflection of the Higher or Transpersonal Self. I presume that human nature is basically healthy and I believe that the forces from the higher unconscious are constantly available throughout life. At times, these higher energies get distorted. For example, a sensitive child can become a fearful person, or, an individual can have a vision of greatness that is mixed with forces of hate and cruelty. I believe that the root of any action has a healthy intention. Even with the worst manifestations of the human spirit, I maintain that there is a higher unconscious energy that has become distorted. (Hardy, 1987, p. 27)

I believe that with more and more awareness of the higher unconscious, and more attunement with the energies of love, beauty, tenderness, power, and true knowledge, which are always present, the field of consciousness can be enlarged to include more of the higher unconscious and lower unconscious material. (Hardy, 1987, p. 28)

The Conscious “self” or ‘I’

In Psychosynthesis the ‘I’ or “self” is the center of pure self-awareness. The ‘I’ is the inner still point where essence is experienced. The ‘I’ is the organizing principle of the myriad content of the field of consciousness. (Hardy, 1987, p. 28)

I believe that the possibility of freedom is related, essentially, to the person's awareness of a separate and independent ‘I’. It is only by identifying with this

center, and dis-identifying from any controlling forces, that a person achieves freedom. "We are dominated by everything with which we become identified. We can master, direct, and utilize, everything from which we can dis-identify ourselves." A major achievement in personal growth is to identify with the 'I'. (Hardy, 1987, p. 29)

The 'I', as well as being the center, and the true experiencer, can also be seen as the observer. When identified with the 'I' a person can look at something and be calm and serene. They are able to take the attitude of the observer at will; this increases the ability to more fully experience inner and outer events and to become unafraid of living. This point of pure self-awareness, the 'I', is the essence of the being. It remains unchanged from childhood through death. (Hardy, 1987, p. 29)

Most meditative techniques are an attempt to get in touch with the 'I', and through the 'I', to connect with the Transpersonal Self. The 'I' is the link between the field of consciousness and the potential. The potential lies in the higher unconscious and the collective unconscious. Identified with the 'I', the person can say, "this is my true essence." It is like resting in the eye of a storm. Although the content of consciousness may change, the 'I' does not. (Hardy, 1987, p. 28 - 29)

The 'I' is the meeting place of the two sides of human nature. It is like a bridge spanning between the higher and lower self. When identified with the 'I', a shift in perception occurs. Everything seems new, relationships with others and the world, take on new meaning and seem to flow with ease. Being identified with the 'I' leads to the shift from unconscious to conscious living. (Small, 1991, p.109)

This level of consciousness is the battleground where all of life is fought consciously. Centered in the 'I', the lower unconscious methods of getting its needs met are observed in a nonjudgmental manner. This approach allows the

person to dis-identify from the lower forces and make healthy, life-giving choices as to how to live life fully. From the 'I', it becomes natural to see what is really needed rather than what is only desired. Through the 'I', the drives of the lower unconscious are brought under the jurisdiction of the Transpersonal Self. At this point the divine ability to know, to love, and to be, is experienced. The forces in the lower unconscious are no longer viewed as the enemy, they give up their power over the personality, and learn to co-operate with the Transpersonal Self to create wholeness and serve God's plan. (Small, 1991, p. 109ff)

The confidence of knowing how to meet the basic needs makes those needs less demanding. Identification with the 'I' increases confidence because of the creativity that operates from the 'I'. (Small, 1991, p.109ff) Others are seen as the subject of their own life, rather than objects. Love can be given even if it is not returned. It is at this level that real charity begins to flow. (Small, 1991, p. 109ff)

Identification with the 'I' leads to a sacred temple where true forgiveness and understanding are possible. It is from here that old hurts are cleared and healed. (Small, 1991, p.109ff)

The Transpersonal Self

In Psychosynthesis the Transpersonal Self, is the point of pure essential beingness. It is above, and unaffected, by the flow of the mind stream, by the bodily conditions, and by any conscious experience. It is the point of synthesis for the whole being, it is the connection with the larger whole of human existence. (Whitmore, 1986, p. 22)

The Transpersonal Self holds the blueprint of life's purpose. (Small, 1991, p. 18) This concept can be explained by using the analogy of the acorn. The acorn holds the blueprint for the oak tree. When the acorn is planted, an oak tree results, not a maple. This happens because the acorn is programmed to produce oak trees.

Although each acorn becomes an oak tree, each oak has its own unique characteristics.

And so, each human being can be identified as human, yet each is unique in having particular gifts and purpose. These gifts and purpose are stored in the Transpersonal Self. The Transpersonal Self gives meaning to life's journey by sustaining, supporting and surrounding the personal 'I' with love. It inspires the mind and heart, and stimulates inner knowing. The Transpersonal Self is a source of healing and wholeness for the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual being. (King, 1988, p. 69)

The Field of Consciousness

The field of consciousness refers to everyday reality. Within the field of consciousness there is an awareness of the incessant flow of sensations, images, thoughts, feelings, desires, and impulses, which we can observe, analyze, and judge. (Hardy 1987 p. 24) It is the place where everyday life is lived in the open. This part of the personality could easily, without reflection, be regarded as the whole, because it is most accessible. Through the study of psychology it becomes obvious that consciousness is only a small part of the whole. Human beings are capable of expanding consciousness. The purpose of Psychosynthesis is to foster an experience of a deeper and broader state of consciousness. (King, 1988, p. 58)

The Middle Unconscious

The middle unconscious is sometimes called the preconscious. It is just below the threshold of consciousness. Although the preconscious is unconscious, it is easily accessible to consciousness. Freud called it the anteroom of consciousness. The preconscious is the region where various experiences are assimilated, and ordinary mental and imaginative activities are elaborated and developed in a sort of psychological gestation before their birth into the light of consciousness. Consciousness is the spotlight, which sweeps the arena and lights up just that area

on which it falls. Everything outside the area of illumination but within its range is pre-consciousness. The boundary between the ordinary everyday world and this region is thin and flexible. (Hardy, 1987, p. 24-25)

The Collective Unconscious

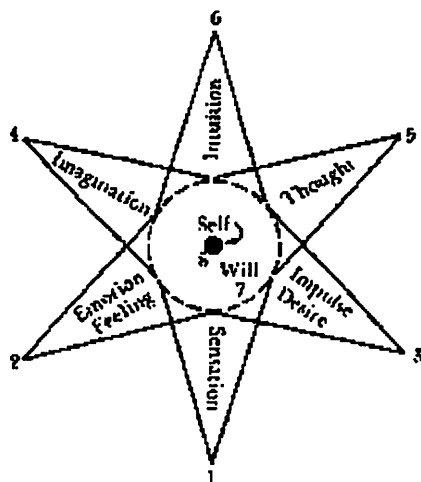
The collective unconscious is the vast sea of unconsciousness, which surrounds and influences the individual psyche. It is shared with all sentient beings. The collective unconsciousness is not contained within the human psyche. Rather, the psyche is contained in it. The collective unconscious is not part of the personal unconscious. It is universal. Unconscious material that does not come from personal experience has a different origin, nature, quality, and value, at each of these three levels. The lower collective unconscious is the repository of humanity's evolutionary heritage, encoded in the genes. The middle collective unconscious contains all that presently exists in the universe outside the individual's sphere of awareness. The higher collective unconscious contains all that exists in potential for all humanity not yet registered in the conscious experience of given individuals. This is the whole spiritual heritage of humankind's evolution born anew in the structure of each individual. (King, 1988, p. 72)

The human being is a kind of receiver that is potentially tuned in to vast historical and geographical areas of human experience. In this vast mass of collective unconsciousness there are archetypes, or forms, relevant to the human condition that have appeared in every race and every time. This largely unconscious human knowledge is communicated through myths, fairy-tales, and sacred symbols. It is the task of each person to face and come to terms with, not only the personal unconscious, but also these elements of the collective unconscious as they relate to that person's life.

Star Diagram

Another map which is very useful in explaining Psychosynthesis is called the Star Diagram and refers to psychological functions:

“Star Diagram” (Assagioli, 1973, p. 49)



1. Sensation, 2. Emotion, 3. Impulse and Desire, 4. Imagination, 5. Thought,
6. Intuition, 7. Will, 8. Personal self.

The center point of the star diagram is the “self.” Surrounding the “self” and touching all the psychological functions is the will. Through the will, the “self” acts on the psychological functions, regulating and directing them. Each of the six psychological functions, sensations, emotions, imaginations, impulse and desire, thought, and intuition, are represented by a point of the star. I have already explained the ‘I’ so I’ll begin with the will.

Will

The will is our power to choose, to bring about change. It is the central force within us and is intimately connected to “self.” Through the will the client can skillfully direct the energies to express his purpose of life. If the energy is not skillfully directed, it may take command of the personality and be expressed in distorted ways. Thus the purpose of the will is to direct and regulate this energy.

There are three aspects of the will: strong will, skillful will and good will. (King, 1988, p. 205 –217)

Aspects of the Will

1. Strong will

Strong will provides the energy to move and direct thoughts into actions. Strong will has purpose, motivation, drive, and determination. Strong will is the fire of the "self." Without intensity and strength there is no movement. (King, 1988, p. 205)

2. Skillful will

Skillful will may be defined as intelligent and wise action based on an understanding of the principles of psychological and spiritual laws. The skillful will stimulates, regulates, and directs, all the other functions and forces of the clients being so that they may lead him to his predetermined goal. The essential function of the skillful will is the ability to develop that strategy which is most effective and which entails the greatest economy of effort. To use the will skillfully, a knowledge of the inner constitution is needed, and a familiarity with the dynamics and principles of the Transpersonal Self. Skill is not given; it is learned and must be developed. (Brown, 1993, p. 115)

3. Good will

Good will is the intention to act in ways that will unite, heal and synthesize. It is compassion and love. Good will is the "desire" aspect of the will, with intention and desire to do no harm. Good will brings love, increases the capacity to empathize and to resonate with others. Good will ensures that the actions are compassionate and constructive. (Brown, 1993, p.123)

Besides the three aspects of will there are also stages of the will. In developing mastery of the will, it is useful to explore its stages so that movement can be made

from intention to realization. By becoming acquainted with the weak links, a focused effort can be directed to the development of the appropriate stage. The six stages in the process of willing as it unfolds from beginning to end are:

1. Purpose, 2. Deliberation, 3. Decision, 4. Affirmation, 5. Planning, 6. Implementation. (Assagioli, 1973, p. 135ff)

If proficiency is developed at each stage, the capacity for achieving the goals and expressing purpose is greatly increased.

Stages of the Will

1. Purpose: The first stage of any willed act is to clarify purpose.

2. Deliberation: Once a purpose is fixed, the next task is to decide how to accomplish it. Often there are many paths. In this stage the task is to find and consider alternative courses of action, assessing resources and barriers, and evaluating consequences. Brainstorming, meditation, inspiration, intuition, logical thought, reading, counseling, and consulting with others, may contribute to this decision.

3. Decision: To make a decision requires formulating a preference and choosing between alternatives. This means choosing one option and letting go of others.

4. Affirmation: Once a decision is made, it can be confirmed with an affirmation. Affirmation activates and fosters the dynamic and creative energies needed to ensure the achievement of the purpose.

5. Planning and Programming: Taking into consideration various obstacles and concerns, how shall he proceed with his choice? His plans must be practical and concrete, but he also needs to remain flexible and open to new inspirations.

6. Implementation: This stage carries out and manifests the plan. If implemented properly, energy is regulated and directed, and the task is effortless. (King, 1988, p. 233)

Qualities of the Will

The will can be used more effectively if its qualities are finely tuned and purified. The quality indicates value and the frequency of energy with which the will resonates, the higher the frequency, the higher and more excellent the quality. These qualities exist in each individual, but are not always at optimal functioning level. The qualities are as follows: 1. Dynamic power, 2. Mastery, 3. Focus, 4. Determination, 5. Persistence, 6. Initiative, and 7. Organization. (King, 1988, p. 236 -249)

- 1. Dynamic power:** Energy is the dynamic power characteristic of a strong will. Without the power to motivate action, the will is stuck at the stage of intention or desire. However, if dynamic power is not associated with other qualities of the will this power is apt to defeat its own purpose and become oppressive.
- 2. Mastery:** Mastery is the ability to contain, discipline, and direct, various compelling forces of energy with skill, wisdom and a deep understanding of their dynamics. Mastery provides maximum effectiveness and the most intense and enduring sense of assurance, satisfaction, and joy.
- 3. Focus:** Without focus, the will loses its potency. Power comes from focused consciousness. A person may use a lens to focus the rays of the sun to intensify its heat. The will can be used like a lens to intensify the energies of the Transpersonal Self. When this quality of concentration is developed, focused attention becomes possible even in the midst of adversity.
- 4. Determination:** The quality of determination is very important at the stage of

deliberation. When information is gathered and reflected upon, it is the quality of determination, which sets boundaries and puts an end to the internal discussion and turns the deliberations into action.

5. **Persistence:** For certain tasks of great length, steadfastness of purpose, endurance, and persistence are needed. When suffering is unavoidable, acceptance can lead to insight, growth and achievement.
6. **Courage:** To move from the known into the unknown takes courage. Lasting security is an illusion, change is inevitable. Taking risks brings a feeling of aliveness and intensity but it requires a willingness to face danger and to seize the opportunities as they present themselves. "Courageous risk-taking is justified and appropriate when it has a well thought-out purpose and value, but it is not primarily an end in itself." (Assagioli, 1974, p.31)
7. **Organization:** Organization is the tool needed to fulfill a unique and specific function. This is the quality most needed in the planning stage. A lack of organization leads to chaos and dispersion of energy while too much organization leads to rigidity. A balance is needed.

To some degree each client has all the qualities present within himself. However, some qualities are more developed than others. If given the proper attention, these latent qualities can unfold and manifest.

Therefore, the will holds a central place in regulating the functions. However, it is the psychological laws that govern the functions. Ignoring these laws may result in the misuse of the power. So knowledge of these laws is of fundamental importance. (Assagioli, 1973, p. 51)

Psychological Laws

Earlier, I mentioned the psychological laws which help guide the process of Psychosynthesis; the following is a description of these laws.

1. Images or mental pictures and ideas tend to produce the physical conditions and the external acts that correspond to them.

Every image has in itself a motor element. The will can be used purposefully and consciously by the individual to choose, evoke, and concentrate on the images and ideas, which will help produce the desired actions.

2. Attitudes, movements, and actions, tend to evoke corresponding images and ideas; these in turn evoke or intensify corresponding emotions and feelings.

Speaking with a harsh voice and behaving in an angry manner tends to awaken real anger. This can be noted in children when they play war games. Often they become angry and a real fight ensues. Thus, the will can move the body, and by this means, evoke corresponding images and ideas, which in turn will intensify the emotions and feelings it wants to strengthen. In other words, conscious and purposeful movement can evoke and strengthen positive and desired inner states.

3. Ideas and images tend to awaken emotions and feelings that correspond to them.

A skilful application of this law takes place when the will mobilizes the energy of the emotions and feelings through the use of appropriate ideas and images. A client seeking peace can write passages from the Bible and other inspirational writing pertaining to peace until those images evoke the feeling that corresponds to them.

4. Emotions and impressions tend to awaken and intensify ideas and images that correspond to, or, are associated with them.

This feedback process can work for good or evil. Through fear of sickness, the ideas and images of sickness are evoked and can produce the corresponding physical condition. Conversely, feeling joy and thinking of healthy, happy things tend to evoke good health and a sense of well-being.

5. Needs, urges, drives, and desires tend to arouse corresponding images, ideas, and emotions.

When a strong desire exists, it influences the mind to find a reason for its fulfillment. For this reason, each urge must be allowed into consciousness so that the value can be discerned, rather than repressing it out of fear. If the urge is in alignment with the personal 'I', it can be integrated into the personality. If it is not in alignment with the personal 'I' then it must be transformed or given a safe healthy expression. It is important for healthy functioning to surrender to the 'I', not submitting to the urge, bearing in mind that the will is the helmsman who uses the wind to direct the ship.

6. Attention, interest, affirmations, and repetitions reinforce the ideas, images, and psychological formations on which they are centered.

Attention renders images and ideas clearer. It can be compared to a lens through which the client observes an object. Interest increases the prominence of ideas and images. Affirming images and ideas gives them a stronger force and effectiveness. Repetitive acts like the blows of a hammer on a nail bring about the fixation of an idea or image, until it becomes dominant and even obsessive. There can also be an opposite utilization of this law. Interest and attention can be withdrawn from an unwanted image or idea thus de-energizing them and reducing their activity.

7. Repetition of actions intensifies the urges to further reiteration and renders their execution easier and better, until they come to be performed unconsciously.

In this way habits are formed. As the repeated habitual actions are taken over by the unconscious, the conscious is free for more sublime activities.

8. All the various functions, and their manifold combinations in complexes and subpersonalities, adopt means of achieving their aims without our awareness, and independently, and even against, our conscious will.

A complex, or sub-personality, develops a mental picture, and the aim of that image starts an activity in the unconscious directed towards the accomplishment of the aim. Often the client remains ignorant of the operation that is taking place unconsciously and is, thus, at its mercy. When functioning is healthy, all things are made conscious. With this awareness, the will directs all energy toward the fulfillment of the purpose of the Transpersonal Self.

9. Urges, drives, desires, and emotions tend and demand to be expressed.

Drives and desires constitute the active, dynamic aspect of the psychological life. They must be recognized and examined and given adequate and constructive expression, or, at least harmless expression. To give some expression is absolutely necessary, otherwise the urge, drive, or desire, will erupt in inappropriate ways. There are a number of methods by which the impelling drives may be given harmless or constructive expression.

10. The psychological energies can find expression; a. directly (discharge or catharsis) b. indirectly, through symbolic action. c. through a process of transmutation.

All these tendencies cannot be expressed at the same time. They need to be regulated on the basis of criteria, possibility and suitability. This, in turn, necessitates deliberation, choice and decision. Symbolically, hostility can be

discharged by trouncing some object that symbolizes the opponent, or by writing a vituperative letter giving full vent to bitterness and resentment and then destroying it. The method of sublimation can use energy to transform the hostility into a higher form. For example, the physical sex drive can be transformed into emotional love, or a possessive love into a giving love. In the next section I will discuss the psychological functions of sensation, emotion, impulse and desire, imagination, thought, and intuition. (Assagioli, 1973, p. 51-65)

Psychological Functions

Sensation

Sensation is an awareness of stimulation in the body. The sensation in the body often contains psychological and spiritual information, of which a person is not aware. The physical sensations contain all of one's inner knowing about a given situation, and when paid attention to, can lead to the next step in growth. The sensation helps us get in touch with our inner wisdom. Paying attention to the physical sensations is like listening to the still small voice within. As one pays attention with a loving attitude the sensation unfolds and reveals its gifts.

Emotion

Emotions serve as a powerful vehicle for developing new dimensions of personal and spiritual knowledge. Since emotions are expressions of life energy, experiencing them in a direct way deepens the experience of life. If the activities of the emotions are subject to the control of the will, and in alignment with the "self," they can enrich life.

The person must be careful not to suppress their emotions, but rather make all emotions conscious and subject to the will and to the "self," thus affirming the freedom of the human person.

Impulse and Desire

Impulses come from the instincts and passions and carry great energy. If the energy is directed positively, this force can be used for creativity and love. By the same token, if this energy is directed negatively, violence and restlessness ensue.

Imagination

Closely associated with thought is imagination. The visualization of positive symbols has a profound transformative impact on the soul. For example, if love is the image, then the focus will be on the beloved and doing good. Thus, images or imagination can be used to heal past wounds and to evoke growth. Yet on the other hand if the images are negative they can have a destructive impact on the soul. If a person is filled with images of hate, the imagination will focus on revenge and destruction. (Ferrucci, 1983, p.118)

Thought

It is believed that a person becomes what they contemplate. If the mind is occupied with gossip, everyday worries, resentments, and the like, the mind will assume their hue. If the thoughts are of God, joy, peace, or kindness, its hue will again correspond. Therefore, it can be said that thoughts define the parameters of the mind and tend to actualize themselves when attention is given them. (King, 1988, p. 210) Thought is dependent on will, and therefore, can be used to create good or evil.

Intuition

The English word intuition comes from in-tueri, "to see within." Intuition is an opening of an 'inner eye' which fosters a deeper perception of realities which are beyond the normal mental sight. Intuition may come in the form of a symbol, which will gradually reveal inner realities. Or, intuition may break into consciousness like a flash of lightning. Intuition gives a perception of the reality in

its entirety and is often directed towards continued development, with a future orientation. (Assagioli, 1991, p. 68)

Summary

The "Star diagram" illustrates the relationship between the "self," the will and the psychological functions. The "self" is expressed in the world through the will and the psychological functions. By reflecting on the star diagram the client comes to a realization of how complex the personality is and just how unique his personality is. Each client relies differently on the various functions, operating with strength in some areas and with weakness in others. This map points to the variety of ways the client has of creating change. Simply by working with one function a process of change begins.

Personality Vehicles Map

The Transpersonal Self is expressed in the world through the mind, the feelings and the body. I call these three components "personality vehicles." (Crampton, 1977, p. 11-12)

It is essential for the Transpersonal Self to be expressed with clarity, balance, and harmony. For this to happen each vehicle must be adequately developed and coordinated. Having balance and harmony is like sitting on a three-legged stool when all three legs are of the same length and equally capable of carrying the weight. When the mind, the emotions, and the body are in harmony and balance, there is an experience of wholeness, completeness, objective psychological consciousness, and spiritual awareness. Crampton, 1977, p. 11-12)

The mind

The purpose of the mind is to develop vision and creative awareness, giving clear insight regarding the meaning of life. (Hurley, Dobson, 1991, p. 72) It is the center of objectivity. Its mastery is consciousness, objective awareness of the

Transpersonal Self and the universe. The mind is used for thinking and calculating. (Hurley, Dobson, 1991, p. 74)

The mind defines what is acceptable and real, and once it decides what is legitimate, it creates a mental boundary, which circumscribes the universe. When used skillfully, this can lead to an expansion of consciousness. When the mind is clear and in touch with absolute truth, it becomes an impeccable spiritual guide.

The mind is not the master; it is the servant of the Transpersonal Self. The healthy mind lets go of dogmas, judgments, and opinions and trusts the inspirations of the Transpersonal Self. (Small, 1991, p. 114) People with a healthy mind are proficient with thinking, calculating, and deliberating. They are able to see things in context and take an objective view. (Hurley, Dobson, 1991, p. 72)

They learn well from processes such as books, courses, and lectures. These people are excited when they make connections with different aspects of the object of their study or perception. They find a sense of meaning in systemization. (Hurley, Dobson, 1991, p. 75)

The feelings

The purpose of feelings is to bring about connectedness within oneself, with other people, the universe, and God. From this center a deep perception of inner movement is recognized. (Hurley, Dobson, 1991, p. 73) Feelings are sensors. They can pick up even the subtle messages from the inner being or from others. It is the center of understanding and spiritual intuition. Once a message is experienced, an appropriate response is possible. (Brown, 1983, p. 40) It is through this center that the individual engages in the world of relationships. (Hurley, Dobson, 1991, p. 73)

When used wisely, feelings can serve as a powerful vehicle for developing new dimensions of knowledge both on the personal and transpersonal levels. In so far as the energy of emotion intensifies experience, it can expose common fixations of the mind and psychological blockage. Emotions can be a guide to the important areas where balance and integration are needed. Since emotions are expressions of life energy, to encounter them in a direct and mindful way can lead to an experience with the Transpersonal Self. When feelings are befriended, accepted and listened to, they can lead to an experience of wholeness. (Welwood, 1979, p. 141)

The physical body

The purpose of the physical body is to generate movement, to harness the inner power of effort and energy needed to act upon the vision and connectedness that the other two centers provide.

The physical body is the center of expression and direct perception. It is the center of freedom. Its mastery is creativity; the ability to make things actualize, to produce. The body is used to preserve safety and to focus on the instinctual reactions. (Hurley, Dobson, 1991, p. 73)

People with a healthy body can skillfully use their power and influence for the good of the world, thus making them feel worthwhile and alive. They feel comfortable with their instincts. They can make demands on themselves and expect to function on a high level. These expectations arise from an awareness of their own energy, and their ability to make an impact on the world. (Hurley, Dobson, 1991, p. 76)

Clients with a well-developed physical vehicle experience their knowing coming from the depths of their being, and they often seem unshakeable once they have made up their minds. (Hurley, Dobson, 1991, p. 76)

The body clarifies, evaluates, and determines how to express the information arising from the intuition-imagination-feelings-sensations. (Brown, 1983, p. 40)

Subpersonality Map

Another useful map is what I call the Subpersonality Map. It is an illusion to think that each person is a unified whole. We are all made up of many different parts. Many psychologists have referred to parts over the years. William James, for example, spoke of the “many selves” within the personality. Eric Berne spoke of adult, parent and child ego states. In Psychosynthesis I use the term subpersonalities to refer to those small energy systems, those small voices, which speak for the whole, yet are only a part of the whole.

Subpersonalities, structurally, are conglomerates of personality traits. But the term structure does not mean that there is a physical substance somewhere that makes up the subpersonality. It rather refers to the mechanism within the psyche that consistently produces relatively stable patterns of reaction in response to certain internal or external circumstances. Each subpersonality is made up of many elements, images, behaviors, attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs. Let me take some time here to make a thorough list for you. Each subpersonality has a world view, thoughts, emotions, feelings, desires, intentions, deceptions, labels, definitions, interpretations, evaluations, analyses, judgments, ideas, notions, concepts, prejudices, demands, likes, dislikes, frustrations, rationalizations, anxieties, philosophies, dilemmas, memories, addictions, fears, beliefs, convictions, hopes, aspirations, expectations, and intuitions. (Manning, 1985, p. 6)

An example may be helpful in making the idea of a subpersonality and its development clear. Take the need for recognition. If children do not get positive strokes for who they are, they may develop a delinquent subpersonality and get recognition through negative strokes. Teenagers who were denied love as

children may develop a promiscuous subpersonality, seeking love and closeness through sexual encounters with their peers.

If we pay attention inside we can recognize all kinds of subpersonalities. I like to give them names to identify them. The following is a list of some common subpersonalities but be aware that there are many more subpersonalities:

Saboteur	Loyal soldier	Martyr
User	Authority figure	Lady
Subservient one	Saint	Teacher
Lover	Clinger	Earth mother
Director	Helper	Delinquent
Helpless child	Little professor	Victim
Care taker	Stoic	Sick kid

(Hendricks, 1993, p. 35)

Each subpersonality arises to fulfill a need or drive, or, to channel the energy of a drive. As the need, or the drive, arises in the psyche, it seeks expression. The individual tries different ways to fulfill the needs, when a strategy works, the method is repeated. With repetition, these methods become patterns and result in the forming of a subpersonality. In time the subpersonality becomes part of the person's identity.

Question: Dr. Assagioli, as I listen to you explain Psychosynthesis and your view of the human person I can see how wonderfully we are made. But what I am wondering is this, if we are made so wonderfully, then why do so many people suffer intense psychic pain and behave so badly?

You are speaking to what is often called the human condition. All human beings come into the world expecting to get their needs met at the appropriate time and in the proper manner. When a child's needs are met with unconditional love, the

child becomes a living example of being in touch with the Transpersonal Self. The 'I' - Self relationship is very strong. The child resonates deeply with the body. It expresses its feelings readily and experiences a deep joy. (Hendricks, 1993, p. 34)

The 'I' - Self relationship is strengthened through the empathy that the caregivers provide for the child. When there is powerful empathy, the child's needs are met and the authentic personality is expressed and can be recognized by the following characteristics. The authentic personality is true, genuine, spontaneous, expansive, loving, giving, communicative, accepting of self and others, compassionate, loves unconditionally, feels feelings (including appropriate, spontaneous and current anger), is assertive, intuitive, has the ability to be childlike, loves to play and have fun, is vulnerable, trusting, enjoys being nurtured, surrenders, is self indulgent, is open to the unconscious, remembers it's divine origin, and is free to grow.

(Firman, 1997, p. 239ff.)

When we identify with the authentic personality we feel alive. We may feel joy, in the form of contentment, happiness, completeness, appropriateness, realness, wholeness, and sanity, or we may feel pain in the form of hurt, sadness, guilt, or anger, but nonetheless, we feel alive.

The authentic personality flows naturally from the time we are born until the time that we die, and during all the times of transition in between. We don't have to do anything to be our authentic personality. The authentic personality just is. If we simply let it be, the authentic personality will express itself with no particular effort on our part. In short - living from the authentic personality is the 'I' expressing it's "I am-ness" in union with the Transpersonal Self. The principle of personality integration is not so much a matter of unity as it is of relationship, a strong relationship, between the 'I' and the Transpersonal Self. Unfortunately, staying connected to the authentic personality does not last. No matter how good the caretakers are, no matter how empathic they may have been, they cannot meet all of the child's needs completely and perfectly.

Many people had good caretakers who intended to meet all their needs, but because they were unenlightened, they mistreated the child through ignorance. Perhaps the parent mistook a cry for the comfort of a soothing bath for a cry of hunger. The parent had the right intention and expressed love by feeding the child, but it was not what the child needed. Perhaps the caretakers had unfair expectations wanting their child to excel in school when the child had only average intelligence. Perhaps the caretakers were inconsistent in attending to the child's needs because they were preoccupied with their own difficulties in life. Or sometimes children have parents who are consciously cruel and neglectful. (McGinnis, 1993,) They may consciously use violence, sexual abuse, physical punishment, emotional bullying, and impose limiting rules. Or the parents may be unresponsive, self-involved, compulsive, and have their own unresolved tensions. There may be outward conflict between the parents, or the child may be left alone to face overwhelming situations.

No matter if the primal wound is inflicted intentionally or unintentionally, the child may feel a lack of communication, annihilation, unthinkable anxiety, unnamable dread, disintegration, anxiety, emptiness, being lost, deadness, futility, pain, emptiness, cold, helplessness, loneliness, insecurity, dreadful horror, nothingness, anguish, and deep pervasive grief. (Firman, 1997, p. 93ff)

When the child experiences this pain he loses trust in the caretaker and the Transpersonal Self. He feels like he does not exist. Instead of remaining connected to the Transpersonal Self, trusting that he is lovable just as he is, he attempts to satisfy his needs through covert, distorted and devious means.

Parts of his being are split off because the caretaker does not respond with empathy to these parts. Under the impact of the primal wound, he splits himself into negative and positive parts. He tries to avoid the pain of non being by hiding

that which he feels is unacceptable, and by developing parts which he believes at the time will meet his needs.

This substitution for healthy direct ways of getting needs met is not effective or fulfilling, but does reduce the pain to a tolerable level, for the time being. The child must not be condemned for using these covert ways, for they were the best available, given the child's lack of experience, the immaturity of the organism, and his internal dynamics, and the limitations of the environment.

In short, the child develops subpersonalities, which compensate for the lack of empathy and care. Often caretakers impose conditional rules and instructions on how to be acceptable. When the child's value is contingent on behaving and feeling in prescribed ways, he becomes a victim of conditional love. Because love is such a potent reinforcer of behavior, the child quickly learns to develop subpersonalities that experience and express primarily those attitudes, drives, thoughts, feelings, qualities, and behaviors, that are rewarded with approval. The child also learns to repress and deny those parts of him that are shamed.

Although living from a subpersonality seems to work initially, it eventually leads to pain because the person has to give up his Transpersonal Self in favor of the subpersonality. He loses touch with the 'I' - Self relationship, his destiny, and his purpose in life. He begins the process of trying to survive instead of becoming who he is supposed to be, that is, living creatively from the Transpersonal Self. (Borysenko, 1990, p. 51)

The subpersonality tries to protect the client from pain, but not only does it protect, it can also imprison. This principle can be illustrated by imagining a medieval warrior dressed in his suit of armor. The armor protects the warrior from swords and arrows but it also confines the warrior's movements and expression. (Finley, 1978) A person rejected as a child may develop a "loner

subpersonality" to protect him from rejection. It may work in terms of protection but it also prevents him from ever being accepted and loved.

When the subpersonality is not transformed and integrated, its responses are ineffective and inappropriate in meeting life's demands. When the client insists on using outdated subpersonality patterns, he has a predictable and limited behavioral response to life. Consequently, he will perceive the whole world through this psychological system, which greatly distorts reality and limits his creative response to life. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 74) Similar life situations evoke a generalized behavioral response. He unconsciously shifts identifications from one subpersonality to another, depending on the demand of the situation. His life is reactive rather than proactive and creative. The subpersonality becomes a tyrant enforcing its will on the entire personality. The client becomes a prisoner of the subpersonality and loses touch with all other choices and creative responses. It feels as though a spirit possesses the client. (Hendricks, 1993, p. 35)

Let us look at a few more examples to deepen our understanding of subpersonalities. A child has instinctive desires to be curious and adventurous. If this child acts in a curious and adventurous manner and the parents punish the child every time he does that, a subpersonality may develop that would create safety and security by preventing the child from acting in an adventurous way. This type of subpersonality is often called "The Saboteur." The Saboteur questions the child's adventurous behavior and cautions it not to go out on a limb. This tactic works well to help the child avoid parental punishment. However, the child misses out on a lot of exploring and may develop a deep-seated fear of taking risks.

As an adult, this same protective subpersonality may greatly restrict his joy and success in life. Suppose he considers taking a program at the university, which is challenging, adventurous and promises to lead to financial freedom. The saboteur

reminds him that the program is expensive and that he will have to borrow money to take the course. The saboteur would point out that the program is difficult and there is a possibility that he will not be gifted enough to complete it successfully. The saboteur may also remind him that he will be punished if he steps out and takes a risk. If the adult listens to the saboteur, then he will remain a prisoner of the subpersonality and stay in his boring, low-paying job.

There are many different subpersonalities that can be developed to meet needs and help deal with different situations. Each subpersonality has an exclusive way of responding. For example, the child may find that "sick kid" and "accident prone" subpersonalities work well with mom in order to get the need for attention met, while the "hard worker" subpersonality resonates with dad to get approval.

The problem is not so much in having the subpersonalities themselves since they can be useful and positive if they are flexible and are subservient to the "self." It is when the subpersonality acts as if it is the center of the personality that it becomes problematic.

Question: Dr. Assagioli, from what you are saying, I can see that getting needs met is very important to human development. Will you say something about our human needs?

The source of life did not complete the masterpiece all at one sitting, but instead devised a plan by which the onward urge within, and the environment without, should act and interact until from countless adaptations a human being is created.
(Anonymous)

These inner urges have their roots in basic needs. Dr. Abraham Maslow, one of the foremost psychologists of recent years and one of the very first psychologists to study normal people for models of human behavior, had this to say:

“The needs of the client are so basic that if they are not met the client will become ill.” Therefore, meeting the needs of the client will restore him to health, or cure the illness. At this point let me make a list of human needs.

Human Needs

Physical needs

1. Need for nutritious food and liquids
2. Shelter
3. Sleep
4. Oxygen

Psychological needs

1. To be secure
2. To be loved and receive affection; touch; tenderness; gentleness
3. To belong
4. To be deeply understood
5. To be deeply accepted
6. To be deeply recognized
7. To be loved, (Mutual trust and a lack of fear)
8. To give and receive love
9. To be cherished
10. To have self-respect
11. To have esteem from others, such as parents and other care takers

Sexuality needs

1. To accept and respect one's body and the bodies of others
2. To accept feelings and urges as vital and proper
3. To accept one's need for psychological and physical intimacy

4. The desire to reproduce children, to protect and nurture them

(Note: sexual intercourse does not remove loneliness and estrangement)

Self actualization needs "What a person can be, they must be." (Maslow)

1. Need for growth and development of potentials
2. One needs challenges
3. Need to know and understand
4. Need to be curious
5. Need to seek meaning
6. Need to achieve
7. Need to acquire

Aesthetic needs

1. One has a need for beauty - of sound, color and form

Freedom

1. Freedom to speak and be heard
2. Freedom to do what one wishes
3. Freedom to inquire
4. Freedom to defend one's self
5. Freedom to be just
6. Freedom to be honest
7. Freedom to be fair

Spiritual needs

1. The need to grow and expand
2. Improve in skills (Spiritual and other wise)
3. Relate to others in meaningful ways

4. Relate to something greater than himself, (At a very deep level, human beings know they are part of something larger than themselves, larger than life, larger than the earth system,)
5. To have order
6. To seek truth
7. To trust life

The basic needs originate in the Transpersonal Self and are planted like seeds in the matrix of the client's being. These seeds lay dormant in the deep unconscious and come forth into expression at the proper time. (Handout from Edith Stauffer)

Question: Dr. Assagioli, how can Psychosynthesis help the client heal the primal wound?

Let me say something about the process of Psychosynthesis. To make this clear I will use the 'I' - Self map." Earlier I stated that Psychosynthesis is a natural process of harmonization and synthesis. This synthesis takes place around two centers the 'I' and the Transpersonal Self. The Psychosynthesis process involves two stages that are successive but not separate. I call these two stages "personal synthesis" and "transpersonal synthesis." (Crampton, 1977, p. 12 -17)

In "personal synthesis" the 'I' serves as the unifying center around which the process takes place. The aim is to foster the development of a well-integrated personality. During this stage, the subpersonalities and personality vehicles are harmonized and integrated so that the person becomes able to function effectively in the realms of work, personal relationships, and to develop a well-integrated personality. The person working at this stage deals with personality deficiencies, psychological conflict, archaic behavior patterns and neurotic complexes.

The immediate goal of personal synthesis is the alleviation of suffering as well as to evoke strengths and latent potentials. It fosters integration between the inner and outer world. It makes possible inner freedom so he can express himself meaningfully and is able to evoke inner authority and wisdom.

Transpersonal Psychosynthesis

During the Transpersonal Psychosynthesis, the focus of personality integration gradually shifts from the 'I' to the "Transpersonal Self." The 'I' continues to collaborate in the process, but the Transpersonal Self increasingly assumes a primary role, becoming the new center around which integration takes place. The 'I' is like the mayor of the city who at first believes that he has full power and authority in his area of jurisdiction. He happily governs his citizens until one day he discovers that many of the laws of his city are determined by the policies of the federal government.

During the Transpersonal Psychosynthesis the 'I' has the task of aligning the personality with the more inclusive purpose of the Transpersonal Self, with which it has now entered into a conscious relationship. Often the 'I' rebels and struggles to maintain its autonomy. It must learn that in co-operating with the greater whole, in harmonizing and blending the energies with those of the Transpersonal Self, it will achieve greater fulfillment than in seeking to maintain the illusion of independence.

For it is through his connection with the Transpersonal Self that we experience real purpose and meaning in life. We are able to transcend the boundaries of his personal 'I' and discover our deeper relatedness to the universe.

Once the identification with the 'I' is firmly established, the personality is gradually harmonized and integrated through the will of the 'I.' The consciousness of the 'I' is expanded and moves up closer to the Transpersonal Self. Eventually it

reunites with its parent entity. As the field of awareness increases we become more aware of the total context of our life. As our awareness expands into the heights, we are also more aware of the depths. As the mountain climber reaches the summit, the vista appears broader and broader. He can see the surroundings more clearly and comprehensively. The closer the 'I' gets to the Transpersonal Self the more enlightened will be the person's perspective on the total context of life. He will have more acceptance and understanding of his past and more strength and inspiration in approaching the future.

We are able to expand into the heights; we are also able to descend into the depths. We are then able to approach the past with its confusions, pain, and distortions, with clearer vision and with greater compassion and understanding.

At higher levels of consciousness we can integrate more fully our experiences of childhood and, not only forgive our parents for the pain we suffered, but come to a deeper understanding of the meaning and purpose of our being born to our particular parents. In other words, we become reconciled with our life as a whole. At this point we can fully embrace our destiny. We see how even the most painful of all our experiences have contributed to the development of cherished qualities and have prepared us for the part we are called to live out in our life. (Crampton, 1977, p.1 ff.) So this is how the process works. I have developed methods to aid this process it must always be understood that the person's Transpersonal Self is the one who leads this process. Sometimes it is very interesting and surprising to observe just how the person is led.

Identification and Dis- identification

I have spoken about the concept of Identification and dis-identification earlier but I think I should explain these important concepts further. "Dis-identification" can be understood in its relationship to its polar opposite "identification." We are

identified with something when we are unable to separate our self from that something. Our sense of identity is bound up in it. (Brown, 1983, p. 27-28)

Sometimes we become so identified with something that we believe that it is who we are. For example, take an athlete; He comes to believe that his worth as a being is dependent on his performance as an athlete. You can see when a young athlete peaks at the age of twenty-five just how difficult it is for him to dis-identify from the performance, and expand his definition of who he is. Take a beautiful woman who believes she is her body. When she ages and become wrinkled or gray, she believes she is less a person. She has identified who she is with her young body.

In working with subpersonalities dis-identification plays a key role. We must be able to stand back from our subpersonalities in order to see them more clearly and to find the vantage point from which we can transform them. A basic principle is that we must be able to own our experience: We must be aware of the subpersonality and recognize that it is a part of us before we attempt to dis-identify from it. Paradoxically, we are often able to be more in contact with our feelings when we are not identified with them. The ability to step back from our feelings by moving into the inner observer position makes feelings less threatening allowing us to explore them more fully.

Summary

In summary I draw your attention to the idea that there is a natural process of growth that involves the integration of previously separate elements into a more comprehensive synthesis. There is an innate drive towards growth, integration and synthesis that we can consciously choose to support. Each of us has a purpose for being here on the earth at this particular time, and it is possible for us to discover this purpose and to function in ways that are life affirming and authentic.

Cooperation with the process requires a conceptual understanding of the structure, functions, and operating principles of the psyche. I outlined the structure of the psyche in the egg diagram, naming and explaining, the lower unconscious, higher unconscious, “self,” or ‘I’, higher or Transpersonal Self, field of consciousness, middle unconscious and the collective unconscious. Becoming familiar with these concepts will lead to a good understanding of the structure of the psyche.

In addition to the structure described in the egg diagram, I described the functional aspect of the psyche with the star diagram. The diagram explains the relationship of the various functions of the personality to the “self” or ‘I’ and the will. These psychological functions are emotion, thought, imagination, impulse, intuition, and sensation. In Psychosynthesis we seek to develop a healthy will in order to direct each function as we seek to fulfill our life purpose. I also outlined ten psychological laws that guide this process.

Besides integrating and synthesizing various elements, we seek to balance the personality. The personality vehicle map outlines three parts that need to be balanced, the mind, feeling, and body.

I also described a number of human needs. When these needs are not met we tend to compensate for the unmet need by forming subpersonalities. Although the subpersonality may act in distorted ways, it has positive intentions and strengths. It is our task to integrate these subpersonalities back into the center so that the positive intentions are fulfilled and the strengths are realized.

This brings up one other important concept. I spoke about identification and dis-identification. The Psychosynthesis process leads to identification with the “self” or ‘I’ and then, with the Transpersonal Self. In order to identify with the “self” we have to dis-identify from all the “attachments” of our personality. The dis-identification process follows a pattern I call the harmonization map. Much of the basic work of Psychosynthesis is aimed at recognizing, accepting, coordinating,

integrating and synthesizing these elements, and becoming identified with the “self.” We are then no longer helplessly controlled by them, but can learn to bring them increasingly under conscious direction.

Reflection: The World Views of Roberto Assagioli and Saint Ignatius Loyola

Assagioli's map of consciousness is a comprehensive view of the human psyche. It has been said that Assagioli provided the most comprehensive view of consciousness currently in existence. He has also created a system whereby any new discoveries can easily be incorporated. His maps of consciousness are truly masterpieces.

Saint Ignatius' model is not as comprehensive, but it is simple. It provides the retreatant with a general framework whereby she can attain spiritual freedom. Although Saint Ignatius does not spell it out in words, it is clear that he recognizes the higher and lower unconscious. However, Ignatius' way of dealing with these two realities is very different from Assagioli's methods. Roberto Assagioli did not see the lower unconscious as evil. Although some of the material in the lower unconscious is distorted and negative, it is not evil. For Assagioli, the transformative process requires a friendly and curious approach even to the most distorted material. By being respectfully interested, the distorted part is able to reveal its wound, its positive function and strengths, and then be integrated into the personality.

Ignatius on the other hand does not trust the lower nature and encourages the retreatant to use strong will to suppress the material in the lower unconscious. This can lead to problems. Material that is suppressed often gains energy in the lower unconscious and may break out into consciousness with a great deal of power creating havoc in the retreatant's life. If the retreatant is strong and is able to keep the material at bay, she will experience a lack of energy. It takes a lot of

energy to suppress lower unconscious material. If this material were to be welcomed and dealt with, a lot of energy would be set free that could be used in the building of God's Kingdom.

Another important difference is that Assagioli recognized where distorted material originates. He noticed that underneath even distorted material there is a legitimate need and that often the distortion was simply an attempt to get the need met. By exploring lower unconscious material the person may expose early wounds and unmet needs. Once these wounds and unmet needs are discovered, the person can set out, with the help of God, to heal them and to meet the need, thus creating more spiritual freedom.

Saint Ignatius would also benefit from incorporating the subpersonality map into his ideas on discerning spirits. Ignatius became very good at recognizing interior movements and taught his retreatants how to discern spirits. However, these spirits are all lumped into two categories: those that lead to God and those that lead away from God. It seems to be useful to give these movements names. Once a name has been given, a relationship can be formed with the movement and this would help the retreatant direct and transform the energy in the movement.

Both Assagioli and Ignatius recognized that each person has a center of being that is separate from all the material around it. This provides a point from which all energies can be directed.

Both Assagioli and Ignatius recognize that each human being has a unique purpose for being here on earth. Psychosynthesis and the Spiritual Exercises share the same goal, to free the individual so that they can respond to their unique call in loving service. Assagioli says the goal of Psychosynthesis is to release the energies of the Transpersonal Self. First, he helps the client develop an integrated strong personality so that the client is free to express these energies. Ignatius says

the goal is to do the will of God. First, Ignatius helps the retreatant to free herself from all inordinate attachments thus freeing her to generously respond to God's call to become co-creator with Christ in building the Kingdom of God.

Ignatius provides the retreatant with a "distorted patterns map." Ignatius identifies seven distorted patterns that prevent the retreatant from being spiritually free. Ignatius calls these patterns "the seven deadly sins." Assagioli leaves the system open and each guide helps the client examine the influences of his unique configuration of subpersonalities. The guide and client will arrive at a unique pattern, which is then reworked until it is transformed.

Both approaches have their strengths and limitations. By combining these two approaches, the understanding of the human person is enriched.

Chapter 3

Methods

The Methods Used in the Spiritual Exercises

Question: Saint Ignatius, will you tell me about the methods you use when directing the Spiritual Exercises?

I use a number of methods in the Spiritual Exercises, they are:

1. Imagination
2. Gospel Contemplation
3. Asking for a grace
4. Discerning Spirits
5. Interior examination
 - a. General examination
 - b. Particular examination
 - c. Examination of Conscience
 - d. Awareness Examination
6. Meditation using the three powers of the soul
7. Colloquy
8. Repetitions
9. Review
10. Penance

Imagination

Imagination is one of my favorite methods. I discovered early in my conversion experience that imagination is a powerful function, which can enhance spiritual development. Many of the methods I use in the spiritual exercises rely on the use of imagination.

Imagination is that power within the retreatant, which equips her to make present what is in the past or in the future. Through the imagination the retreatant can travel back in time 2000 years and live the gospel scenes, or she can project herself into the future imagining she is standing before God after she dies.

Imagination is intimately connected with the retreatant's five senses that take in the data from the environment whether that environment is in the present, past or future.

Imagination is essential in grasping and communicating meaning. The imagination is like a gateway to the deep recesses of the retreatant's soul. Thorough imagination she can go very deep and create and use symbols that are essential to her healing and development. (Veltri, 1998, p. 610)

Gospel contemplation

Gospel Contemplation is a prayer method used in the Spiritual Exercises that relies heavily upon imagination. In this method the retreatant takes a passage from the gospels and participates imaginatively in the event just as if it were happening in the present moment. I find it helpful to use the "Application of Senses" when doing the gospel contemplation. I encourage the retreatant to get into the gospel scene and see, hear, taste, smell, touch and feel whatever is going on. She lets herself drift back in time and be present to the gospel events of some 2000 years ago. The retreatant can go beyond the physical imagining and really taste the infinite fragrance and sweetness of the Divine. She can use her spiritual senses and become passively receptive to Divine intimacy. (Veltri, 1998, p. 296ff)

Grace

Grace is the word Christians use to denote and connote the energy of God's personal relationship and consequent activity with the retreatant. I believe anything the retreatant does that has any relationship to her salvation or to her growth in God's love comes as a result of God's initiatives. All grace is a gift from

God. Grace is a freely given, it is not earned. Grace is that abiding presence of God's life within the retreatant. It also refers to those impulses, initiatives, and inspirations that ultimately encourage the retreatant to move into a deeper involvement in God's life. (Veltri, 1998, p. 608)

Asking for a grace

In each prayer period during the Spiritual Exercises I ask the retreatant to ask for grace. By this I mean the retreatant is to express her deepest desires to God. She knows that, ultimately, it is only from God and not from her own effort that she can receive what she desires in the prayer exercises. The very asking for a grace or the articulation of her desires for a deepening of her relationship with God in some particular way comes from God. The initial impulse, the consequent shift in her consciousness, the openness to the gift, the reception of the gift, the presence of God's own Self to her is all grace, all gift. (Veltri, 1998, p. 608)

Discernment of spirits

Discernment is a key method I teach in the Spiritual Exercises. Discernment specifically denotes the discrimination and judgment concerning the kind of spiritual movements that take place in the retreatant's heart as she is engaged in discovering God's will for her. Being able to discern spirits moves her into greater spiritual freedom and enables her to make conscious decisions from a place of free choice.

By "movements" I mean those interior experiences and spontaneous reactions such as thoughts, feelings, impulses, inclinations, moods, urges, consolations and desolations. The retreatant may feel bored, angry, excited, fearful, depressed, anxious, challenged, or she may have moments of insight and meaning.

In order to help the retreatant discern spirits I have devised rules to help her perceive and know the different movements that are experienced in her soul. I

devised a set of rules for the first week of the exercises and another set for the second week. The first set of rules, which I will explain in detail later, is for the beginner. These rules are relevant for all retreatants who are seeking a conversion experience and who are earnestly seeking to develop a loving relationship with God. I have found from observing retreatants on the first week that many of their interior attitudes and affectivity are aligned with God's desires even though they may be a long way from being truly spiritually free.

The aspect that distinguishes the first set of rules from the second set of rules is subtle. The first set addresses issues of a good person who has not been versed in spiritual things. She may be tempted grossly and openly. The retreatant at this stage may have temptations of fear. The fear may present an obstacle to receiving the grace of intimacy with God. She may fear that God might ask too much of her, or the fear may prevent her from persevering in God's service. She may fear losing social status.

The second set of rules is usually taught during the second week of the exercises. The second set of rules is designed to perceive the more subtle movements of the spirit. These guidelines benefit retreatants who are quite interiorly free and are already experiencing a personal closeness with God. This retreatant is conscious of the needs of others and is very generous towards God. Many of her interior attitudes and affectivities are aligned with God's will and she is very close to being spiritually free. Yet even at this stage the retreatant can be tempted. However, temptations at this level are not as open as in week one. Temptations at this stage come under the guise of light. The retreatant may be seduced not so much by obvious disordered attachments, but by being misguided in loving generosity. Take, for example, the retreatant who is moved by the love of God into a service. She takes up a ministry in which she has zero training. After a short time, she becomes overwhelmed and discouraged and gives up the ministry altogether. In this case the retreatant should have had help to discern whether or

not this “good thing” was for her. A sister is called to the contemplative life of prayer, yet she lives across the street from a rehab hospital. Many people question her as to why she does not visit the people in the hospital. For her the answer is easy. She has discerned a call to the contemplative life, and she is certain that God is not calling her to visit people in the hospital. If she hadn’t gone through the discerning process she may well be tempted to visit the hospital and thus avoid her true call to the contemplative life. (Schemel, 2000, p. 179ff and 193ff)

Interior examinations

Besides teaching the retreatant how to discern spirits I also teach her how to examine herself. There are a number of ways, a. the General examination, b. particular examination, c. examination of conscience and d. awareness examination.

General examination: This is an all-embracing Examination of Conscience. It is a searching inventory of all the thoughts, words and actions by which the retreatant has compromised herself with evil. The retreatant can make this General Examination daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly, depending on the need.

Particular examination: In the particular examination of conscience the retreatant focuses frequently and more intently on one fault, one attitude, or one pattern of behavior that the retreatant desires to modify. It is best to keep a journal to do this work. This is a technique to help the retreatant keep herself in harmony with the graces asked for in the Spiritual Exercises.

Examination of conscience: This is the activity the retreatant does when she reflects upon herself in the light of her conscience. She judges whether she has acted or not acted in thought, word, or deed according to her Christian values. This exercise is recommended before going to bed.

Awareness examination: The awareness examination is designed to help the retreatant reflect upon her interior movements and their influences on her day-to-day choices and consequent activities. Through this exercise, she attempts to discover where and in what ways God has been present and revealed in her daily experiences. (Veltri, 1998, p. 596)

Meditation using the three powers of the soul

The powers of the soul to which I refer are Will, Memory, and Understanding. Many of the meditations in the Spiritual Exercises use these three powers. Imagination is considered very much a part of the retreatant's memory and is enmeshed with her reasoning powers, which leads to a felt understanding. When doing the meditative practice during the Exercises, the retreatant decides on certain things. Deciding makes use of the Will. When the retreatant attends to and focuses on an image or truth that arises from some scriptural or personal story, she is using the function of Memory with Imagination presumed, this brings her to a felt Understanding which leads her to make a decision using the Will.

Colloquy: A Colloquy is a conversation in which the retreatant engages at any time during a prayer exercise in a dialogue with Jesus, God the Father, the Holy Spirit, with Mary or some other saint. (Veltri, 1998, p. 598)

Triple Colloquy: The triple colloquy is another form of dialogue I suggest at significant points during the Exercises. The triple colloquy incorporates three dialogues first to Mary, then to Jesus, and then to God the Father. (Veltri, 1998, p. 626)

Repetition

I use a method called repetition. Although it is called a repetition it is not just doing the same thing over again. In a repetition the retreatant returns to an earlier prayer exercise, to a point where she has experienced some movement in the

prayer experience. It may be a moment of consolation, which is a sense of being lifted up, a sense of God's presence, an unexpected understanding or meaning, It may also be a moment of desolation, a struggle, or a discomfort, a sense of God's absence, It may be a moment of spiritual appreciation of some insight or awareness. When the retreatant returns to these moments she ponders them and stays with them listening to her inner movements for it was at these times that God was speaking to her. (Veltri, 1998, p. 619)

Review

The review is a distinct method I teach in the Spiritual Exercises. In the review the retreatant reflects, by herself, on her own experiences of the prayer exercise just finished and notices, by herself, the spiritual movements that were taking place during the time of the prayer exercise. (Veltri, 1998, p. 620)

Penance

I ask people to do exterior penance. There are a number of reasons for this, one is to strengthen the retreatants will. A strong will is very important in the process of making free choices. Another is to help develop a greater harmony between body and spirit. Exterior penance ranges from bodily discomfort such as fasting or making a vigil to the performance of good works, such as visiting the elderly or donating to charities. Penance can also discipline the retreatant's inappropriate sensuality in order to be aligned with the desires of God's will. Penance disposes the retreatant for the Grace that she is seeking. It helps to rid her of faults. (Veltri, 1998, p. 616)

As you can see I offer a number of methods. In this approach it is expected that the retreatant use these methods regularly. My approach demands participation. By using these methods the retreatant becomes a co-creator and active participant in her spiritual journey. If the retreatant chooses not to use these methods God

continues to work in her life, but if she becomes an active participant, the process of the spiritual journey is intensified and accelerated.

The Methods Used in Psychosynthesis

Question: Dr. Assagioli, earlier you said Psychosynthesis is a natural process of synthesis and also a way to co-operate with that process. What can a person do to co-operate with the process?

In Psychosynthesis, active cooperation is very important. The faithful, consistent practice of certain exercises tends to support the natural process of Psychosynthesis within the client over time. By performing certain exercises the client can co-operate with his own personal development. He can choose to practice in ways that enrich and deepen his life. He doesn't have to sit back passively waiting for development to happen. He can use his awareness and will to heal and strengthen his personality so that he gradually becomes a more coherent and creative instrument for the expression of Transpersonal energies. (Yeomans, 1989, p. 4)

There are a number of methods and exercises I teach to my clients and students. To name a few:

1. Critical Analysis
2. Dialogue
3. Inner dialogue
4. Subpersonality work
5. Gestalt dialogue
6. Mental imagery
7. Symbolic artwork and free drawing
8. Evocative techniques
9. Psychological journaling
10. Catharsis

11. Ideal Model
12. Meditation
13. Self Identification
14. The development of the will
15. Grounding

Critical analysis

Critical analysis is a discursive method used to assess both the blocks and the potentials of the personality and to initiate an exploration of the unconscious in order to reach the roots of psychological complexes.

Through active dialogue the guide encourages the client to use his mind with observation and discrimination, to bring clearly into his consciousness the irrational elements of the problem and corresponding feelings. The guide intends that the client see the drawbacks and harm caused to himself and others through his uncontrolled behavior. (Assagioli, 1965, p. 107)

Dialogue

The most basic method used in Psychosynthesis is dialogue between the client and the guide. This entails feedback, active listening, clarification, deepening, exploration and validation of the moment-to-moment process of the client. The guide often discusses the implications of the work that is being done in therapy. The guide helps the client look at questions to be explored between sessions, or in future sessions. The guide in collaboration with the client seeks ways of applying what has been learned in therapy to practical everyday life.

Inner dialogue

Dialogue not only takes place between the client and the guide. There is also an inner dialogue going on inside the client and inside the guide. I encourage the guide to teach the client how to dialogue internally. Inner dialogues can be used for many

purposes. The client, through inner dialogue, can contact transpersonal energy. It is through these inner dialogues that the heart is opened to receive guidance and inspiration. (Yeomans, 1989, p. 21) Each client has within him a source of understanding and of wisdom that knows who he is, where he has been, and where he is going. This wise part is in tune with his unfolding purpose and senses clearly the next steps to be taken to fulfill his purpose.

When using these techniques, a spirit of attentive patience is necessary. For example, a client may decide to address the Transpersonal Self and ask a question. When the client asks the question the intuitive process is stimulated. The process is set in motion and works on its own time and reveals the answer in its own way. Sometimes the response is immediate and clear; at other times the answer may come later at an unexpected time, and sometimes in a symbolic form, an impulse to action, a sudden intuition, the right word from a friend, a book, or a song. (Brown, 1983, p. 99)

Inner dialogue is not restricted to dialoguing with higher parts. The client can dialogue with subpersonalities, feelings, dream symbols, and physical sensations. (Brown, 1983, p. 54)

Gestalt approach

In the gestalt approach an emphasis is placed on experiencing what is, rather than talking about something. The aim is to facilitate the client's awareness of what is seen, heard, and felt, without offering interpretation or advice.

In Gestalt identification the client identifies with an image, an aspect of himself, a dream component, a feeling and then the guide invites dialogue between himself and the identification of the client as a means of working through the dynamics of the interpersonal subjective relationship. The client can hold an inner dialogue with images, subpersonalities, and symbols of any kind. (Brown, 1983, p. 55)

Mental imagery

Imagery is the language of the unconscious; thus it provides a means of communication with the unconscious. When the client goes inside, all sorts of images may emerge: people, beasts, demons, healing entities, and cosmic visionary scenarios. The guide encourages the client to give these images the power of speech and movement. Through the imagination profound things happen. Innate objects come alive and lead the client into growth.

Mental imagery is used in two ways. First, it can be used evocatively, by drawing out that which already exists in the unconscious. The client may be invited to call up a visual image for a specific purpose. Once the client has lived something on a symbolic level the client is encouraged to interpret his experience. By symbolically facing situations the client has expanded his sense of possibilities, which replace immature or neurotic ways of feeling and relating. Secondly, the client may consciously choose to recondition the psyche with pre-chosen images that are known to have a positive effect on the psyche. The guide offers selected symbols to be used to set into motion a psychological process. Every image has in itself a motor drive. The image tends to produce the physical conditions and external acts corresponding to them. Positive use of a chosen image allows for the creation of its corresponding psychological state. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 47 –50)

Free drawing

Drawing builds a bridge between the conscious and the unconscious. It offers a medium of expression for releasing repressed psychological energy. There are two ways of using this technique: First is a spontaneous method. The client plays with paper and colored crayons allowing the hand to move freely without thought. A great deal of negative energy can be released this way. The second way is using symbolic artwork: the client is invited to draw a symbol from his mental images. Reflecting on the meaning hidden in the shapes and colors, feelings are evoked which bring learning and insight. For example, I may ask a client to draw symbolic

images to answer the following questions: 1. Who am I? 2. Where do I come from? 3. Where am I going? 4. What is in my way? 5. What do I need to develop and nurture in myself to get there? (Whitmore, 1991, p. 50 - 53)

Evocative techniques

I developed an exercise called "Evoking Transpersonal Qualities." There are many transpersonal qualities in the higher unconscious, which are useful to the client as he deals with life. The purpose of this technique is to create inner and outer conditions to foster and enhance the desired quality. It is important that the choice of the quality comes from within, not as an external, but as something chosen purposely and freely as a further step in growth. (Brown, 1983, p. 60)

Psychological journal

Journal writing is a powerful tool in the transformation process. I often begin by asking the client to write an autobiography and then continue to record his inner life and its developments. Journal writing helps the client formulate his thoughts, feelings and observations with great clarity, thus enhancing self-awareness. The very choice to write implies commitment to change. The writing also stimulates the creative process and releases dormant insights. It also has a cathartic effect and provides a means to release tension, and to become aware of the meaning behind the tension. I encourage the client to use the following headings in his journal. 1. Dialogue with ideas. 2. Dialogue with persons. 3. Dialogue with events. 4. Inner dialogues. 5. Dreams. 6. Imagery. 7. Identity. 8. Will. 9. Peak experiences. 10. Problems. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 46 - 47)

Catharsis

Catharsis means the process of becoming pure. The guide encourages the release of previously repressed or blocked psychological energy. Through the expression of these powerful feelings negative energy is released and the client is purified, refined and transformed. It must be remembered that catharsis is not an end in itself. After

the negative energy is released, it must be replaced with something positive.

(Whitmore, 1991, p. 44 - 45)

Ideal model

The method of the ideal model can be used in three ways: 1. Problems related to usage: In this situation the client builds an image of himself living freely without difficulty. 2. Cultivation of the opposite: In this situation the client cultivates the qualities he is lacking. For example, a person experiencing fear may need to cultivate courage. 3. Overall purpose and direction: Through the use of the ideal model, the client discovers the purpose of his life. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 53 - 55)

Meditation

Meditation is another path to the transpersonal realms. There are many methods but one method I teach is particularly effective. It is called "Creative Meditation" and is based on raja yoga. In this approach I teach the client to focus on a particular quality, phrase, or seed thought and then work through three stages called reflective, receptive and creative. Each stage exercises a particular faculty. The "reflective stage" helps the client to develop his thinking mind, his reason and his capacity to put various bits of information and ideas into useful patterns. It makes use of imagination and emotion. The "receptive stage" helps the client open to inspiration from the transpersonal realms, and the "creative stage" directs the power of his mind towards transformation, and towards manifesting transpersonal energy. In short, the three stages teach discipline, concentration, and trust in the miraculous capacities of our being. (Stauffer, 1987, p. 185-203)

Will

In order to face, transform, and express, either the energies of the lower unconscious or the energies of the higher unconscious, the client needs a well-developed will. Without a well developed will, there can be no sense of self, no independence of thought, or feeling, no internal authority, and no conscious contact with the Transpersonal Self or higher unconscious.

A developed balanced will can be cultivated by working on the three aspects of the will: strong will, good will and skillful will.

Strong will is the dynamic power, the fire of the Transpersonal Self. Without a degree of intensity of strength, there will be no movement, or ability to bring transpersonal qualities into the world. Good will is the intention to act in ways that unite, heal and synthesize. It expresses compassion and love and assures that the action is constructive. Skillful will is intelligent and wise action based on an understanding of the principles of a particular process and of the psychological laws. The action is effortless in achieving its purpose provided skillful will is used. (Brown, 1993, p. 123ff)

Identification/dis-identification

Along with developing an effective will, the client can increase the likelihood of having transpersonal experiences by following the method I call “identification” and “dis-identification.” I believe the client is controlled by everything with which he is identified, and is free of everything from which he dis-identifies. If he is disturbed by emotion, sensation, thought, memory, or experience, it is simply because he has identified himself with one or more of these experiences. The resolution of such a disturbance is simply to dis-identify from disturbing emotions, sensations, thoughts, memories, or experiences, and identify with the “self.” I teach my clients how to dis-identify from afflictive experiences and how to identify with the “self.” By following my instructions in the dis-identification exercise and self-identification exercise, the power that the distorted emotions, sensations, thoughts, memories, experiences and subpersonalities exerted simply drops away. The client begins to see that what is happening to him is not a serious matter. He realizes that inside there is a deeper self that is not disturbed by his outer goings on. In short, if the client is identified with some sort of pain, humiliation or fear, he feels afflicted and enslaved. But if he identifies with the “self” these afflictive experiences no longer threaten him and he is no longer

moved to manipulate them, wrestle with them or subdue them. He simply witnesses them from the “self,” without judging them, avoiding them, dramatizing them, working on them, justifying them or transcending them. This is possible only when he understands that none of these experiences constitute his “self.” (Brown, 1991, p.51 –53)

Grounding and creative expression

Insights are wonderful but unless they are manifested in daily life they are not going to bring about transformation. Therefore, the guide helps the client to find ways to express the new insights in his daily life. This may take the form of assigning homework whereby the client performs some sort of activity designed to make concrete changes in his life. (Brown, 1983, p.63)

I have presented a few methods that are useful in the process of Psychosynthesis. The number of possible methods that could be useful in this process at various times is very great indeed. However, a random, grab bag approach to choosing a method is not recommended. The guide and the guide’s Transpersonal Self in collaboration with the client and the client’s Transpersonal Self carefully select from a variety of methods which ones are right for the client at this particular time in his development. (Brown, 1983, p.64) It must be kept in mind that the goal of using a particular method is to support and actively nurture the natural process, which is moving from fragmentation to wholeness. (Crampton, 1977, p.51)

Reflection: On the Techniques of the Spiritual Exercises and Psychosynthesis

Given the fact that there is almost 500 years between the birth dates of Ignatius and Assagioli the similarities are striking. Both Ignatius and Assagioli recognized the powerful effect of imagination on the psyche. Many of the meditations of the Spiritual Exercises involve imagination. Ignatius encourages the retreatants to

move back into the gospel scenes using all their senses to recreate the scene as vividly as possible. God speaks through these images.

Imagery is also central to Psychosynthesis. Assagioli describes how imagery works in his psychological laws and explains how images affect thinking, feeling, physical states, and behavior.

Another interesting similarity is inner dialogue. Assagioli has clients dialoguing with different subpersonalities, and dream symbols and the Transpersonal Self, which is seen as the connection with the divine. Ignatius has the retreatant dialoguing with different biblical characters, with saints, and with God.

Another similarity is Ignatius asking for a grace and Assagioli evoking transpersonal qualities. In order to bring a quality into the personality, such as the transpersonal quality of courage, Assagioli has the client do an exercise called Evocative Word. The client meditates on a particular quality and the unconscious brings it into consciousness. Assagioli has another exercise called "Letter to the Transpersonal Self" where the client writes to the Transpersonal Self and asks questions. When the intensity is high enough the Transpersonal Self answers the questions in some form.

Ignatius uses the same type of principle. Before each meditation, Ignatius has the retreatant ask for a particular grace. For example, the first meditation in week one has the following theme, "God, who is mother and father to us and so much more than what we can imagine, loves us, and cares for us personally." (Veltri, 1998, p. 197.)

At the beginning of this meditation Ignatius has the retreatant ask directly for a grace. In this meditation the retreatant asks for "a deep confidence and trust in God's care and nearness." In the second week the retreatant may ask for the grace

of “a growing and intense sorrow for her sins with a deepening awareness of God’s merciful love.” By asking directly the retreatant often gets an answer.

Discerning Spirits

Ignatius teaches the retreatant a method of paying attention to the very quiet voice deep within. Ignatius sees spirits motivating us. Ignatius provided rules on how to deal with different types of spirits.

Assagioli also taught his clients to pay attention to the movements within themselves. He identifies these inner movements as subpersonalities. Assagioli has his clients listen very deeply to discern different subpersonalities, and how they are affecting the personality. He has his client listen for inspiration and intuition that come to him from the higher unconscious.

Awareness Examination

Ignatius taught his retreatants a method he called “Awareness Examination.” Each day the retreatant reviews her day noticing where she heard the good spirits and followed their lead and where she heard the bad spirits and was influenced by their lead. Ignatius believed this was the most powerful prayer form. Even if the retreatant did not have time for gospel contemplation he insisted that the retreatant do her “awareness examination.”

Assagioli also taught his clients to do something he called the “evening review.” Each evening the client goes over his day and notices when he acted from the “self” and when he acted from a distorted subpersonality. He affirms all the choices he made to do the will of the Transpersonal Self. He goes over in his imagination all his mistakes reliving them the way he would have preferred to act. In this way he reinforces how he wants to act, and hopefully, when he is confronted with a similar situation he will act according to the will of the Transpersonal Self.

Chapter 4

The Qualities and Role of the Facilitator

The Qualities and Role of the Ignatian Spiritual Director

Question: St. Ignatius, will you say something about the role and the qualities of the retreat director?

Trusting relationship

The first task of the director is to develop a trusting relationship with the retreatant. The trusting relationship is primary in giving the Spiritual Exercises. The director develops the trusting relationship by being aware of what the retreatant is speaking about; What she is revealing; What she is experiencing through her interior movements. The director acknowledges whether or not she is comfortable, uncomfortable, peaceful or uneasy. The director conveys understanding to the retreatant. The director reflects back to the retreatant what is happening inside her in a loving accurate manner. When the retreatant experiences this loving attention, she begins to feel safe and a bond of trust is established.

For example, if the retreatant is fearful, the director relates to her with love and concern. If the retreatant is slow, the director is patient. The trusting relationship will grow as the retreatant experiences positive regard, respect, and reverence from the director. As the director listens, questions and dialogues with deep caring, concern, and loving acceptance, the retreatant feels comfortable to be herself.

During this initial phase of the retreat, the director is aware of the retreatant's style of relating. For example, the retreatant may be a person who talks around issues, or perhaps, the retreatant is a frightened person who is afraid to talk; others may try to dominate, some may be angry, others are jokers. No matter what type of

retreatant sits before the director, she has to be present in a loving way. However, if the retreatant's moods, attitudes, or presence controls or manipulates the director, she must confront the issues empathically, while at the same time fostering a trusting relationship in which the retreatant can speak freely and openly.

When the trusting relationship has been built, the director and the retreatant are ready to enter into the discerning process. The director helps the retreatant discern the mysteries of her interior life in a practical way that is meant to lead to practical decisions in the service of Christ. The retreatant is the primary discerner and the director is the auxiliary discerner. That is, the retreatant is the subjective discerner and the director is the objective discerner. The director listens, with the retreatant, to her inner experiences, her moods, attractions and repulsions. (Veltri. 1998, p. 3 ff)

Spiritual freedom

During the spiritual exercises the overall goal of the retreatant is to come to a sense of spiritual freedom. Therefore, the director's role is to foster freedom. At every stage of the spiritual exercises freedom is necessary. The retreatant must be free enough to be herself before the Lord, to look at the Lord and to receive from the Lord, to commit herself to the Lord, to grieve with the Lord, to let herself be consoled by the Lord.

In short, the function of the retreatant is to do the Spiritual Exercises and gain a sense of spiritual freedom. The function of the director is to guide and monitor the Exercises. The director provides the retreatant with a specific structure and personalized meditations. The director typically meets with the retreatant individually to give guidance and to help the retreatant discern her interior movements.

The retreatant is asked to give a faithful account of her inner experience and responses that take place in the course of her meditation. Upon hearing the retreatant's inner experience, the director teaches the retreatant how to distinguish between the good and evil influences, and how to distinguish the Divine call from every other influence on her. (Smith, 1973, p. 20ff)

The director helps the retreatant discern where the Spirit is leading her and helps her to see the Lord's action in her daily life. When this path is discerned and followed, she will grow through the responsible decisions she makes and will develop a deep commitment to the inner Christ.

The director offers her input in harmony with the retreatant's actual accomplishments, thus moderating the advance and flow of the retreat in a fully personalized way. The director is fully aware of the grace sought in each meditation. She knows that each grace is necessary, and that one grace builds upon the other. It is like building a tall structure; each part of the structure has a particular place and function. When built in the proper order the structure is strong. If the parts are out of order the structure is unstable. In this manner the director guides the retreatant, building one grace upon another, until the structure is well balanced and strong.

Shared responsibility and trust

The director understands that she is sharing the responsibility for the Spiritual Exercises with the retreatant. The director desires to call forth freedom in the retreatant. She is aware of the delicacy and tenderness of the retreatant's inner garden. She is aware that the retreatant invites her into her soul to act and to direct. The director remembers that she does not take on all the responsibility for the growth and transformation of the retreatant. She knows it is a shared responsibility. The director believes that the retreatant is free, can change, and will grow in Christ with the presence of the director as a catalyst in this development.

The director must believe this deeply and act accordingly. The director's fear of losing control of the retreat if the retreatant exercises freedom, is banished with a deep trust in God and in the process. With this trust the director asks the retreatant to take an active role in the relationship. The director discerns with the retreatant, not for her. She makes suggestions, looks for opportunities and at times directs, but she leaves the responsibility with the retreatant. The director lets go of the notion that she knows what is best for the retreatant. She lets go of the desire to achieve results in the retreat and makes space for God to do His work in whatever way He sees fit.

Self knowledge

Although the focus during the Spiritual Exercises is on the growth of the retreatant, it is also a wonderful opportunity for the director to grow as well. The director pays attention to her own reactions as she directs the retreatant. She realizes that she is not totally free, and is bound up or chained within herself at times. She catches her fearful or hurt tendencies, she notices when she is inflexible in her own spiritual life, and she notices when the retreatant's issues threaten her. For example, a director may have a great need for approval and realize that this personal need is getting in the way of the retreatant's progress. The director must fight the desire to have the retreatant dependent on her. This type of awareness is essential for growth in self-knowledge. It keeps the relationship with the retreatant free from contamination. The director needs to be aware that she is not perfect and that, although she may be advanced on the spiritual path, she still has attachments, disorders and issues that have not been resolved fully. These issues do not need to be obstacles to directing the Spiritual Exercises. In fact the director's awareness in these matters will assist her and at times make her even more sensitive to the retreatant's needs. Self-knowledge is a source of freedom. It is a path to psychological, theological, and spiritual maturity. When the director has her needs met in healthy relationships outside the retreatant

- director relationship, she is more able to meet the needs of the retreatant in an objective way.

Trusting faith and prayerful attitude

To be effective, the director needs a trusting faith and prayerful attitude. Prayer is essential for the director. In order to be an effective director, she needs to be dependent on God and present before Him as poor in spirit. She needs to relate to Christ as her guide and remain open to the movements of the Spirit. She needs to be living a deeply spiritual life in order to be a helpful guide to the retreatant.

(Leach, 1973, p. 39)

Theological knowledge

The director needs certain theological knowledge. The director must be familiar with Spiritual, Dogmatic and Moral Theology with a good foundation in Christology. But besides this knowledge, the director needs to remain open, listen, learn and expand her theological views. By being open, the director can let go the worry that she may not know what to do if the retreatant takes a path she is not accustomed to. The director must be familiar with the techniques of the Spiritual Exercises, but she must be open to the retreatant's interior movements. She must listen carefully to what is happening with the retreatant and be willing to abandon techniques in the interest of the retreatant's movements and growth. Techniques must not be imposed on the retreatant. The openness to the Spirit must be maintained. (Connolly, 1973, p. 61)

In this exploration of the qualities and role of the retreat director, I have included the need to create a trusting relationship, which will foster the goal of the Spiritual Exercises, which is to attain spiritual freedom. In order to attain this goal, the director develops the skills to guide and monitor the process in collaboration with the retreatant. Besides having these skills, it is imperative that the director works on her own spiritual freedom, by becoming self aware, developing a trusting faith and

prayerful attitude. It is also helpful if the director has a well-developed theological understanding of the spiritual life. Being a spiritual director is an on going learning process.

The Qualities and Role of the Psychosynthesis Guide

Question: Dr. Assagioli, will you tell us a little about the role and attitudes of the Psychosynthesis guide?

The guide's role is not only to address issues of psychological wounding and healing on the personal level but, also, to work with the spiritual dimension of personality on the transpersonal level. The guide strives to give each of these areas its proper due. Both of these dimensions are important in the transformation process. (Firman, 1997, p. 8-9)

Connect to the Transpersonal Self

The guide helps the client connect to the Transpersonal Self that directs the exploration of both the lower and higher unconscious. Then, a synthesis can take place that includes a very wide spectrum of human experience. The guide concentrates on the effects of wounding, healing of the wound, and the growth of the human spirit.

Unconditional love

The guide offers the client unconditional love, positive regard and non-judgmental acceptance, which serve to facilitate a new sense of personal "self." This empathy will energize and activate the wounds within the client. Loving empathy illuminates the trauma, making it possible to heal. The role of the guide is to maintain an empathic connection, and process each wound as it emerges. (Firman, 1997, p. 235-236)

Accepting

Let me speak directly about the guide's attitudes. The Psychosynthesis guide maintains an accepting attitude. This means being open to whatever is there, even if it is uncomfortable or distorted, for it is known that even uncomfortable feelings contain wisdom. The guide creates an atmosphere of safety, so that the client can trust, and be open to anything, be it repressed in the lower unconscious or repressed in the higher unconscious. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 26) Acceptance is crucial for change. People naturally repress anything that is not accepted. Acceptance of negative feelings can be revolutionary and transformative. If afflictive emotions are accepted and given some loving room to be, they will flow and change. If they are resisted, they will remain stuck.

Friendly

The Psychosynthesis guide maintains a friendly attitude. This attitude is an extension of acceptance. By being friendly to the client, he learns to set aside critical attitudes that spring from the attitude of his Inner Critic towards his feelings, thoughts and behaviors. This allows the process to unfold without judgment. Sometimes it is helpful to teach the client to imagine that he is keeping company with a hurt child. (Weiser – Cornell, 1993, p. 36)

Trusting

The Psychosynthesis guide maintains a trusting attitude in the client's capacity to understand his life, to make choices, and to transcend apparent limitations. The guide does not focus on illness and pathology, but rather, sees the client as a healthy being struggling to allow the energies of the Transpersonal Self to emerge. The guide assists the client in holding the bigger picture and vision. It is known that the guide's expectations affect the outcome of therapy. If the guide sees the client as pathological, the client often feels worse and remains stuck. If the guide sees the big picture, the client's potential is free to grow. He is able to express his true nature. (Brown, 1983, p. 48)

Receptive

The Psychosynthesis guide maintains a receptive attitude. This means that the guide is expectant. That is, maintaining an expectation that the solution is in the client, and that he has all the resources he needs, or is capable of developing the resources he needs to deal with his situation.

Non-attachment

The Psychosynthesis guide maintains an attitude of non-attachment. This means the letting go of preconceptions of what ought to occur, and of the desire for a particular type of measurable success. However the guide does have an expectation that the client will find his way and align himself with the energies of the Transpersonal Self. The guide allows him all the time and space he needs for this transformation occur.

Respectful

The Psychosynthesis guide maintains a respectful attitude. The guide is not the authority or expert. The guide does not impose solutions on the client, but allows the answers to emerge from the client rather than pushing good ideas. In this way the guide accepts the timing in which feelings change and new meaning or answers are revealed. (Brown, 1983, p. 46)

Goals

With the client, the guide may set goals to help structure the process, but attachment to achieving the goals may subvert what the Transpersonal Self has in mind. Therefore, the guide and the client must be able to let go of the set goals. For this reason the guide must be aware of his own needs and biases because, from the guide's limited perspective, he does not know if any one outcome is preferable to another. The guide always works closely with the client.

Detachment

The guide needs to detach and release his client to his own destiny and allow him to take full responsibility for himself. This means allowing the client to deal with his own issues rather than doing the work for the client, thus fostering dependency.

Defense Mechanisms

The guide respects the client's defense mechanisms as legitimate ways of coping with anxiety and maintaining psychological stability.

Skills

Besides these attitudes the guide needs certain skills. The guide will need the ability to be genuine, and to work on himself. This requires dedication to self-awareness, through courage, and honesty. Being a whole person is a process. It is a journey that is never totally completed. Often the client's material evokes the guide's issues, which need to be worked out in order to be open to the client.

(Brown, 1983, p. 43)

Multifocal vision

The guide needs to develop multifocal vision. The guide needs to be aware of the client's expression of thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations as well as what is coming through from his Transpersonal Self. At the same time, the guide must be aware of his own thoughts, feelings and body sensations as well as his own Transpersonal Self and the higher functions of intuition, wisdom and compassion.

(Brown, 1983, p. 48)

Concentration and empathy

The guide needs to develop concentration and empathy. The guide makes a choice to focus on the client, and let go of his own intrusive thoughts and feelings during

the session. The guide pays attention to feelings, thoughts, imagination and intuitions that relate to the client. (Brown, 1983, p. 47)

Present

The guide needs to develop the ability to be present to the client. This means not giving in to the desire to make the client feel better in the moment. The guide doesn't need the client to change or to have a good session. (Brown, 1983, p. 49)

The guide's role is to be there and hold the space. He lets his consciousness become like a still pool of water that is waiting to reflect his client's process. (Cornell, 1996, p. 78)

Active participant

The guide needs to be an active participant. The relationship with the client is more than professional; rather, it is a mystical participation. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 21)

Being involved

The guide needs to develop the skill of being involved with his whole person. This means being open to all his resources, mental, emotional, intuitive, sensory, instinctive, and being able to respond, fully and appropriately, to the client's needs.

Listen to the inner being

The guide learns to listen to his own inner being, monitoring his emotional process and inner urges. He discerns his process to see if he is picking up subtle clues the client is giving, or if they are coming from his own inner rumblings.

Attune to energy

The guide learns to attune to the client's energy, which is expressed in subtle ways such as, skin tone, voice tones, breath, physical holding patterns and relaxation patterns expressed through the body.

Develops the mind

The guide develops his mind for it has the power to analyze, interpret and draw conclusions. A well-developed mind helps the guide respond precisely. The mind clarifies, evaluates, and determines how to express the information arising from the intuition, imagination, feelings, and sensations.

Develops imagination

The guide develops imagination because it is a rich source of information. Imagination can bring him in tune with the inner process of his client. (Brown, 1983, p. 42)

Develops intuition

The guide develops intuition because through intuition he can comprehend his client's deep needs and emerging potential and respond accordingly. (Brown, 1983, p. 42)

Seeing the bigger context

The guide learns to see the presenting problem in a much bigger context. He finds ways to reframe the client's perception of the problem to open him to finding meaning in the issue.

Two axes

The guide learns to work on the two axes, the personal and the transpersonal.

A positive philosophy of suffering

The guide develops a positive philosophy of suffering. Life is a journey and the purpose of life is to express the energies of the Transpersonal Self. Suffering is seen as an opportunity for growth. The guide sees obstacles as blessings and turns them into stepping-stones.

The client's potential

The guide learns to evoke the client's potential including transpersonal qualities.

Cultivate the client's sense of "self"

The guide learns how to cultivate the client's sense of "self." This helps the client to keep a certain distance from his issues: the client often makes one of two mistakes when working with painful issues. He either gets too close to the issue and feels overwhelmed by emotion; or he gets too far away from the issue and can only think about it. By identifying with the "self" gives him just the right amount distance.

Cultivate the client's will

The guide learns to cultivate the client's will, the capacity to make choices, which brings freedom and nourishment into the client's life.

Ten psychological laws

The guide needs to understand and implement the ten psychological laws. (Brown, 1983, p. 77)

Inner authority

The guide evokes the client's inner authority, wisdom and autonomy and thus he becomes his own best guide.

Attitude of the client

The guide is aware that whatever attitude or stance the client takes, its opposite will be evoked in the unconscious of the guide. There will be a strong unconscious drive for the guide to fill in the missing piece for the client rather than the guide providing the opposite of what the client wants. The guide helps the client evoke the missing piece within himself. If this is not done, the unity created between client and counselor is regressive. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 38)

In this exploration of the qualities and role of the guide in Psychosynthesis, I have included a number of attitudes such as being accepting, friendly, trusting, receptive and respectful. I have included a number of qualities such as being genuine, multi-visioned, empathic, present, and active. I have also included a number of skills, being able to be involved with the whole person, to listen to the client's inner being and to be attuned to the client's energy. The guide must also be able to evoke the client's potential, cultivate his sense of "self" and his inner authority.

Although this is a tall order it is feasible as the guide sets his intention, is honest, does his own work on himself and practices the attributes of the guide.

Reflection: The Qualities and Role of the Ignatian Spiritual Director and the Psychosynthesis Guide

Both Ignatius and Assagioli emphasize the importance of the relationship between the director and the retreatant, and the guide and client. The relationship must be accepting, loving and trusting. These attitudes foster safety and security which are needed by the retreatant/client to explore his/her self in-depth.

Ignatius and Assagioli also agree that the retreatant/client is responsible for the work. The director trusts Jesus to lead the retreatant to spiritual freedom, and the guide trusts the Transpersonal Self to lead the client to Self-realization. I believe Ignatius is less active than Assagioli. John Veltri 1998 speaks of letting the retreatant struggle with the issues rather than helping her work through them as a Psychosynthesis guide would do. The retreat director lets God deal with the retreatant in a more direct way. Ignatius sees the process as a shared responsibility between the director and the retreatant. The Psychosynthesis guide also trusts the Transpersonal Self to lead the process, but the guide is more apt to suggest certain exercises that will help the process to move forward.

Both Ignatius and Assagioli promote bifocal vision. The Psychosynthesis guide is aware of the client's presenting issues, feelings, thoughts, bodily sensations and, is at the same time, aware of what the Transpersonal Self is trying to bring into the personality. Ignatius is aware of the disorder that blocks spiritual freedom. He is focused also on Jesus: what He is trying to bring into the retreatant's life, and how the retreatant can join with Jesus in building the Kingdom through loving service.

Both Ignatius and Assagioli agree that guides and directors must be working on their own growth and development. The guide's role is so important that he must be reflective and listen to his inner process throughout the session. He must be able to tell when the images and intuition that arise in him are from his Transpersonal Self for the service of the client, or when they are triggers of his own issues. The same for Ignatius, the director must be in a process of spiritual development, and must be aware when her issues interfere with the spiritual freedom of the retreatant.

Both Assagioli and Ignatius expect the guide/director to be familiar with the inner territory. Both need academic knowledge and personal experience in the inner processes. It is not that all people work the same, but there are great similarities in the patterns of unfoldment that lead to spiritual freedom and Self-realization.

Chapter 5

A Path of transformation

The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola

Disposition Days

Question: St. Ignatius, will you explain about the different phases of the Spiritual Exercises?

The Spiritual Exercises are broken down into four phases, which I call weeks. In the first week the retreatant discovers God's unconditional love, which is experienced through Jesus Christ, and simultaneously, she discovers her personal sin. The second week can be understood as the retreatant's initial and immediate response to the love and call offered by Jesus Christ the King, who invites the retreatant to labor in, and for, the kingdom of God. In the third week, through a series of meditations on the passion of Christ, the retreatant finds her relationship with Jesus tested, deepened and strengthened. In the fourth week the retreatant, through a series of meditations, experiences the risen Lord in His victory. The retreatant is confirmed in her relationship, and experiences a deep love, which she desires to share with all of humanity. (Langstaff, 1995, p. 196 – 203)

In my day, the early 1500's, I gave the Spiritual Exercise only to people I felt were well disposed for the Spiritual Experience. Today, the exercises often begin with what the Jesuits call the Disposition Days. This initial phase is an attempt to prepare the retreatant to enter into the Spiritual Exercises as fully as possible. I will explain each week in detail, but let me begin with the Disposition Days.

The Disposition Days are intended to prepare the retreatant for the Spiritual Exercises and to dispose her for "spiritual freedom." Spiritual freedom is the goal

of the Spiritual Exercises. The purpose of the Spiritual Exercises is to conquer any disordered tendencies, and have the freedom to submit to the will of God.

Spiritual freedom exists in those moments when the retreatant is so filled with love for God that all the desires of her heart, and all the affectivity, thoughts, decisions and actions that flow from these desires, are oriented towards God.

I came to realize, through my own conversion experience, that real joy comes from spiritual freedom. Through spiritual freedom, the retreatant enters into union with God and is thus free to do His will in service for others. The concept of spiritual freedom is paradoxical. In order for the retreatant to be free, she must give up control.

Therefore, the director's hope is that the retreatant will come to appreciate the importance of spiritual freedom. In order to do this, she must first understand the concept of spiritual freedom, indifference, and detachment, and how these relate to the Christian life. Secondly, the retreatant must cultivate a desire to become spiritually free. And thirdly, the retreatant must come to a practical awareness of the areas in her life in which she needs to grow in freedom.

For example the retreatant may need to become aware of:

1. Her self-centeredness, which can trivialize God's call.
2. Her inordinate attachments, which affect her decision-making process.
3. Any excessive need for nurturing.
4. Her fears and anxieties, which interfere with the use of her gifts for others.
5. The need to expand her horizons of church and the human family.
6. Her social responsibilities.
7. Her fixated idea about her role in society. (Veltri, 1998, p. 40)

The scripture says "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free."

This bible passage from the gospel of Saint John is the overall rubric under which

the Spiritual Exercises function. However, some truths are very hard to take, and cannot be deeply received, unless there is an atmosphere of safety in which the retreatant is loved, accepted and transformed.

A major function of the Disposition Days is to ensure that such a safe place exists so that the retreatant may have a secure sense that freedom is really possible.

Without this sense, it is too difficult, or even impossible, to assimilate the subject matter that will come later in the Spiritual Exercises.

It is the director's hope that the retreatant will come to a sense of comfort with: 1. The use of her imagination in prayer, and 2. Letting unconscious thoughts, feelings, and sensations into her awareness, and being able to share them with God and her director.

During the Disposition Days, it is important that the retreatant understand that spiritual freedom is not earned by her hard work. Spiritual freedom is a gift, and is the work of God. Spiritual freedom flows from the experience of being loved and forgiven. It is also very important to come to understand that spiritual freedom is not an end in itself; rather spiritual freedom is a means to a deeper union with Jesus, and a total surrender to God's will.

In order to help the retreatant come to a point of spiritual freedom, a number of things have to happen during these disposition days. The director needs to set the stage, and instruct the retreatant in a number of things. From this input, it is hoped that the retreatant's attitude will begin to transform.

The first action of the director is to establish a good rapport with the retreatant, and create a safe place in which the retreatant can share freely in a non-judgmental and respectful environment.

During this preparation time, the context of the exercises is established. The Spiritual Exercises take place in the context of faith. The director is a person of faith and the retreatant is a person of faith. The director makes it clear that, although she is a facilitator, it is the Holy Spirit who leads the process of the Spiritual Exercises.

In these preparation days, it is important to set up a useful structure. After all, the Spiritual Exercises are basically a structured prayer experience, and it is the structure that opens the retreatant to the graces of the retreat experience. The structure gives a touchstone for discerning and evaluating where the retreatant is on this journey. If the director knows what is being prayed upon, what the time commitment is, and what Grace is being sought, then she has a way of understanding what is happening in the retreatant's subjective experience.

During this preparation time the director introduces the retreatant to a number of skills and concepts, which will be needed throughout the Spiritual Exercises. They are as follows:

1. How to prepare for a prayer period.
2. How to dispose herself to receive God's gifts.
3. How to pray using scripture for 45-60 minutes.
4. How to relax in prayer.
5. How to allow God to take the initiative in prayer.
6. How to cultivate an open attitude towards life.
7. How to understand life as mystery rather than a problem.
8. How to recognize and accept gifts and weaknesses.
9. How to desire God's grace.
10. How to have an understanding of the "Principle and Foundation."
11. How to have some understanding of what it means to be spiritually free.
12. How to have a sense of God's holiness.

The length of time spent on the Disposition Days is unpredictable; some retreatants will need a very short time and others will need a very long time. The retreatant must understand the concepts, and have mastered the skills explained above. She must also have received the grace of being a creature, and at the same time, know that she is loved unconditionally by God. This cannot be a mere notional belief. She must truly experience herself as “a beloved creature,” totally dependent on a nurturing God who is present now. When this happens, she will become deeply aware of how her personal history and God's involvement intersect. (Veltri, 1998, p.1 –76) At this point she is ready to enter into the first week of the Spiritual exercises.

Summary

In conclusion, let me say that the Disposition Days are a period of preparation for the Spiritual Exercises. The purpose of the Spiritual Exercises is to conquer disordered tendencies and attain spiritual freedom, thus submitting to God's will.

During these Disposition Days the retreatant realizes the importance of spiritual freedom. She begins to desire spiritual freedom and becomes aware of her need for growth. She also realizes that she cannot earn spiritual freedom, but rather, it is a gift from God.

The director's role is to cultivate an atmosphere of safety that encourages the retreatant to be comfortable with her imagination, unconscious thoughts, feelings and sensations. The director also introduces a number of skills and concepts that I mentioned earlier. The first week of the Spiritual Exercises begins when these tasks are completed.

The First Week of the Spiritual Exercises

The classical Christian spiritual stages of development are purification, illumination, confirmation, and union. In the Spiritual Exercises, I name the stages as purification, illumination, confirmation in suffering, and confirmation in joy. These four stages represent the four weeks of the Spiritual Exercises.

The First Week of the Exercises is concerned with purification. This stage generally lasts from seven to nine days. Remember the "Weeks" are not calendar weeks; they are stages of growth, sometimes called the "seasons of the soul." The Spiritual Exercises are a time for doing definite personal tasks and opening to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

During this first stage the retreatant prays for the grace to know that God loves her unconditionally. To know what it means to be a creature, and to know what it means to be a redeemed sinner.

In this first week of the Spiritual Exercises the retreatant purifies herself from sin, that is, from disordered attachments. If the retreatant makes a decision under the influence of sin and disorder, she moves away from God. However, if she frees herself from sin and disorder, she experiences spiritual freedom and her decisions move her towards God's will.

When the retreatant is free of disorder, God comes first, then, the human person, all other creatures, and the earth. To be free, the retreatant must order her life to be in alignment with God's will. Human beings have a way of "mixing up" that order. The retreatant tends to put creatures before the human person; she tends to put the human person before God. When she gets that hierarchy out of order, that is sinfulness as far as I am concerned. I think it is a great way to think about sin. Some people think of sin as hurting God, but this isn't helpful; the retreatant just

ends up feeling guilt and shame. When sin is seen as disorder, the retreatant can pray and work towards ordering things in their proper hierarchy and thus experience spiritual freedom.

During this first week the spirit of God leads the retreatant into a profound experience of sin. The retreatant begins to feel totally unworthy of God, a sense of helplessness and hopelessness wells up. She feels as though she has botched up her life. She feels lost and lonely. She may recall specific sins with great remorse. The retreatant begins to see the misery of the world around her: war, despair, violence, and poverty. The retreatant feels the enormity of evil and her own helplessness. She enters into a state of desolation, as I like to call it.

The retreatant may stay in this experience of desolation for a number of days. These feelings motivate the retreatant to call to God for help. She recognizes herself as a creature in need of her God. It may take days, but eventually, the retreatant begins to feel the “good news” of Jesus. She begins to experience in the deepest recesses of her being. “I am a loved sinner.” When this realization deepens, the retreatant often sheds tears of joy. She says, “I have nothing to fear; God loves me with all my warts and moles.” “I no longer need to fear others or myself.” With this realization the retreatant can deal with life in a more mature manner. This experience often leads the retreatant to want to share the good news with everyone in the world. (Barry, 1973, p. 98)

The retreatant now knows that God loves her in any circumstance, even the circumstance of serious sin. God loves the retreatant no matter how dumb or how smart she is, no matter how pretty or how ugly she is. God loves her, not with a contractual love; but with a covenant love. God does not love her only if she gets her act together; God loves her no matter what.

The director asks the retreatant "Do you know in your bones that God loves you in any situation, that you are precious and honored in God's sight?" The grace received in this first week is to know she is loved personally, individually, and by name, despite her sinfulness. This inner knowing leads to a deep gratitude towards God.

The dynamic of this first week moves the retreatant into an experience of:

1. Being loved unconditionally.
2. Being a needy creature in need of God.
3. Being a forgiven sinner.
4. Being called to participate in building the kingdom of God as a co-laborer with God. (Schemel, 2000, p. 171)

Paradoxically, in confronting sin, the presence of God becomes more visible; causing an aversion to everything that is not of God. In the first week the retreatant moves from awareness, confusion and sorrow to a response of deep gratitude and love. The grace of the first week emerges when the retreatant's desires come gradually into greater harmony with God's will and desire.

The goal of the entire progression of the first week is to stand naked before God, not in order to be terrified at her nakedness, but in order to find God's love to be the only real security she needs. This is a love that accepts her as she is, even while she is afraid to face and accept herself. Through this experience of God loving her just as she is, she comes to love herself, and allows others to love her also. (Dyckman, 2001, p. 154)

Question: St. Ignatius, now that you have explained what happens during the first week will you tell me how you facilitate this movement of grace?

The content of the first week consists of the following meditations:

1. The Principle and Foundation.
2. Understanding and accepting humans as creatures.
3. Sin and sinfulness on a cosmic, personal, and social level.
4. Redemption and mercy.
5. The Kingdom.
6. The rules for discernment.

The movement of grace is facilitated through meditations, and learning to discern spirits. The focus of the meditations during this week is on sin and sinfulness. Each day there are five one-hour meditations. The first one begins at midnight, followed by one in the early morning, late morning, in the afternoon and finally, one in the evening.

Meditations

The first meditation

The First Meditation is made at midnight. The retreatant gets up from sleep after quieting down from the day, and makes her one-hour meditation, and then returns to sleep. You may feel it is harsh asking a retreatant to break her sleep to pray, but I assure you she will learn things in the silence of the night that she cannot learn during the day.

The subject matter of this exercise is the “the triple sin”: The sin of the angels, original sin, that is the sin of Adam and Eve, and the sin of an ordinary person. (Pousset, 1980, p. 30)

The retreatant begins her meditation by asking for the grace of shame and confusion. Shame in the fact that she does reinforce the sinfulness of the world, and confusion in so far as it shakes up her worldview.

Meditating on the sin of the angels is an attempt to realize how evil entered into the world. Today many people deny the reality of evil. By understanding how the angel's committed sin helps the retreatant understand her own sinful nature. Basically sin is a disorder. It is a rejection of God's gifts. Sin is not listening or surrendering to God; in short, sin is the refusal to let God in.

St. Gregory of Nyssa provides a metaphor that helps explain the deep nature of sin. He says, "imagine a big mirror receiving the energy of the sun and transmitting this light to other mirrors, which in turn transmit the light to others. Now imagine that the big mirror becomes aware of its own dependence on the sun, the source of light, and begins to feel slighted. Imagine the big mirror refusing to receive light from the sun because it wants itself to be, for itself and for others, the only source of light. As a consequence of refusing to receive the light, the mirror becomes dark." (Cowen, p. 38, 2000)

Through this meditation on sin the retreatant comes to know that all is gift. Unless the retreatant accepts her status as "creature," surrenders to God, and receives His light, she will become dark and be cut off from God.

Through her experience of meditating on the triple sin, she comes to know that she is totally and utterly dependent on God. (Cowan, p.38-39, 2000)

Meditation on Adam and Eve

There is a whole theology of sin and sinfulness contained in the story of Adam and Eve. It is an archetypal story to explain why things are so difficult here on earth. The reason why things are so difficult on earth is because Adam and Eve refused to listen to God, and in turn, we refuse to listen to God.

The retreatant identifies with the idea of refusing to listen to God. She comes to know in a deep way that God gave her free will. She becomes aware that she has

the capacity to refuse to listen, and thus, to sin. Along with the gift of freedom come an awesome responsibility, and the capacity to sin. It says in the Bible "I put before you a blessing and a curse - choose life." (Deut: 30:15) The notion of choice is very important in the spiritual life. The retreatant can find many examples in Scripture of people choosing. Some choose to listen and others refuse. Sin is refusing to listen. Listening is being able to discern what God is saying, even in the still small voice. Discernment is the opposite of the refusal to listen.

The Meditation on One Person Going to Hell

In this meditation the retreatant reflects on one person going to hell for one mortal sin. The retreatant needs to know that this does not mean a single act. People have to build up to such a mortal act. The retreatant is aware of certain destructive compulsive patterns called "Capital Sins." Being compelled by a capital sin may begin in a small way, but often it leads to bigger ways until, eventually, the person is controlled by the compulsion. The capital sin then becomes a way of life. It grows in the person. It becomes lethal to the person and eventually, destroys her. Saint John of the Cross says that unless you get control of your passions, they will destroy you. (Tetlow, 1992, p. 71)

During this meditation, the retreatant becomes aware of the magnitude of disorder in the world and within herself. She comes to know that sin is working against her transformation in Christ, which is willed by the Father. As she reflects on the starving people of the world, the plight of the refugees and the evil in the judicial system, she comes to know that sin is very real. The retreatant wants to be aware of sin on this level. She seeks to know sinful structures when she comes upon them. After completing this meditation, she can no longer look at sinful structures and systems and shrug her shoulders. She realizes that this is not the way things have to be, and she resolves to actively work against sin and sinful structures.

The second meditation

Early in the morning the retreatant contemplates her own salvation history within her own human biography, seeing where she sinned. She begins by looking at the reality of her own sinfulness. She reflects on the sins she has committed during her lifetime, and identifies the patterns of sin in her life. She looks at the gravity of her sin, and her ability or inability to respond to God. She calls to mind the sins of her life, reviewing her life year-by-year, and period-by-period. Three things will help her in this: she considers the place where she lived; secondly, she reflects on her dealings with others; thirdly, she looks at the offices she has held and the people she worked with. (Schemel, 2000, p. 160)

As you can see this meditation is not simply an examination of conscience. It is a reflection on a unique relationship; her sinning and God's merciful love. She is begging God to let her know the disorder, the sin, the brokenness in her response to God's gifts. At this point, she prays for an intense sorrow and tears for her sins.

This sorrow for her sins gives way to a deep inner peace. She experiences her sin, but also the reality of God's love for her. She says with sorrow and joy "I am a sinner infinitely loved by God."

She looks carefully at her own sin, her refusal to hear God, and the breaking of her own personal relationship with God's personal love for her. To know herself as sinner is liberating because she becomes aware of her sins in the context of a loving, faithful God. Thus she can look "head on" at her sinfulness, knowing that she is a loved sinner. Consequently, she can love herself and allow others to love her despite everything. This experience fills her with peaceful gratitude. (Tetlow, 1992, p. 70)

The third meditation

This third meditation is done later in the morning and is extremely important. It introduces the retreatant to the technique of “repetition.” Repetition is a key technique; It fosters spiritual reactions that lie at the heart of the Spiritual Exercises. Prayer exercises and repetition allow the retreatant’s interior reactions and responses to unfold their inherent meaning. Repetition helps the retreatant to be in touch with God's movements that take place in her heart.

During this third Meditation, the retreatant is introduced to the technique of the “triple colloquy.” This technique helps the retreatant to grow in enlightenment and freedom, so that she can become free enough to receive the gifts that God desires to give her. The Triple Colloquy helps the retreatant remove blockages and detects disordered tendencies in her heart, which undermine her decision-making process.

By the use of the triple colloquy, the retreatant 's prayer becomes a continual conversation in genuine intimacy. This intimacy helps the retreatant look at the evil in the choices of her life and helps her to do something concrete about it. (Veltri, 1998, p. 94)

The grace sought in this meditation is three-fold:

1. The knowledge of her sins: This is not just a neutral knowledge from personal reflection, but rather it is a spiritual knowledge given by God. She desires to know the power of sin within her.
2. The understanding of the disorder of her actions: To really understand her desire for possessions, for honor and for life. She discerns which desires are in alignment with God’s will for her, and which lead her to resist the call of Christ and lead her to seek independent satisfaction.

3. The knowledge of the world, the ability to recognize the sinfulness of the world, and to see the darkness in history: She asks for this grace in order to discern that which leads her to death and that which leads her to the dynamic light of God. (Cowan, 1993)

This third meditation invites the retreatant to explore deeper levels of beingness.

At level one, the retreatant explores her activities and becomes aware, or at least semi-aware, of the things she does that she doesn't want to do. (Rom 7:15) She becomes aware of her sins, faults, and actions, which flow from the disordered tendencies in her heart. It includes those behaviors and approaches that directly affect others: being a nice person all the time, keeping the peace at all costs, being overly sensitive, expressing herself in overpowering ways, rigidly expecting conformity, bullying, judging, grasping, cheating, nagging, demanding, and working too hard.

At level two, the retreatant becomes aware of what is traditionally called the seven deadly sins, pride, lust, envy, anger, sloth, gluttony, and avarice. She reflects on these underlying drives, tendencies and compulsions, which energize her attitudes and actions of level one. Being just below the surface, these sins can usually be discovered by self-reflection.

At level three, through the grace of God the retreatant discovers her hidden disordered tendencies. For the most part, they are invisible to the retreatant until God reveals them to her. She lacks awareness of their presence and their effects on the ways she behaves and makes choices. When she begins to recognize them, she does not fully appreciate their pervasiveness. Unaware of their influence in her life, she thinks that some of the choices she makes are in harmony with God's desires for her, but in reality, these choices are sometimes skewed. This is a painful stage, but when dealt with, it brings enormous freedom.

At level four, the retreatant comes to recognize that sin dwells within her. This is known, in Christian theology, as the effects of original sin.

At level five, the retreatant becomes aware of the subliminal images that influence her on an unconscious level and prevent her from making free choices to follow God's will. (Veltri, 1998, p. 97-98)

In summary then, the goal of the third meditation is to assist the retreatant to understand how her own hidden disordered tendencies affect her decision-making and choices.

The fourth meditation

The fourth exercise is a repetition, but this repetition is of a different kind. Instead of going back to individual points of her previous prayer, the retreatant is asked to make a prayerful synthesis of the orientation of the entire series of movements and of insights from the work done to date. It is a deepening of her experience; it helps her orient herself more and more to the movement of the spirit. (Tetlow, 1992, p. 71)

The fifth meditation

The retreatant completes this movement of darkness by carrying it to its logical terminal point. I propose a meditation on hell. I use medieval imagery, which may not fit so well today, but I believe that the grace she will receive will be well worth her effort. The retreatant chooses heaven or hell, life or death, by all the choices she has made in her lifetime. Hell, by choosing against God, and Heaven, by choosing for God.

During this meditation, the retreatant prays to experience the pain, which the damned suffer. She holds before her the consequences of a life of disorder. She also prays for motivation that can support her movement to God.

With the fundamental knowledge that she can reject the love of God, she moves into a state of gratitude for the love and protection of God. (Tetlow, 1992, p. 71)

It is in the meditation on hell that I introduce the technique known as the “application of the senses.” I have the retreatant use all her senses to get deeper into the meditation on hell. I have her smell the sulfur, feel the heat, and thus for each of her five senses.

Although this meditation on Hell may seem negative and destructive, it is not. It is a meditation that brings the retreatant into the awareness of God's faithful protection and kindness. When the retreatant finishes the meditation she can pray, “I thank God that, up to this very moment, He has shown me His face, so loving and full of mercy towards me.” This meditation disposes the retreatant to appreciate that from which she is being saved. The retreatant experiences an overwhelming appreciation of how God has been nurturing her all along the way. Hopefully the retreatant will realize just how much she needs God, not only for her continued growth in love, but also, for her ongoing responsibility in cooperating with others in the establishment of the kingdom of God through her conscious choices. (Veltri, 1998, p. 113)

Question: As the retreatant comes to the end of week one, what are some of the signs you look for that tell you the retreatant is ready to enter into the Second Week?

If the retreatant experienced a number of the following graces I usually lead them into the second week.

1. A deep-felt experience of God's acceptance and mercy.
2. A desire to know her personal benefactor more.
3. Gratitude with a readiness to serve in any way God might call.

4. The experience of some pain at having looked at herself.
5. A sense of peace in her own sinfulness.
6. An experience of Jesus as personal savior.
7. The experience of sin as impotence, with a deepening realization that she is helpless without the power of Jesus.
8. A certain amount of recognition that she has been hard-hearted.
9. Greater freedom in prayer as it comes from her heart.
10. A deepening of the contemplative attitude.
11. A greater honesty and simplicity. (Veltri, 1998, p. 112)

Rules for Discernment in the First Week

Besides guiding the retreatant through these meditations the director also teaches the retreatant the First Week Rules for Discernment. The whole thrust of the Spiritual Exercises is to get free enough to be able to discern and choose to do God's will. The rules of the first week are a description of how consolation and desolation work in the retreatant's life.

The director adds insights and rules for discernment as the retreatant moves through the developmental stages of the Spiritual Exercises. The first set of rules are for the retreatant who is concerned with matters such as the love of God, who am I, who is God, what does it mean to be redeemed, and what does it mean to be a creature?

This first set of rules for discernment are actually guidelines and observations about what happens to the retreatant as she goes through the dynamics of the first week. They are really more characteristics, or descriptions, rather than rules in the sense of a law.

The director speaks about discerning spirits. Let me say what I mean by the word "spirits." Spirits are spontaneous movements of affectivity. I am not making

statements here about devils or angels or some kind of external being. I am concerned with spontaneous movements of affectivity that come up in the retreatant's heart. The director teaches the retreatant to sort through these movements and discern them. The word "discern" comes from a Latin word that means "to sift through" or "to sort out." In discernment the retreatant is sifting through the movements of affectivity in her heart to see where God might be leading her.

The director will speak of the good spirits and the dark spirits. People who are not interested in God and purification experience the spirits differently from people who are seeking God. When persons who are not trying to be in God's presence are moving from one deadly compulsive urge to another, the spirit of darkness is upon them. They experience that spirit of darkness as filling them with delights and gratifications. However, these delights never satisfy. These people are trying to get their needs met in all the wrong places.

When the good spirit is upon the same people, they experience God's presence as a sting of conscience, as a sting of remorse, as an insight, a light of reason that says, "Ah, maybe what you are doing is not healthy for you."

The experience is different for those retreatants who are earnestly seeking God. For the retreatant who is earnestly striving to cleanse her soul from sin, and who seeks to serve the Lord, the opposite of the above description is true. For sincere retreatants the spirit of darkness will manifest itself as anxiety, and sadness. Things seem murky, and the retreatant will feel very disturbed.

The director will recognize when the devout retreatant is under the influence of the spirit of darkness because she will feel anxious, worried, and sad. On the other hand, when the spirit of goodness influences her, she will experience a sense of courage, strength, certitude, peace and joy.

When the good spirits influences the retreatant, she is in a state of consolation, and when influenced by the dark spirits, she is in a state of desolation. When the retreatant is in a state of consolation, it is more than feeling good about life. Consolation is always oriented to the love of God and the service of humankind. Consolation is faith, hope, love, and joy. Consolation attracts that which is heavenly. In the state of consolation there may be tears, but if there are, they urge the retreatant to the love of God, or a sense of sorrow for sin, or move her towards the love and the service of God and neighbor.

Desolation, therefore, is exactly the opposite of Consolation. Basic to all forms of desolation are a lack of faith, a lack of hope, and a lack of love. Whenever the retreatant finds herself lacking faith, lacking hope, lacking love, she is in a spirit of desolation.

The word desolation is not simply feeling down. It is something more than an affective state. The retreatant experiences darkness, turmoil, restlessness, being slothful, being tepid, being sad or feeling separated. All these affective states can accompany the lack of faith, hope or love.

In times of desolation, it is important not to make any life changes, remain firm and constant in the resolution and decision made before the desolation set in. The only time for making a decision is in the midst of consolation: when the retreatant is in touch with such basics as, who God is, who she is, and her mission in life. Fortified by faith, hope, and love, she is able to make her decisions in alignment with God's will. Ideally, her decisions should come out of the very best that is in her, rather than coming out of her desolation.

It is important to work against the desolation. In working against desolation the retreatant can pray, meditate and examine herself. Another way to fight desolation is to do penance. To find the proper type of penance she asks herself:

how has my spirit been wounded? When she gets in touch with how her spirit has been wounded, she has some idea about what penance is right for her. The penance should focus on healing that area of her life that is wounded. For example, if she is the type of person who is constantly overworked and dashing from one thing to another, she may find herself with a very weary spirit. In this case she can design a suitable penance to act against that particular desolation. In this case, she would take the time and the stillness that she needs, so that she is not so frenzied, overworked and compelled.

Another important method in dealing with desolation is to remain faithful to the examination of consciousness each day. In times of desolation the retreatant must be bold. She must take an assertive position toward the desolation. She must also avoid secretiveness. She needs to find somebody to talk to and get her concern and worry out in the open. And lastly, she needs to know and defend her weak side. She should know where her own desolations come from and know some tactics to take care of the desolation. She must be ready to face those particular desolations.

There are some reasons why retreatants suffer desolation. The director may suggest that, at times, God is withdrawing grace from the retreatant in order to test her. Sometimes desolation is upon the retreatant because of her own fault. She may have been careless, or she may have been lazy or neglectful.

Second, desolation tests the retreatant's faithfulness. When she is in desolation, for whatever reason, it is an occasion for fidelity. It is an occasion for being patient and remaining faithful.

Thirdly, persevering in desolation brings about a certain humility and detachment. In the midst of desolation the retreatant is reminded that she cannot of herself

produce great devotion. She realizes that loving God and being fervent are truly graces.

Another way to fight against desolation is to reflect, while in a state of consolation, how she will conduct herself during the time of ensuing desolation. She can plan what she will do, and she will store up a supply of strength as defense against that day.

When the retreatant finds herself in a state of consolation, she should take care to be humble and to be as realistic about herself as possible. Remembering how little she can do when grace is not upon her. This attitude will save her from spiritual pride.

All these rules apply to the First Week, when the retreatant is searching for her own identity, what it means to be loved by God, what it means to be a creature, how sin and sinfulness come into her life, and specifically, how personally she needs to be redeemed. Ultimately, the First Week Rules of Discernment help the retreatant take responsibility for her own affectivity. (Veltri, 1998, p. 417ff)

Summary

In spiritual growth, there is a necessary focus on self-identity. The transformation movement of this first week may be captured in the phrase, “from self-focus to God-focus.” The grace of the first week is one of being caught up in the love of God. The retreatant’s response to this gift is to look at the giver of the gift. Her attention is drawn away from herself to God. This focus allows the retreatant to move from thinking about what she is getting to what she can give. The grace of the first week moves the retreatant into an attitude of gratitude.

Many retreatants come to the Spiritual Exercise caught up in self-focus. There seems to be a great need for security and identity. Many speculate on what causes

such individualism, but the reality seems to be pretty clear that people in our society are infected with individualism and self-focus. It is this stance that is challenged in the first week. The call of transformation is from self-focus to God-focus. This transformation movement is so basic to Christian living that the retreatant has to return to it again and again. As the director guides the retreatant through this week, she must be careful not to pronounce what this transformation movement will look like. The exercise only prepares the ground for the great gardener; it is God who does the work. (Fleming, 1996, p. 77)

The Second Week of the Spiritual Exercises

The retreatant moves from the first week of purification into the second week of Illumination. (Veltri, 1989, p. 610) The goal of the second week, through contemplation of the human life of Jesus Christ, is for the retreatant to open herself to the gradual transformation of her deep operational attitudes into the attitudes of Jesus, which are explained in the beatitudes. The retreatant also deepens her ability to discern. She attunes herself to God's call and becomes a laborer with Jesus to bring in the Kingdom. During this week, the retreatant grows in passionate personal love of Jesus, so that she can follow Jesus wherever He goes, even to Calvary and the cross. (Cowen, 1993)

This second week centers on the kingdom of Christ. Christ is the eternal King who calls each retreatant to distinguished service in building the kingdom and working for redemption. The retreatant opens herself to the call of the King and learns to be prompt and diligent to accomplish the King's most holy will. The high point for the retreatant during the second week is when she receives intimate knowledge of her Lord so that she may love and follow him in a deeper way.

Many forms of mysticism focus on loving union with God, but the path on which the director will lead the retreatant does not end with union; the focus is on

service, doing God's will. Therefore, during this second week the director cultivates an attitude of generosity, respect, and courage, in the retreatant. By the end of the second week the retreatant will be a loyal soldier and loving servant who wishes only to discern God's will and give herself totally to God. (Egan, 1984, p. 38)

In the second week the retreatant no longer stands under the cross of the defeated Jesus. She walks with him as He brings the good news to towns and villages. Her understanding of herself moves subtly from that of a sinner being passively saved to a loved sinful person invited to labor beside the Great King in His great enterprise. These deep shifts in consciousness grow out of her changing relationship with Jesus. (Tetlow, 1992, p. 89.)

The retreatant's decision-making powers deepen during this second week. Her spirituality becomes a spirituality of choice at the level of faith. There is a great emphasis on discernment and decision-making during this stage.

Decision-making is the cutting edge of fidelity. The retreatant sees herself united with God as a co-worker as He labors in the world building His Kingdom. The retreatant chooses to labor with Christ in building the Kingdom by the quality of her decision-making. It is not enough for her to rest in loving union with God. She must take the graces and gifts of God and bring them into everyday life in a tangible way. This is the key to the second week. The retreatant will incarnate her consolations. She will live from her deep relationship with Christ making the gifts of God real in history just as Christ Jesus made his consolation real in history.

The director facilitates this movement to union and service by guiding the retreatant to contemplate the life of Christ. In this stage the retreatant puts on the mind and heart of Christ. She is contemplating Christ in the different events of scripture and learning from Him. She is being illuminated by His way of thinking,

His way of doing things. He is the Word from the Father and the retreatant is being taught and illumined by the Word made Flesh.

The director urges the retreatant to get into the mystery of Christ, or better yet, to let the mystery of Christ get into the mind and affect of the retreatant, so that the meaning of the gospel events can work its transformation on the retreatant. When the retreatant is well prepared after the first week, the Lord can work on the whole person, her mind, will, imagination, and affect.

As she is affected by the mysteries in the life of Christ, and is transformed on every level of her being, she will begin to focus on the election. Election is from a Spanish word meaning "to choose." During the Spiritual Exercises the retreatant is often led to respond to the call of God and choose a permanent way of life, or choose the best way to live out of a way of life that is already chosen; or the election can be on some other major decision that the retreatant is facing.

The director generally gives the retreatant ample time for this second stage of the Spiritual Exercise, usually around twelve days.

Question: St. Ignatius, How does the retreatant enter into the second week so she will receive the graces?

The director strategically introduces the retreatant to a number of meditations that are designed to dispose the retreatant to the graces of the second week. They include the "Call of the King," the "Two standards," the "Three classes of people," and the "three ways of being humble." Besides spending time on these meditations, the retreatant also meditates on the life of Jesus starting with His incarnation, birth, and childhood, then moving into His public life and mission.

Meditations

The call of the king

The director helps the retreatant make the transition from the first week of purification to the second week of Illumination by using the meditation "The Call of The King." This meditation uses medieval imagery. During my life, Spain was about to be united under one King and many people willingly and joyfully gave their life for that king. The meditation "The Call of the King" is based on this personal experience.

The purpose of this meditation is to order the retreatant's life in the service of the Kingdom of God. The retreatant is lead to discover Jesus Christ as a living person who focuses and unifies all her desires, which give her life meaning as she surrenders to Jesus and does whatever He asks. To work for Jesus without seeking objectives for herself is to live in the Kingdom of God.

The retreatant reflects on the parable of the King. (See Appendix for the parable of the King) The relationship between a king and his vassal was very strong, and the vassal entered into this relationship freely. The relationship was sealed by a pledge. The retreatant immerses herself into the parable and begins to understand the relationship between the earthly king and his vassal. It is a relationship of mutually offering protection and friendship, and being provider and leader.

After reflecting on this earthly king, the retreatant turns to reflect on the true king, Christ the Lord. She projects the same qualities of the earthly king onto Jesus, and she makes a pledge of her fidelity to Him.

Following the Call of the King meditation, the retreatant is asked to spend approximately three days contemplating the Incarnation and the infancy of Jesus. (Tetlow, 1992, p. 96-97) As the retreatant reflects on the life of Jesus, the contemplation leads her into an intimate knowledge of Jesus. She begins to think like Jesus, feel what Jesus felt, and want what Jesus desires.

As the retreatant learns about Jesus, she also learns about herself. As she comes to know Jesus more intimately she comes to know herself more intimately. She is learning who she is in Christ as she walks with him, through the events of His life. She comes to know more and more clearly what she authentically wants. During these Gospel contemplations, she begs God to give her the grace to know Jesus Christ, to love Jesus Christ and to follow Jesus Christ. (Cowan, 1993, p. 72)

The two standards

This meditation is similar to the Call of the King. Human existence is a struggle between light and darkness, life and death, truth and lie. During this meditation the retreatant meditates on two opposing strategies. The strategy of the evil one attempts to turn the retreatant away from God's love and lead her into hell. The evil standard aims to destroy freedom, it distorts will and increases the desire for power, prestige and material possessions. The evil one tries to teach the retreatant to dote on the material things she has. She then becomes convinced that she has a right to these things. Once she is convinced that she has a right to all those things, she has chosen to depend on herself for happiness. She becomes the center of her life. Such disorder leads her into darkness.

Jesus presents the retreatant with a different strategy. Jesus invites the retreatant to follow Him. He invites her to see that everything she has is a gift from Him. The retreatant realizes that she does not depend on any creature but only on her Creator. She surrenders with joy to whatever God wants for her. She is comfortable with wealth or with poverty, fame or dishonor, health or sickness.

During this meditation the retreatant begs God for the grace of lucidity and spiritual intelligence, these graces will help her labor with Christ, here and now, to bring the kingdom of God into being. (Tetlow ,1992, p.106)

Three classes of people

This exercise leads the retreatant back into the Principle and Foundation at a deeper level. This prepares the retreatant for making her election, to respond generously to her call.

The grace sought during this meditation is for the freedom to respond generously to God's call. The director wants the retreatant to react vigorously against any resistance to the call of the Lord. The retreatant prays for the grace to be able to make her interior, affective detachment so real that she can live it out concretely in her life. The retreatant is seeking to transcend all inordinate dependencies and seeks to experience full awareness of her absolute dependence on God, enabling her to make choices for God's service and to act upon them.

The three kinds of humility

The three kinds of humility represent three degrees of centering on God, three degrees of indifference or detachment, three degrees of love and three degrees of self-giving.

The "first" kind of humility is when the retreatant lives her life in a way whereby she keeps all of God's commandments and loves God to the point of never wanting to be separate from Him.

The "second" kind of humility is when the retreatant loves God so much that she avoids all deliberate sin. She avoids selfishness and looks for ways to love better. She seeks indifference and detachment, and works hard at taming her unruly appetites. The source of all her choices is solely the love of God.

The "third" kind of humility is when the retreatant moves to a deeper level of personal love for Jesus Christ. This retreatant knows how to fall in love. She desires to be with Jesus and to be like Jesus. As this kind of love moves naturally

into acts, she can freely embrace, poverty, humiliation and the cross. Living such a surrendered life brings joy to her deepest self. (Tetlow ,1992, p. 107)

Following the meditations on the three types of humility the director leads the retreatant into meditations on the public life of Jesus. She begins with His baptism and then walks with Him as he spreads the Kingdom of God. These second week meditations end with the transfiguration of Jesus.

Election - choice

During the second week, the director gives the retreatant some norms about making decisions, making an election, a choice. Election sometimes involves choosing a vocation, as a single person, as a married person, or becoming a religious or a priest. However, the election does not always involve choosing a vocation. The retreatant may be choosing between different options concerning life style, the use of money, a career, or a relationship. Decisions are often the concrete matters in which true conversion of heart takes place.

The grace of choice comes in three different kinds of experience. In the first type, God so moves and attracts the will that the retreatant responds without hesitation to whatever she has been called to do. Some biblical examples of this type of call and choice can be found in the life of St. Paul and St. Matthew. They both had a powerful experience of God, and responded totally and completely to that call.

This type of experience is a time of great grace. It is a time in which God enters the issue. God and the object of choice are seen as one entity, and the retreatant chooses God. This is a time of mystical grace. This type of call is not necessarily rare, but the retreatant cannot count on this kind of clarity and grace to help her make choices on a daily basis.

The Second type of experience of making a good choice comes in the light and understanding that is gained through the experience of desolations, consolations and discernment of diverse spirits. For instance, as the retreatant prays over her election, she experiences many movements of spirit. She makes her choice based on the information she receives from listening deeply to the movements within her heart. If she imagines herself choosing this course of action she notices how she feels. She asks, "Do I feel desolation, separated from God or do I feel consolation and close to God." The retreatant may spend a great deal of time in this type of listening and sifting through her inner movements.

The Third experience of choosing is a time of faith and tranquility. The retreatant holds in her mind the purpose of her life and simply makes decisions that support that purpose. This type of decision is made in tranquility. The retreatant is not knocked off her feet. She is not gaining light and understanding by sorting through her experiences of consolation, desolation and the discernment of diverse spirits. The retreatant simply makes a decision that supports her life purpose. (Tetlow, 1992, p.117ff)

Rules for Discernment in the Second Week

During the first week of the Spiritual Exercises the director gave the retreatant some rules to help her discern spiritual influences. During this second week the director will give the retreatant more rules that will deepen her ability to discern these movements. The second week rules are for the devout retreatant who knows she is loved by God, who has prayed over the Principle and Foundation; who knows that she is created and that all the other creatures on the face of the earth are created to help her move towards union with God and service. She has looked at and prayed over sin, sinfulness, and forgiveness; and she has prayed over the Kingdom meditation and desires to labor with Christ to build the Kingdom.

These second week rules of discernment are subtler than those of first week. The director assumes that the graces of the first week are assimilated, and that the retreatant is ready for more subtle experiences and decision-making.

In the second week the retreatant is more concerned about the quality of decisions she makes for the Kingdom. It is no longer a matter of choosing between good or evil. That is already settled. It is a matter of choosing from among many good things.

These rules sketch out the *modus operandi* of the evil one. At times the evil spirit assumes the appearance of an angel of light. He begins by suggesting thoughts that are suited to a devout retreatant, and ends by suggesting his own. For example, the evil one will suggest holy and pious thoughts that are in conformity with the retreatant's purpose in life. However, later he will endeavor, little by little, to draw the soul into his hidden snares and evil designs. This is a metaphorical way of speaking about pushing a good thing too far. The evil spirit may attack a retreatant who has a good mind encouraging her to use God's gifts to an extreme. Later, she finds that her life is imbalanced, and that she has identified with her intellect. Again, the evil spirit may attack a helpful retreatant and encourage her to be even more helpful until eventually she is burnt out and bitter.

When discerning seemingly good courses of action, the retreatant must observe the whole course of her thoughts. If the beginning, the middle and the end of the course of thoughts are wholly good, and directed to what is entirely right, it is a sign that they are from God.

If the retreatant finds herself in trouble, the director will help her examine the whole course of events to see where she went wrong. She goes back to see how her course of action began, how it progressed and how it ended. Once the retreatant finds the distortion, she can learn the patterns that determine her

choices. When the enemy of human nature has been detected and recognized by the trail of evil markings, it will be profitable for the retreatant to review the whole course of the temptation. The director helps her consider the series of good thoughts: how they arose, how the evil one gradually attempted to make her step down from the state of spiritual delight and joy, and finally, how he drew her to his wicked design.

The purpose of this review is that once such an experience has been understood and carefully observed, the retreatant may guard herself in the future against the customary deceits of the enemy.

When making a choice the director asks the retreatant to:

1. Reflect on the grace.
2. Examine the grace.
3. Formulate the grace.
4. Shape or incarnate the grace.
5. Share the grace with her.
6. Put the grace in the context of her life.
7. Seek approval from legitimate authority.
8. Work out the details.
9. Try it out in history.

Once the retreatant begins to act on the grace, she is encouraged to watch the progress over time. If it is not achieving what it is supposed to do, the retreatant brings it back for further discernment. (Veltri, 1998, p. 428)

Question: Saint Ignatius, how does the director know when the retreatant is ready to move into the third week?

The retreatant is ready for the third week if she has made an election, or a choice and is ready to pray for confirmation. Usually, at this time, the retreatant's prayer experience is moving her in the direction of praying for conformation with the suffering Christ. She is growing in consciousness of the cross, and is growing in her desire to embrace it. Another sign that she is ready for the third week is that, despite tediousness in her prayer, she continues to pray and feels love, patience and peace.

Summary

At the end of the second week the retreatant will have a deeper relationship with Jesus and a strong sense of her own worth. She will have a strong trust that her life is unfolding as it should. She will feel a sense of unity with others and want to serve them. (Tetlow, 1992, p.127)

Following the second week the retreatant will have made the interior movement from "self determination to discipleship." The gospels are primarily the faith stories about Jesus Christ, and the call and gradual transformation of the disciples through their faithful following of Jesus. Contemplating the gospels puts the retreatant into the basic learning situation of the first disciples. She listens, observes, and is fully present.

During this week, she has prayed not to be deaf to the call of the great King. She has come to know her generous response to grace as gift. She has let go of her value system and has entered into the value system of Jesus. Her self-determination gives way to her role as disciple, always obedient, always listening carefully to the word of God no matter how it manifests in her life. To be a disciple of Jesus is to grow continually in service. The service is determined by the call and not by the retreatant. To stay true to the grace given by God is to know the continuing conversion of being a disciple of the great King. (Fleming, 1996, p. 79)

The Third Week of the Spiritual Exercises

The goal of the third week is to confirm the election the retreatant made in the second week. This election is confirmed by receiving the grace of a deep passionate personal love for Jesus and compassion for His suffering. The retreatant chooses to go all the way to Calvary with Jesus, laboring to bring the Kingdom into being. (Cowan, 1993, p. 117) The retreatant confirms her willingness to accept the cost of discipleship even if Jesus bids her to “come and die.” (Bonhoeffer, 1937)

During the third week the retreatant prays for the grace of compassion, to suffer with Christ in His passion. The retreatant desires a profoundly felt interior participation in the sufferings of Jesus. This experience is akin to the feelings a child has as she watches her parent suffer.

In the first week, the retreatant developed a commitment to Christ. In the second week, she grows in intimacy with Christ and freely chooses to help Him build the Kingdom. In the third week she renews her commitment by her willingness to identify with Christ in His suffering. She willingly shares His choices, His anguish, His truth, His desires, His aloneness, and His sense of the absence of God.

The retreatant has grown in knowledge and love of Jesus. She has chosen to be a disciple of Jesus and to do His will as she participates in building the Kingdom. During this third week, she is confronted with the consequences of living out such a reality in a world that is not orientated to Christ. (Cowan, 1993, p. 123)

She is called to suffer with Christ, not for sufferings sake, but because following Jesus and building the Kingdom brings opposition. Therefore, suffering is a natural consequence of following Jesus. During the third week, the retreatant prays for the grace to be able to embrace the sufferings of Christ, and to be able to

face her own sufferings with peace. The third week is an experience that will test the authenticity of her desire to be a disciple of Jesus. She will come to see the enormity of what the Father might ask as she feels compassion for the suffering of Jesus, and realizes that as she identifies with Him she may be led to Calvary herself. The retreatant has been seeking intimacy with Jesus, and now Jesus asks "Can you stay with Me now in My suffering?" It was easy to be with Jesus as He walked around Galilee healing the sick and casting out demons. Being with Christ in his suffering calls for a deeper commitment.

During the third week the retreatant may feel the darkness, but the darkness takes on a new horizon of faith. She feels empowered to take a courageous stand. Despite fearful foreseeable consequences, she knows she has to do something, and willingly surrenders herself to God's will.

The meditations for the third week begin at midnight with the retreatant keeping company with Jesus at the last supper, then, keeping company with Jesus in his agony in the garden at Gethsemane. The retreatant continues to keep company with Jesus as he walks the road to Calvary. The retreatant shares with Jesus His sense of failure, grief, loss, and betrayal by his friends. She remains with him until He dies.

Death is not final for Jesus nor for the retreatant. She knows the sorrow and confusion of the third week when Jesus' divinity hid itself. The fruits of the third week will manifest themselves in the retreatant's deeper identification with Jesus in freedom and gratitude. (Maruca, 1973, p.140)

Often during the third week the director will propose rules with regard to eating. These rules are a concrete application of ordering the retreatant's life to God. Being intimate with God requires denial of disorderly appetites. The meditations on the passion of Christ will provide powerful motivations to practice self-denial.

Although the director speaks of rules for eating she is really providing a model for ordering life towards God. This model can be used for the use of time, money, recreation, television, and reading.

Ongoing growth in the attitudes of Jesus through continual contemplation of Him gradually enables the retreatant to have a pervasive consciousness of ordering all to God, which will overcome any distorted tendencies. Thus, the retreatant will remain on guard against strong disordered desires, and will possess the self-control required to keep them ordered towards God. (Tetlow, 1992, p. 137)

Summary

In the third week there is a movement from Sympathy to Compassion. In the third week the retreatant becomes a “person for others.” She proclaims; “I want to follow Jesus to make a difference for my world.” “I will work to make my world more human and more divine.” During the third week, the retreatant moves from being “for” others to being “with” others. The retreatant prays to feel sorrow with Christ, to feel anguish with Christ. This is the gift of compassion. Sometimes a retreatant can get all fired up about a cause, and may even become hateful, violent, or despairing about it. In this third week, she learns to be with the cause and to surrender to the outcome. In her choice of life, she embraces the suffering, which is part of following that choice. And as she follows Christ, she also has compassion for herself, and for her limitations, as she reaches out in faithfulness to her call. (Fleming, 1996, p. 80)

The Fourth Week of the Spiritual Exercises

The fourth week leads the retreatant into the fullness of the paschal mystery. The third week plunged the retreatant into the suffering and death of Christ while the fourth week inaugurates a time of gladness, a time to rejoice. Through the contemplation of the Resurrection, the retreatant is able to see victory in the cross.

This realization deepens the retreatant's commitment to follow Jesus. She knows that there is victory no matter how intense the pain of the cross becomes.

After identifying and being with Jesus in his passion, she moves into identifying and being with Jesus in His victory. The retreatant is now with her friend in His joy. This grace enables her to hope even when she feels crucified.

In this fourth week the grace is that of utterly selfless love, to be glad and rejoice intensely, because of the great joy and the glory of Christ her Lord. She prays for joy with Christ in His joy.

During the fourth week the retreatant's transformation deepens. She opens herself to receive the qualities of the risen Lord. The Holy Spirit bestows on her an apostolic spirit, courage, hope, simplicity, humanity, love and the ability to find God in all things. (Cowan, 1993, p.131)

During the fourth week, the director assigns meditations on the thirteen texts comprising the Easter story. These meditations change the retreatant significantly. Her perspective shifts from looking at life with her own eyes to viewing life through Jesus' eyes. The emphases in weeks three and four emphasize being with Jesus and imply letting go of her personal agenda and taking up God's agenda. This transformation entails intimacy and personal identification with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

During the fourth week the director introduces the retreatant to a meditation called "Contemplation to Attain the Love of God." The goal of this contemplation is to plunge the retreatant into the reality that is love and to learn, in the concrete here and now of her life, how to love and serve God in all things. The retreatant prays intently to receive this gift of love from God.

When this grace is received, the retreatant finds God in all things. She is able to recognize the love that surrounds her, the love in which she is immersed, the love from which everything flows.

The retreatant reflects on God's gift of love given to humanity as a whole. She then reflects on the personal favors God has given her. She asks for an intimate knowledge of all God's blessings to her. This creates a deep desire to return the love always and in everything. This brings her to a heartfelt awe as she enters into the life of God. (Dyckman, 2001, p. 230)

Summary

In the fourth week the movement is from a living faith to a realized hope. When the retreatant prays for the grace to enter into the joy of the risen Lord, she seeks to enter into a whole new perspective of the world. It is more than just believing in the resurrection; it is to realize that the world has been affected by the resurrection. She becomes a shining star in the nighttime of her world. (Fleming, 1996, p. 82)

Question: St. Ignatius, will you briefly summarize the four weeks of the Spiritual Exercises?

I would be happy to present a brief summary. Many people were exploring ways of finding God. I personally had experiences that led me to develop the Spiritual Exercises. I structured the search for the God who communicates Himself with human beings. As the retreatant practices the exercises she opens to divine love and begins to find her unique role in the service of God, building His Kingdom on earth.

I place a great deal of emphases on the exercises, on the methodical human effort, on the structured practices and techniques, and at the same time I realize that

everything is pure gift. Every encounter with God is a gift and entirely gratuitous on God's part.

Yet I believe that human effort and cooperation is very important. As you can see I use a variety of methods, such as, focused imagination, searching the memory, engaging the understanding, and above all, guiding free will so the retreatant can increase her capacity to love.

At the risk of seeming to be obsessed with order and detail, I take advantage of one's environment; the use of daylight, the way of regulating meals, the reading of books, the meticulous scheduling of time. All the methods are mobilized to make the exercises more purposeful and, above all, more effective in their concrete actuality. The purpose is to open to the Spirit with great generosity, leading to an offering of her will in God's service under the guidance of the Spirit.

Even though the retreatant follows the method and structure, she has to be aware that human effort does not work on God like magic, forcing Him to respond. Rather, as the retreatant diligently performs the exercises, she finds God already active in her heart.

Both the director and the retreatant cannot be too attached to the exercises and methods. The important thing is to have the retreatant open to the Lord's teaching. If the structure works and is helpful then stay with it, if not, change the methods and exercises so God can act.

It is one of the characteristics of the Spiritual Exercises that each retreatant is expected to assume responsibility before the Lord for her life. Therefore, out of respect for the retreatant in her personal search for God, I merely try to be useful by offering some exercises marking a path to union with God. In no way do I expect

the retreatant to have a mystical experience similar to my own. I am open to the action chosen by God for her whatever that action may be.

Following the structure of the Spiritual Exercises, the retreatant will pass through four different stages; they are Purification, Illumination, Confirmation and Union. There is a prerequisite that must be met before the retreatant begins the Exercises: she must have an inner knowledge of God's love for her. This love must be personal and individual. The retreatant cannot enter fully into the first week of the exercises without an experience God's love. It would be impossible for her to face her sinfulness without being grounded in God's love.

During the disposition days, the retreatant begins to experience the unconditional love of God, begins to desire spiritual freedom and becomes aware of her need for growth.

The first week focuses on purification. The retreatant experiences herself as a forgiven, redeemed and loved sinner. She experiences herself as she is, with all her gifts and all her flaws. Yet, despite her flaws, she feels loved. She takes the focus off herself and put it on God. She asks "how can I serve God?" rather than, "what can God give me?"

In the second week the retreatant comes into the illumination phase of her life with God. She prays over the life of Jesus getting to know Him in a very deep and intimate way. She also develops a strong sense of her own worth and a sense of unity with other human beings. During this week she becomes a disciple of Jesus responding to his call.

In the third week the retreatant's call is confirmed as she prays over the passion of Christ. She realizes that following Jesus will not be easy, and that she will be given the courage to follow Jesus no matter what the cost. She becomes a person

for others. She desires to make a difference in the world and embraces the suffering, which is part of following her call.

In the fourth week the retreatant moves into union with God as she prays over the resurrection. She experiences the joy of the risen Lord and perceives the world in a new way. She realizes that the whole world has been affected by the resurrection, and she becomes a shining star in the darkness.

Chapter 6
A Path of transformation
Psychosynthesis

Phase One - Assessment

Question: Dr. Assagioli, will you explain to me what happens when a client comes to see you?

When a client comes to see a Psychosynthesis guide, he expects the client to move through a number of phases during the course of therapy. He begins with a complete assessment. This helps the guide and the client understand the issues. They work on “Personal Psychosynthesis,” then move into the middle phase that helps the client to ground his new insights. They move on to “Transpersonal Psychosynthesis,” and integrate the energy of the super conscious and the Transpersonal Self. And lastly, the final phase is planning for future growth and termination.

The Assessment Phase

Generally the client comes into Psychosynthesis therapy because he is in pain. Pain is a powerful motivator, and in Psychosynthesis therapy, pain is seen in a positive light. Pain pushes the client onto the path of self-exploration and ultimately into the quest for Self-realization. Pain comes in a variety of forms, but is always welcomed by the guide in an accepting way. The guide believes that Psychosynthesis has something very important to offer the suffering client.

The guide believes that Psychosynthesis can help the client:

1. Find his individuality.
2. Affirm his uniqueness.
3. Express himself autonomously.

4. To love and to receive love.
5. Be the master of his own life.
6. Have a sense of belonging.
7. Have unity within himself and within others.
8. Find meaning and purpose in his life.
9. Experience transcendence.
10. Answer his deepest yearning. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 50)

With these things in mind, the Psychosynthesis guide begins to develop a working relationship with the client. In Psychosynthesis, the guide is an active participant. The relationship is more than a professional collaboration; it is a mystical participation. The client is more than his problem. The guide knows that his expectations affect the outcome of therapy. If he sees the client as pathological, he makes the client worse. If the client is treated with respect, and his potential is evaluated positively, he will grow and develop.

In the assessment phase, the guide needs to be aware of the details around the presenting issue. It is important, too, that the guide learn as much as possible about the details and content of the client's life. Although this begins in the assessment phase, the guide is gathering information continually throughout all of the stages of Psychosynthesis. The guide gathers as much knowledge as he can about the conscious aspects of the client's personality. It is advisable to start with an inventory of the conscious aspects and then move on to gather knowledge about the unconscious aspects of the personality.

It is important for the client to live a conscious life, becoming aware of the conscious and unconscious elements and components of his personality. The client must be a willing participant as the guide leads him to a deep understanding of "who he is." By becoming deliberately conscious, the client prepares himself to assimilate the unconscious aspects of his personality. In order to do this, the

client cultivates the attitude of an inner observer. This attitude enables him to look at his psychological experiences and functions objectively and non-judgmentally. This attitude allows him to examine his own life history, consider its development, and to ponder the experiences in his life that have shaped his personality. (Assagioli, 1965, p. 68-69)

This process begins with a biography. It can be verbally taken, however, it is preferable to have it written. It is known that, while writing, both conscious and unconscious factors are activated. As the client writes down the conscious aspects of his life, the unconscious level emerges as well.

The guide pays special attention to the following areas.

1. The origin of various personality traits.
2. The existence of any complexes.
3. Polarities, ambivalences and conflicts.
4. Subpersonalities.
5. Persistent traits belonging to earlier developmental stages.

The guide asks for information about age, marital status, family details, medical history, psychiatric history and past counseling experiences.

The guide will be curious about:

1. What is it that brings the client to counseling?
2. Where did the client spend his childhood?
3. How would he describe his background?
4. What was his family like?
5. Were there any childhood traumas?
6. Does the client consider himself strong or weak, fit or unfit?
7. Was his father and mother present throughout his childhood?
8. What is his relationship to his affective life?

9. How does he deal with feelings?
10. How did his parents relate to their emotions?
11. What role did he play in the family, (Peacemaker, Rebel or Clown)?
12. What are his greatest challenges in life?
13. Have there been any significant turning points or crises in the client's life?
14. What are his deepest concerns and how does he experience them?
15. Has he had moments of peak experience? (Whitmore, 1991, p. 60)

Gathering information in depth is important because the guide needs information to help the client work at transforming his underlying dysfunctional patterns. Rather than simply working on the presenting symptom, the guide works at a deep level. The guide is not looking for a band-aid solution but a lasting transformation.

In the higher unconscious there are three important elements: love, will, and intelligence. The guide notes the client's preference for love, will or intelligence. Later the guide will help the client balance all three energies. Initially the guide will give the client what he needs. If the client needs love, the guide provides security, safety, support, nurturing care and acceptance. "You are worthwhile simply because you exist." If the client needs "will," the guide encourages the client to own his personal power, and challenge old limiting behavior patterns. If the client needs intelligence, the guide provides relevant information.

The guide is very aware that whatever attitude or stance the client takes, its opposite will be evoked in his unconscious. There will be a strong unconscious drive for the guide to fill in the missing piece for the client. However, the guide must resist providing the missing piece. Rather, the guide helps the client evoke the missing piece from within himself; otherwise the unity created between the client and guide is regressive.

Psychosynthesis places emphasis on well-being beyond personal pathology.

Information regarding the client's spiritual life is relevant.

1. What makes his heart sing?
2. Where in life does he find the most fulfillment and joy?
3. What gives his life meaning?
4. What vision does he have of the future and how does he want it to be?
5. What are his strengths and positive values?
6. Has he had moments of peak experiences?
7. Has he experienced a deep sense of identity?
8. What is the purpose of his life? (Whitmore, 1991, p. 61)

Based on the information gathered and the personal relationship with the client, the guide formulates a working hypothesis. However, the hypothesis must be held lightly and, likely, will be adjusted over time.

The guide holds a bifocal vision. He sees the client as a personality, but he also sees the client as a spiritual Self. The guide not only notices the symptoms of pain and their underlying patterns, but also sees the client's emerging purpose. This provides a progressive context within which the client can experience himself and make free choices. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 62)

The guide asks himself "what is trying to emerge through these difficulties, and what potential for growth is contained in them?" "If the client were unconsciously seeking a step forward what would it be?" "What old patterns of behavior are dying in order for something new to be born?"

The guide believes that whatever is happening to the client is not just fate. The guide attributes meaning to all the client issues. All problems have a hidden purpose that will advance the client in his development. Emerging purpose is the progressive step forward contained within the client's difficulty. The guide

remains sensitive to the client's progressive thrust, and listens attentively to what is trying to emerge. The important thing to remember is that the emerging purpose is intimately linked with the client's difficulty. Pain often signals the death of old forms and the birth of new forms. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 63)

The guide sees the client's motivation as a progressive step moving towards a clear intention for change. The guide helps the client come to an awareness of what he really wants. This shifts him from the motivation of avoiding pain to a conscious positive intention. This shift is accomplished by evoking the client's will; intentionality implies a commitment, a determination to act.

Life purpose and intention provide the strength for the client to move in spite of resistance, discomfort and pain. What would you like if you were free of this problem? Evoking intention provides an opportunity for the client to co-operate with his emerging potential and to go beyond his self-imposed limitations.

During this assessment phase the guide looks for opposites. The unconscious has a compensatory function. Whatever the client identifies with in his conscious life, the unconscious will hold the opposite. For example, if the client is identified with being a very hard worker, his playful part will be held in the unconscious and will try to come forth. If the client identifies with being an ascetic, the unconscious will hold his hedonistic part, which will seek some expression. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 67)

As the guide and the client move into the treatment phase the guide helps the client develop all aspects of himself. The guide helps the client play the full keyboard rather than just a few notes no matter how beautiful they may be.

Summary

The assessment phase is very important; it sets the stage for the therapy. Many models focus on the presenting problem; Psychosynthesis takes the presenting problem seriously but sees it in a larger context. The symptom or pain is seen in a positive light. The symptom is leading the client to a place where he can look at his life and transform dysfunctional patterns, thus giving him the freedom to express the energies of the Transpersonal Self, which is the overall purpose of his life.

This is done in the context of a loving collaborative relationship whereby the client feels loved, valued and respected. The strategy for change may involve many methods, which the guide and the client choose together. Working on the therapeutic plan together empowers the client to actualize his motivation and intention, which leads to the initial stage of therapy.

Phase Two - Personal Psychosynthesis

During the second phase of the process, the guide focuses on personal Psychosynthesis. The aim is to foster the development of a well-integrated personality.

This work began in the first phase of assessment. The guide continues during this phase to establish a good relationship. The guide knows that without trust and authentic communication nothing much will happen. Without a good relationship the client will not feel secure enough to reveal his deepest feelings. The establishment of trust may take time, especially if the client has been deeply wounded in childhood.

The guide builds trust by actively listening to the client. The guide lets the client know that his experience is valid by showing interest in the details of his life and

by validating the content and emotions of his presenting issues. The guide will expand the client's understanding of the issues in a non-judgmental way.

A second very important task of the guide is to activate the client's "will." The will is the central function of the "self," and is essential to psycho-spiritual health. The guide's intervention is geared to arouse and strengthen the will. Without will, the client may gain insight into his issues but nothing will change, in fact, things may get worse as the client identifies with his pathology. The guide asks questions, such as; What direction do you want to take? What do you really want to achieve? When therapy is over, how will you be different than you are right now? What is the most important issue for you to work on? This type of question stimulates the client's "will" and moves him towards wholeness. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 71)

The guide communicates to the client that he is more than his pathology. The guide helps him to find a positive purpose to which to aspire. The client begins to turn inward, and seeks his own inner wisdom to help lead him to wholeness.

Although the Psychosynthesis guide avoids normative definitions of health and step-by- step recipes for the client, he does follow a certain sequence if possible. During this personal Psychosynthesis phase of therapy, the focus is on chronic life patterns, subpersonality conflicts, limited identity, Self-identification and psychological freedom.

The Focus of Personal Psychosynthesis

Chronic life patterns

During this phase of therapy, the client and the guide look for life patterns. A good place to start is with the presenting problems. The client is very likely to find familiar and repetitious patterns underpinning his presenting pattern. It is as if some uncontrollable force is operating, conditioning both the inner and outer experiences

of the client. Recurring situations, seemingly outside the client's control continuously crop up. The client typically responds in a predictable and limiting way, thus creating the problem.

The guide is aware that every chronic life pattern has an historical base. Chronic life patterns develop around painful and traumatic events. Usually, the patterns are trying to protect the client from pain. The patterns may have been successful originally, but now, they are no longer useful and are very limiting, thus, causing pain. Yet, the patterns are repeated again and again, even though they no longer work.

The memories belonging to these life patterns will have a similar theme, and often carry a strong emotional charge. For example, the pattern of low self-esteem will contain the client's memories of past experiences of humiliation that damaged his self-esteem in the first place. Once the pattern has been identified, the guide will help the client to address the pattern on three levels: experience, understanding and transformation. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 74)

Experience

With loving support, the guide encourages the client to enter into the physical and emotional experience of the presenting problem. Using tools, such as guided imagery, the client relives the experience. This evokes the same old emotions and physical sensations, thus bringing the underlying dysfunctional pattern to consciousness and, at the same time, creating a cathartic release.

This release is almost always liberating, and from this freer psychological state the client gains an expansion in awareness. The guide may use inner dialogue techniques to free the client from interjected parts that make up the oppressive pattern. Activation of the will and grounding techniques are then used to bring the insights into the client's everyday life. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 75)

Understanding the pattern

Experience must be blended with understanding if the client is to gain freedom from the controlling pattern. The client needs to define and articulate the psychological system, its causes, and development, and then, make the connection to the manner in which it affects his life today. The guide helps the client accept himself as he discovers how these experiences have colored his consciousness and his self-image. Through this process the client begins to grasp the dynamics of the pattern behind the presenting issue, and, with this broader understanding, the client has the possibility of expanded choice. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 76)

Transformation of the pattern

Transformation implies evolution from negative symptoms to positive outcomes. Therefore, transforming a negative psychological pattern involves more than merely eliminating the dysfunctional behavior. The client takes a step forward, and welcomes the unfolding positive energy that is trying to emerge through the painful symptoms. The client actively redirects emotional energy that is bound up in the old negative pattern into healthier modes of being and behaving. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 76 - 77)

Subpersonalities

As mentioned earlier, subpersonalities are autonomous configurations, psychological identities co-existing as a multitude of lives in the client. Each subpersonality has its own behavioral pattern, corresponding self-image, body postures, feelings and beliefs, and each has its own exclusive way of responding.

Sometimes the client becomes overly identified with one or another subpersonality to the exclusion of others, thus creating an imbalance in his personality. Whenever the client is identified with a subpersonality, it consumes his consciousness, dominates, controls, and limits his awareness, perception and self-image.

These identifications are often unconscious. The client often shifts from one subpersonality to another unconsciously as he responds to life situations. Sometimes his response is effective and healthy, and at other times is destructive and unhealthy.

If the client is to live a productive healthy life, he needs access to his entire personality and to all his subpersonalities. He needs to be in charge of them so that he can choose alternative and appropriate behavioral responses depending on the situation in which he finds himself. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 77 -79)

The goal of subpersonality work is to free the client from the dominating and limiting behavioral patterns imposed by identification with certain subpersonalities.

Working with subpersonalities

Strategies to address multiplicity, limited identifications, and conflicting elements are recognition, acceptance and integration.

Recognition

Conflicting subpersonalities that are repressed tend to present themselves in dreams, fantasies, physical symptoms, neurotic manifestations and irrational behavior.

Together, the guide and the client observe the subpersonalities acting in these unconscious ways, which brings them into conscious awareness. Recognition and awareness are the first steps towards freedom. Recognition can be accomplished by using techniques of symbolic imagery, the evening review (see appendix), and guided imagery.

Once the subpersonality is recognized, the guide assists the client in defining it, naming it, learning how and why it developed, and discovering its function. The guide also helps the client to understand that the subpersonality struggles to fulfill the needs of the client, and to express itself in the world. .

Acceptance

After the subpersonality has been recognized, the next step is to accept the subpersonality. This means not only accepting the positive aspects of the subpersonality, but also accepting the negative aspects of the subpersonality. The only way the subpersonality can be transformed is through acceptance. Rejecting the subpersonality only creates a psychological block that causes distortion, and prevents the client from using its positive qualities, skills, and strengths for living life to the fullest. Once a subpersonality is accepted and the client discovers its needs and fills them, the subpersonalities' positive qualities are enhanced and the negative ones dissipated.

It is easy to accept a subpersonality if it is in keeping with the client's value system, but he tends to reject subpersonalities that do not fit his self-image. This can be a real challenge, but through the loving, non-judgmental support of the guide, the client is often able to come to accept the most distorted subpersonality.

Sometimes the client has to work with more than one subpersonality at a time. Subpersonalities can polarize in reaction to each other and create inner conflicts. The client must accept each subpersonality in the conflict and address each one's needs for resolution to occur. Suppression of the weaker subpersonality by the stronger one never works and only creates more stress.

Integration

The guide and the client must find the positive intention and inner strengths for each troubled subpersonality. It must be remembered that at the core of every subpersonality, no matter how many layers of distortion, the basic need and motivation is always positive and in service of the personality and the Transpersonal Self. Therefore, the client can be calm and confident when integrating the subpersonality into his personality, for when it is integrated, it will serve him well. The subpersonality has become dysfunctional due to repression,

and its inability to express itself directly, not because it is dysfunctional in itself. Integration of the subpersonalities relieves fragmentation, resolves inner conflicts, and releases repressed blocked energy that can be used for the positive expression of the personality. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 80 - 86)

In a word, the guide helps the client recognize, accept and integrate the subpersonalities, remembering that at their core they are positive and have a lot to offer the personality. From this integrated position the client has a choice when it comes to expressing the energies of the Transpersonal Self and dealing with everyday situations.

‘I’ or "self" identification

The major goal of this phase of therapy is to introduce the client to the concept of “self”-identification. By identifying with the “self” the client attains psychological freedom. The “self” is a center of pure awareness, will, unchanging and constantly self-consciousness. The "self" provides a thread of continuity. It remains the same throughout the client’s life, and is the center of his being.

Being identified with the “self” provides the client with a sense of individuality, an experience of aliveness, and a direct knowing of his higher nature. A fleeting moment of experience with the “self” can have a profound effect on the client’s personality. The goal is to identify with the “self” in the midst of daily life.

Being identified with the “self” is like being an orchestra conductor. The conductor gets inspiration and energy from the composer of the music, (the Transpersonal Self). The conductor, (the “self”), following the written music, directs the instrumentalists (the psychological functions and subpersonalities) to play the proper notes at the proper time thus creating a beautiful experience of music. In short, the “self” gets inspiration and energy from the Transpersonal Self,

and directs all the psychological functions and subpersonalities to act in alignment with his purpose in life, thus creating peace and joy in loving service.

The guide helps the client choose to identify with the “self,” modeling the experience of the “self” by encouraging moments of stillness within the session, and by assigning meditation exercises outside the session, such as “dis-identification” and “self-identification” meditations. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 80 -89)

Summary

In this phase of personal Psychosynthesis, the focus is on the meaning and integration of the client’s personal existence. The client is working toward an experience of being significant and effective in the world. At this level the client seeks strength and intelligence. He wants to be self motivated, pragmatic, efficient, and effective, thus having a well-rounded personality. This work is accomplished by working with chronic life patterns and subpersonalities, as the client moves through the integration process towards a solid identification with the personal “self.” (Brown, 1983, p. 20-21)

Phase Three – Deepening the Process

During the assessment and initial phase of therapy the client receives many insights and revelations, which give him a new sense of freedom. In the next phase of therapy everything intensifies, and the growth deepens. The guide begins this phase of therapy by testing situations in the client’s life to help him implement his learning by making connections between his work in the therapy session and his everyday life. The goal of this phase of therapy is to deepen the client’s identification with the “self,” and to deal with resistance, transference, and counter transference.

Resistance

By this time the client has learned that the identification with certain subpersonalities, psychological functions, or personality vehicles, is not who he really is. He has been gaining insight into unconscious material and integrating it into his personality. However, as he reflects on his new experiences, he may feel threatened by his newfound freedom and feel that life is too demanding.

Although dis-identification ultimately leads to inner freedom and a deep sense of identity, the client needs to be aware that what he has dis-identified from was around for a long time. It was initially developed for a specific and good purpose, usually as a way to survive his life situation. These old identifications have served him well and provided him with some sense of meaning. To let go of these identifications may feel like losing a comfortable old shoe, an old friend, or a loyal soldier. A grieving process is often necessary before the integration is complete.

The guide helps the client deal with feelings of resistance. They are not a sign of backsliding but are rather signs of progress. Resisting the “letting go” of familiar identifications is a natural part of the therapeutic process.

Resistance is a positive sign that old patterns are breaking down, making way for new ones. It is natural for the old patterns to resist the new change. Resistance provides feedback to the client and to the guide. The guide and the client can gain deep insight as they work cooperatively with the resistance. The guide treats resistance with great respect and makes it a trusted friend.

Resistance can take many forms

1. The client may change the subject during the session.
2. The client may become long winded and use distracting talk.

3. The client may use long anecdotes to explain something, and never get to the heart of the issue.
4. The client may become angry and project negative qualities on the guide.
5. The client may become stubborn.
6. The client may go suddenly blank.
7. The client may pretend the issue has been resolved.
8. Sometimes the client's crying can be a form of resistance.
9. The client may become mind-identified and enter into an intellectual argument on some philosophical point. (Brown, 1983, p. 88)

Resistance may erupt just as something big is about to shift. Sometimes when the client moves toward new awareness, all the parts of his personality that fear the change mobilize and come to fight back. This is resistance to the change.

Sometimes the client fears the deep void, which may accompany the potential loss of identity when the client gives up an old pattern and hasn't integrated the new pattern.

The client may feel vulnerable without his old identity and revert back to old ways of behaving. The guide always remembers that identifications were developed for good reasons, thus the guide is patient and respectful. The client may feel a sense of separation from himself, others, and the world, without the old loyal patterns being present.

Resistance often happens when the client is about to implement a new insight by making connections between the therapy and his everyday life. Resistance may happen no matter how unpleasant the dysfunctional pattern is, or how much pain it brings the client. The client may know and be familiar with the old pattern and, although painful, it feels familiar.

It is very important for the guide and the client not to ignore resistance. If both the guide and the client ignore the resisting subpersonalities, and try to force things through, the resisting subpersonalities will go underground and sabotage the client's life. The old beliefs and patterns need to be embraced and honored within the new paradigm. The subpersonalities need to know that they will not be cut off or forgotten, but rather, they must come to believe that their needs will be met and their gifts utilized.

How to respond to the resistance

As a first step the guide helps the client to identify the resistance and to be friendly to it. The guide and the client need to give the resistance some space to be. When the resistant subpersonality feels comfortable a dialogue may ensue. The dialogue is not intended to get rid of the resistance, but rather, to understand the resistance and to be very curious about it.

By dis-identifying from the resistant subpersonality, meeting its needs, and utilizing its gifts, the guide helps the client to focus on the new subpersonality that is emerging. The client can explore the new possibilities, and experiment with living the new pattern in daily life, noticing how it feels. The guide then helps the client activate his will and make a choice in favor of the new awareness and the forward moving energy. Often this is enough to make the shift.

However, if it is not enough, the resisting subpersonality may need more attention. The resistance may be based on deep hurts, anger or unfulfilled needs. The resistant part may be a survival-oriented subpersonality who believes that if it is not dominant in the personality, the client may not survive. This gives tremendous power to the resistance. If this is the case, the guide focuses the work directly on the resistant subpersonality. (Brown, 1983, p. 88)

As the guide directly engages the resistant subpersonality, he is ready to spend lots of time getting to know it: What does it do? How does it see the world? What does it believe? How does it feel? When did it develop? Why did it develop? What has it been trying to do? What are its positive qualities?

After a complete exploration of the resistant subpersonality, the guide then initiates a dialogue with the emerging subpersonality: What does it want for the client? What is its view of the world? What are its beliefs? What are its feelings? What is it going to do for the client?

After developing a deep understanding of this emerging subpersonality, the next phase of synthesis begins. The guide introduces the two subpersonalities to each other. Then the guide facilitates a dialogue between them. The two subpersonalities are helped as they negotiate a way of honoring each other. The guide and the client work together at finding a way of meeting the needs of both subpersonalities. They also negotiate how they both can express their positive qualities as well as their positive intentions. When they reconcile, there is generally energy released which can be used for integrating the two subpersonalities into the “self.”

Throughout this process the will is actively engaged. The guide is always encouraging the client to make a choice to move towards the light and growth, rather than towards darkness and despair. However, the guide must always honor the client’s choice and at the same time help him to explore possibilities.

So far resistance in relationship to the client’s internal processes has been discussed. Sometimes resistance is triggered by the manner in which the guide intervenes. The guide may be trying to impose his biases, or perhaps to push the process too fast. When resistance is in relationship to the guide, it is called transference. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 95)

Transference

Transference takes place when the client unconsciously plays out childhood patterns by becoming emotionally and sexually fixated on the guide. The client projects onto the guide characteristics that he has attributed to his parents, and relates to the guide with similar attitudes, behaviors, and emotional responses. The client unconsciously attempts to repeat, rather than to remember, his earlier experiences. He believes that he is really experiencing these feelings toward the guide. Projecting these feelings onto the guide may be easier than facing the pain of remembering where they originally came from. Transference must be interpreted and analyzed in order for the client to experience formerly unconscious patterns in a conscious way in the present moment.

Common forms of transference are love, anger, fear, and idealization. Love may be expressed as admiration and/or sexual attraction: The client may want to be the guide's favorite client, and may unconsciously resist growing up, in order to keep that favored position. The client may unconsciously fear hostility, aggression, or rejection from the guide. Anger may be harbored against the guide. This may be a displaced anger that should be directed towards the client's parents. Arriving late for sessions, canceling at short notice, and/or finding fault with the guide may be an expression of the displaced anger. The client may fear the guide and believe that he has all the power. The client may fear that the guide may reject, dominate, or control him. Or, the client may idealize the guide, and place him on a pedestal. This may be an attempt to create an idealized parent, which he longed to have. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 99)

Strategies for working with transference

In Psychosynthesis, the guide views transference as positive. It is a healthy thrust of the client to complete a gestalt, to finish unfinished business, to redeem childhood trauma, or to search for unity. The guide dissolves the transference as it emerges, although it is not seen as the core of the therapeutic process as it is in

some other systems of therapy. Transference is confronted only when it is an obstacle to therapy. In Psychosynthesis, the guide is not anonymous to the client; he forms a relationship with the client. It has been observed that as the relationship between the guide and the client deepens, the transference loses its energy. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 102)

There are a number of ways the guide can address transference:

1. The guide responds appropriately in re-parenting interventions. The client re-enacts his limited responses from childhood, and the guide responds differently from the client's parents, thus making space for new responses from the client.
2. The guide and the client work directly on the client's original parental relationships, thus releasing him from parental interjections which helps him develop an inner nurturing and protective parent.
3. The guide encourages subpersonality work with the client's inner child. The client learns to care for his wounded inner child, and develops the capacity for self-nurturance.
4. The guide may ask the client to explore directly the dynamics of their relationship.
5. The guide and the client may explore images that emerge from the relationship.
6. It is helpful to periodically assess how the therapy is going. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 104 -107)

In addition to the client projecting onto the guide, there are times when the guide projects into the client. This is called counter transference.

Counter transference is the guide's response to the client. It includes the guides emotional reactions, unconscious fantasies, expectations, anxieties, hopes, unresolved conflicts, and remnants of his biographical history.

The guide must listen to his internal responses as feedback that will help in the therapy process. The guide must examine his relationship with the client for blind spots. If the guide fails to see immense potential in his client, he must ask why?

Counter transference can take a variety of forms.

1. Giving longer sessions.
2. Never challenging the client for fear of losing his love.
3. Avoid confronting out of fear of anger.
4. Believing the client's positive transference is true.
5. The guide fulfilling his own need for intimacy.
6. Giving unnecessary advice in order to be in authority.
7. Overvaluing the client's progress for the guide's own success.

(Whitmore, 1991, p. 108 -109)

Summary

During this phase there is an emergence of a deep sense of identity and a resistance to that emergence. As the resistance, transference and counter transference issues are addressed; the client begins to see how the insights discovered in therapy are implemented into his life situation, thus bringing him new freedom and choice.

Phase Four -The Transpersonal/Spiritual Dimension

As discussed earlier, the personality is organized around two centers, the personal "self" and the Transpersonal Self. Human growth occurs on these two dimensions. The personal dimension is dealt with directly in the first three phases of therapy, and the transpersonal dimension of growth is dealt with in the fourth phase of

therapy. However, in actual practice Psychosynthesis does not take place in this linear fashion.

A client may have what is called an existential crisis and need to work on the transpersonal/spiritual level. The client may have a well-integrated personality, be successful in relationships and the material world, but experience restlessness and a lack of meaning in life. In such cases the guide helps the client to take the developmental step of expanding his vision beyond his personal existence. The resolution of the existential crisis occurs when the client is able to expand the meaning of his existence beyond the boundaries of his personality and begin exploring the transpersonal/spiritual dimension. Resolution of this crisis can only come by working on the transpersonal/spiritual dimension. (Firman and Vargiu, 1977, p. 70)

In our culture the transpersonal/spiritual dimension is not often considered in psychotherapy. However, if the transpersonal/spiritual is not dealt with, the crisis will not be resolved and the client will be lost. Without the spiritual/transpersonal dimension the client may frantically seek meaning in more material things, or perhaps in finding new relationships, but, of course, nothing would change. Some of the intense pain may be relieved by distracting himself for a while, but eventually the Transpersonal Self will begin to call the person to broaden his view and the crisis would return.

The transpersonal/spiritual dimension is crucial to the development of the individual as a whole person. Transpersonal/spiritual drives are as real as personal drives. Higher needs for Self-realization must be met for optimum health,; just as needs on the personal level must be met. Transpersonal experience influences the client's reality and his outer behavior.

The Transpersonal Self has been referred to earlier as the higher organizing principle overseeing the evolution of the client. The Transpersonal Self sends out energies which are stepped down in intensity, and are transmitted through super-conscious experiences and received by the personal "self" and utilized by the client to fulfill his purpose in life. The Transpersonal Self transmits these energies through intuition, imagination, inspiration and illumination.

How effectively the client receives and expresses these energies is dependent upon the degree of personal integration; hence the value and importance of personal Psychosynthesis. If the client is not ready to receive this energy he experiences a "crisis of duality." In this crisis the client has a broad vision of inherent meaning of how life could be. Transpersonal energy is pouring into his personality. However, the client is not able to manage the intensity, or manifest the vision, in his life and relationships. He does not have a sufficient psychological integration on the personal level to cope with the vision and energy. He may feel frustrated by his inability to express this vision in his life. Too much awareness can lead to excessive perfectionism, guilt, and a sense of failure. This client needs to go back and work on the personal level to develop the capacity to actualize his vision.

If the guide does not understand the transpersonal/spiritual dimension, the client having the crisis of duality may be labeled crazy, and be put on medication that interferes with transpersonal energy. What really needs to happen is for the guide to respect the transpersonal energy and his client's vision. Then the guide helps the client develop and strengthen his personal dimension so that he can express the transpersonal energy and vision in the world in a healthy manner.

When the client is able to integrate the energies of the higher unconscious, and develop a deep relationship with the Transpersonal Self, the client gives up relying on outside sources for direction. He finds an inner authority rather than

relying on outer authority. He discovers the ability to know what is best for him, what his next step in life is, and how to heal and direct his own development.

As the client grows along the transpersonal/spiritual dimension, he considers questions of ultimate meaning. He seeks the meaning and purpose of a larger reality. He asks questions such as: where am I to go? What is my purpose for being on this earth? The client in this phase awakens to, and begins to understand, the unique context of his life. He poses questions of direction and purpose in his moment-to-moment choices, in the transformation of his personality, in everyday relationships, and in his life in general. (Brown, 1983, p. 21)

As the relationship between the “self” and the Transpersonal Self becomes more conscious, the client may become aware of obstacles that prevent a deeper response to the Transpersonal Self. These obstacles need to be worked through before the client can develop the abilities needed for a full and complete response to the Transpersonal Self. (Firman and Gila, 1997, p. 213)

Work on the transpersonal dimension is fundamentally a time in which the client seeks to connect and respond to the Transpersonal Self. This is a time of conscious commitment to living a life centered on his deepest sense of value, meaning, and direction.

Transpersonal/spiritual experience can come from either the higher unconscious or from the Transpersonal Self. They are simply different levels of transpersonal/spiritual awakening. Higher unconscious infusion comes from the super consciousness, which holds in trust the client’s intuitions and inspirations. The super consciousness holds many qualities such as beauty, creativity, eternity, gratitude, harmony, joy, truth, wisdom, compassion, generosity, peace, understanding, power, goodness, light, service, simplicity, courage, freedom, goodwill, wonder, love, being, faith, and will. During a transpersonal/spiritual

awakening, some of these qualities begin to awaken and infuse the client. (Brown, 1983, p. 96)

At other times, the client seems to approach the Transpersonal Self directly. The Transpersonal Self demands to be the center of the client's life. The experience may seem as if the client is being asked to make a significant change, and that nothing short of surrender to the Transpersonal Self is acceptable.

Transpersonal/spiritual awakening is not always full of joy and ecstasy. Confrontation between the personality and the Transpersonal Self is an opportunity for the client to choose to be who he truly is, to make a commitment to actualize higher unconscious potentials and patterns in the face of fear, embarrassment and social pressure. This is not easy; he must wrestle with his demons before he can make a choice to surrender to the Transpersonal Self.

Higher unconscious energies may evoke fear and resistance because of their unfamiliar nature. Demands for new creative expression may require dis-identification from old roles and subpersonalities. This process will take time and conscious effort.

If a client has no guidelines or understanding of what is happening to him, he may feel as if he is going crazy. On the other side of the coin, a client may seek higher unconscious energy for his own edification. He may experience some higher unconscious energy, identify with it, and promote himself as some sort of guru, thus becoming stuck and missing the point. Some clients try to distract themselves from the transpersonal/spiritual awakening by overworking, drinking, drugs, sleeping pills or tranquillizers.

Sometimes this type of fear is called "the fear of the sublime." The client may fear transpersonal growth because it means abandoning the "familiar." That means

taking risks that many clients do not want to take. If he wants to experience the Transpersonal, something in him must die before he truly lives. He is being called upon to abandon his illusions, and this can be frightening. Some clients who have deep childhood wounds fear the domination of the personality by the Transpersonal Self. Other obstacles to experiencing the energies of the Transpersonal Self are feelings of inadequacy and the fear of letting go and trusting. (Haronian, 1974)

The role of the guide is to support growth during periods of transpersonal/spiritual awakening to let the client know he is not alone, to communicate trust in the process, and to provide understanding. A client can withstand a great deal of pain if he believes the pain has meaning.

The guide uses many methods when working on the transpersonal dimension. He may use the methods of dialogue, gestalt techniques, dream work, guided imagery, affirmations, and meditations; these are all powerful methods. Specific exercises such as "The Wise Being," "Evoking and Developing Transpersonal Qualities," "Letter from the Transpersonal Self" (see appendix B) and other transpersonal/spiritual practices are very useful. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 121)

When the client aligns with the Transpersonal Self and opens himself to higher unconscious energy, he experiences two impulses. The first is for Self-expression. The client desires to express his special gifts and qualities directly in forms that are compatible with his personality. Secondly, the client has an impulse to be of service. The client desires to contribute in some meaningful way to the evolution, health, and well being of his family, friends, community and humanity in general. Here the guide helps the client find expressions that are most appropriate for his individual qualities and gifts.

When he inquires deeply into what gives him the greatest satisfaction and happiness, he generally finds that he is happiest when he is expressing his highest qualities, which are so valuable to the world. After the awakening, he discovers that what he thought he wanted, things like ease, money, material goods and power, are not able to bring him the happiness he sought.

Transpersonal/spiritual awakening is an awakening and transformation in how the client manifests his special qualities in the world. He discovers that, at the deepest level, he can trust himself to be who he is, and know that he has value.

Summary

Working on the transpersonal/spiritual dimension may bring peace, joy and beauty, but it can also bring terror and fear as unmanifested potential is pushing towards actualization. The client's identifications and attachments are being challenged and these old forms have to disintegrate to make way for new forms. Chaos and disintegration are often the precursor of more coherencies. Therefore, even this transpersonal/spiritual dimension has both its pitfalls and promises.

The successful outcome of working on the transpersonal/spiritual level is an expanded sense of identity, an increased acceptance of all the experiences of life, an integration of the inner and outer worlds, a revelation of meaning and the discovery of purpose. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 135)

The Final Phase - Termination and Planning

The Psychosynthesis process is seen as an open ended, ongoing journey. There will be, always, an un-manifested potential seeking manifestation. There is no moment on this earth when the client can say Psychosynthesis is complete. Keep in mind that Self-realization is a process, not an end result.

Termination

When the client is ready to leave therapy, the journey is not complete. It never will be complete, but the client may not need therapy to continue the journey. He may be at the point where he trusts his own inner resources.

At this time, the guide and client review the journey from the onset of therapy to the present. Together, they assess whether or not the primary presenting issue has been resolved adequately? In other words, has the client achieved his objectives ?

(Whitmore, 1991, p. 138)

Plan

The client completes therapy with a clear vision and plan for his personal and transpersonal/spiritual ongoing growth. The guide helps the client look at his future life direction. At this point the client is in touch with the Transpersonal Self and has sufficient maturity to listen and surrender to the Transpersonal Self. The Transpersonal Self continues to guide the client on his journey. (Whitmore, 1991, p. 138)

Summary

This final phase of therapy is important. It helps focus the client on the next step. At this point in time, the client no longer needs a guide but the journey is not over. In this final stage of therapy the client clarifies his next steps as he prepares to continue his journey to Self-realization without the assistance of the guide

In Conclusion

A description of what a client may expect when he enters into the Psychosynthesis process has been presented. In earlier sections, the main components of Psychosynthesis were illustrated through the use of different maps, such as, the egg diagram, the star diagram, the personality vehicle map, the subpersonality map, the 'I'-Self map. Also discussed were our human needs, the concept of

identification – dis-identification, and the two dimensions on the road to Self-realization.

The role and qualities required of the guide have been discussed. In this last section, the pieces have been brought together to show how the guide enables the client to move along the two dimensions towards Self-realization.

There are four phases in the process. The goals and procedure for each phase have been outlined. Psychosynthesis provides a holistic perspective of the human being, from the personal dimension to the transpersonal dimension. Different ways of proceeding have been discussed, but the methods are distinct from Psychosynthesis. An open system has been developed here. Any method is useful if it supports the Psychosynthesis process,

Although to date there is no way to measure the outcome of Psychosynthesis, it has been observed that the process leads to an increase in compassion, altruism, the capacity to love, a sense of personal freedom and a fresh sense of inner direction, meaning and purpose. Thus, a well integrated personality has been developed.

Chapter 7

COMPARISON

The Purpose

The goals of Ignatian Spiritual Experiences and Psychosynthesis are very similar. Ignatius leads the retreatant through the Exercises so that she can let go of all inordinate attachments, attain spiritual freedom, come into union with God and generously do His will.

Assagioli leads the client through a number of phases. The client develops a well integrated personality. He identifies with the "self" and learns to direct all the psychological functions, integrate all his subpersonalities and balance the personality vehicles. From here, he opens himself to the transpersonal dimension, receiving transpersonal energies and expressing them through his well - integrated personality in loving service.

The goal of both systems is to express the will of the divine in loving service. In order to do this, the personality must be free and well integrated.

The transformative process of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercise and Assagioli's Psychosynthesis are compared below. This section is followed by a more in-depth comparison of 1.) Facing disorder/working with the lower unconscious 2.) Discernments and 3.) The Call to Service.

<u>Spiritual Exercises</u>	<u>Psychosynthesis</u>
1. The retreatant experiences the love of God.	1. The client moves toward identification with the personal "self."

Both Ignatius and Assagioli bring the retreatant/client into a place where they can look at the distortions/disorder in their life. Once the retreatant experiences the

unconditional love of God, she can face her darkest self. Once the client identifies with the “self,” he can separate himself from the content of his personality, thus gaining mastery over it. Then, he can direct it in ways that are in alignment with his life purpose.

<u>Spiritual Exercises</u>	<u>Psychosynthesis</u>
2. The retreatant faces and transforms, her darkness and disorder that prevent her from being spiritually free.	2. The client explores, transforms, and integrates aspects of the personality, including subpersonalities, deficiencies, conflicts and behavior patterns.

Both Ignatius and Assagioli see the importance of developing a well-integrated personality. Ignatius saw this process as simply having the retreatant rid herself of disordered attachments. Assagioli goes much further and works towards self-actualization. He deals with conflicts, deficiencies and outdated behavioral patterns. The Ignatian retreat director would benefit from an understanding of personal Psychosynthesis.

<u>Spiritual Exercises</u>	<u>Psychosynthesis</u>
3. The retreatant learns to discern her inner movements and decide which ones lead her towards God and which one's lead her away from God.	3. The client, while identified with the “self,” learns to observe his inner movements and learns to recognize where they come from, and whether or not they are in alignment with the Transpersonal Self and his life purpose.

Discernment is one of the greatest gifts Ignatius gave to humanity. He trains his retreatants very well in this art. I think the Ignatian director would benefit from understanding Assagioli's framework of subpersonalities, psychological functions and personality vehicles. This framework would help the retreatant put her inner movements into a workable form. I believe the Psychosynthesis guide could benefit from Ignatius's emphasis on discernment. Assagioli speaks of being identified with the "self," and the fair witness who observes, but more emphasis would be beneficial.

<u>Spiritual Exercise</u>	<u>Psychosynthesis</u>
4. The retreatant makes a commitment to listen to the inspirations from God and to do His will becoming co-laborer in the Kingdom of God.	4. The "self" becomes aware of, opens to, and surrenders to the Super conscious and Transpersonal Self.

Ignatius helps the retreatant to form a deep and personal relationship with Jesus, the Christ, and God. Upon receiving this deep unconditional love, the retreatant responds with generosity, devoting herself whole-heartedly to the will of God. This is a deeply personal experience. Assagioli helps the client open to the higher unconscious, the repository of the transpersonal qualities such as wonder, love, intelligence, will, beauty, and devotion. Also, throughout the Psychosynthesis process, the client is developing a relationship with the Transpersonal Self. At first glance, it would appear that the relationship with Jesus is far more personal than the relationship with the Transpersonal Self, but John Firman, Ann Gila and Vivian King suggest in their writings just how personal the relationship with the Transpersonal Self can be. For example Vivian King suggests asking the Transpersonal Self what its name is.

<u>Spiritual Exercise</u>	<u>Psychosynthesis</u>
5. The retreatant is called to be a co-creator with Jesus as he builds the Kingdom of God through loving service.	5. The client's life purpose and mission are expressed as he expresses the energies of the Transpersonal Self.

Ignatian spirituality is known as an apostolic spirituality. It is concerned with union with God, but it does not stop there. The love between God and the Retreatant must flow out in loving service. Assagioli is in full agreement with Ignatius on this point. A well-developed personality and a deep relationship with the Transpersonal Self are not enough. The energies of the Transpersonal Self must be expressed in the world.

Working With Disorder and the Lower Unconscious

Ignatius and Assagioli both work at confronting distorted feelings, behavior patterns, conflicts and any blocks which prevent the client/retreatant from being free to express his/her highest purpose.

Ignatius leads the retreatant into the way of purification during the first week. The retreatant already has an experience of being loved by God, which is necessary to confront the sinful, disordered aspects of her life. Ignatius begins by leading the retreatant to face the mystery of evil: how evil came into the world, how sin affects each human being, the theory of original sin. Finally, Ignatius leads the retreatant to confront her particular disorder and sin. Through this experience, the retreatant comes to a deep knowledge of her own sinfulness and the consequences of her sin.

Ignatius needed a touch of genius to arrive at the spiritual insight that, by acknowledging the presence of sin and disorder, the retreatant would experience

God's unconditional love and forgiveness. Facing sin, and feeling God's unconditional love, leads to a deep sense of gratitude to God for giving His love freely. Paradoxically, in confronting sin, the presence of God becomes more visible, causing an aversion to everything not of God. Thus, the retreatant's desires come more into alignment with God's will as she makes choices and decisions about her life.

In the Ignatian material there seems to be a contradiction. On the one hand Ignatius leads the retreatant into a state of total self-acceptance, "I am a loved and forgiven sinner." On the other hand, when confronted by disorder, he does not spend time exploring it or coming to acceptance of it. He tends to use strong will to overcome, or eliminate, the disorder. He works against it. This approach can be dangerous. Material can be repressed that really needs to be healed. Assagioli would tell Ignatius that repression heals nothing. Repression may work for a while, but eventually the repressed material will resurface with even greater force. The Ignatian attitude may create a fight or flight pattern in the retreatant.

The fight pattern is illustrated in the following saying: "the dragon appears, and must be destroyed." If the retreatant chooses to fight for survival, supremacy must always be maintained over the "dragon." This stance will never lead to peace and joy because there is a constant threat of losing the fight.

In a fighting consciousness, the will, rather than love, is the guiding force. Often the retreatant uses strong will to eliminate disorder, rather than using Assagioli's approach to see the disorder as a messenger who can lead the retreatant to the deeper wound that needs healing. When disorder is pushed away or overcome with strong will, it will eventually reappear in the same or altered form. This pattern will continue until the retreatant listens to the message that the disorder is sending to her and responds appropriately, thus healing the underlying cause. If the retreatant destroys the messenger, the wound or unmet need will continue to

send messages in the form of disordered impulses in an attempt to draw attention to the real wound or unmet need.

If the retreatant opts for the flight pattern, she runs from the “dragon.” This action drains energy, weakens resistance, and induces fears of stumbling, of being overtaken, and of being mastered. In order to escape, she denies the disorder is present and represses it. The retreatant in this pattern pretends that the sin never happened or that the consequences of the sin will just go away. This approach may restore a temporary equilibrium. However, the unspoken hope is that through the use of denial, repression, suppression, rationalization or withdrawal, the disorder will go unnoticed.

Assagioli leads the client to identify with the personal “self” From this place of pure self-consciousness, the client dis-identifies from his chronic life patterns and subpersonalities. The guide explores with the client how and why these patterns and subpersonalities developed and how they affect his life. As the client moves through this phase of recognition, the therapist encourages the client to accept himself as he discovers how these patterns have colored his worldview.

Both Assagioli and Ignatius believe that the disordered behavior of the lower unconscious must be dealt with. Each has his own unique approach to the problem. If the retreatant/client tries to avoid the personal level of integration s/he will face a crisis of duality in which s/he will be forced to deal with the lower unconscious. Holiness and wholeness of life cannot be obtained by spiritual practice alone.

Ignatius and his directors could benefit from learning Assagioli’s harmonization map. This map allows the retreatant/client to embrace the disorder. The first step is recognition, then acceptance, followed by co-ordination, integration and finally, synthesis.

Assagioli believes that dysfunctional behavior has a positive function at its core, and has strengths to offer the personality. Each disorder must be looked at, and listened to, in order to find the deeper meaning beyond the distortion.

Dysfunction is a mirror of consciousness, therefore: to fight it is to fight the energies of the Transpersonal Self, to flee from it is to flee from the energies of the Transpersonal Self, and to succumb to it is to give up the energies of the Transpersonal Self. When dysfunction is embraced, the process of healing and transformation begins.

Transcending distorted behavior requires love. Mistakes must be loved and embraced because they always point to the next step in growth. Distorted behavior asks the retreatant/client to take time out for evaluation, for regaining perspective and readjusting attitudes. When the retreatant/client identifies with the loving acceptance of the Transpersonal Self, or the Christ, s/he is apt to respond to the distorted behavior with compassion and attention, which will expand consciousness and enable the needed change to be discerned.

The following example will illustrate the liberating effect of listening to the deeper message. A young woman named Ann came to her therapist's office in shame and humiliation. She was an outstanding citizen in her community. She was loved and admired by many.

Ann was an immigrant from a Latin American country and had successfully adjusted to her new culture. After establishing herself as a certified accountant making a good living, she decided to help her family. She began to sponsor them, so that they could immigrate to her new country. It was not long before Ann had sponsored her parents, two brothers and their wives, and her niece and nephew. Ann had nine people living in her apartment. It was overcrowded, but she was willing to make the sacrifice so her family could have a better life. The new immigrants were not allowed to work, so Ann worked at her full time job and a

part time job in the evenings and on Saturdays, to support everyone. Ann was painfully aware that, although she was working twelve hours a day six days a week, her family did very little to help her around the house, and often complained of the poor living conditions.

A few months passed and Ann was arrested for shoplifting. This experience was devastating to her. This type of behavior was totally out of character. Her priest went to court with her and spoke on her behalf. The Judge was merciful because it was her first offence.

Ann was so frightened and humiliated by this experience that she resolved never to steal again. However, three weeks later, Ann was arrested again for shoplifting. This time the judge was not so lenient. He placed her on probation and ordered her into therapy. When the guide saw Ann, he helped her embrace the act of stealing. He helped her to listen to the underlying message that stealing had for her. Ann relaxed, and asked for an image of her inner thief to emerge. The inner thief appeared as an ugly man dressed in tattered clothes. At first, she was frightened and repulsed by this image. The guide encouraged her to stay with the image, and to begin sending love to the inner thief. Ann was able to do this, and then drew a picture of him.

As Ann stayed with the image in a loving attitude, soon the image softened and became cooperative. The guide encouraged Ann to speak with the image. She asked the image why he had become active in her life. The image responded by telling her that she was neglecting herself while looking after her relatives. The inner thief said, "if you are not going to take care of yourself, then I will do it for you."

Ann was able to thank the inner thief for his concern and love, but pointed out that his approach was causing all sorts of trouble for her. She suggested to the inner

thief that she should take charge of her own self-care. Ann promised him that she would set aside two evenings per week plus a half-day on Saturday for herself. She also promised to demand cooperation from her relatives with regard to household tasks, and to ask them to stop complaining. The inner thief agreed with her plan. If she kept her bargain, he would not bother her. Ann spent some time imagining herself going to the movies with her friends, sitting and reading a good book, and taking walks in the park.

Ann imagined herself embracing her inner thief as they were engulfed in the light. She realized that, at his core, he was not a thief, but rather a loving “messenger” who wanted Ann to care for herself. As Ann watched, the image of the ugly man was transformed into a loving mother. Ann has not been tempted to shoplift since, and she enjoys finding new and creative ways to care for herself.

The Ignatian Director could benefit a great deal by learning how to embrace sin and disorder, and see it as a messenger who has come in the service of healing.

Discernment

Both Ignatius and Assagioli believe that discernment is important as the retreatant/client makes choices in life. Discernment is the art of awareness, whereby the “self” can determine which course of action will express, most deeply, the Transpersonal Self and/or the will of God. Discernment is the ability to sense which response would, in concrete situations, be most true to the personal “self,” to the Transpersonal Self, to God, and to the vocation, commitments, and mission of the retreatant/client.

It is vital for each retreatant/client, who seeks guidance and direction from the higher unconscious, the Transpersonal Self, angelic beings, or God, to know how to discern the many different driving forces of thoughts, sentiments, desires, impulses, intuition, imagination, illumination, revelations and inspirations.

It is naive to think that all bright spiritual ideas come from the higher unconscious, the Transpersonal Self, angelic beings, or God. Some inspirations are holy and wise originating in the Transpersonal Self or in God, while others may be distorted, originating in parts that masquerade as the Transpersonal Self or God. It is up to each retreatant/client to develop the gift of discernment in order to be able to sort through the many inspirations that come to mind. The problem is to determine which ones are coming from the Transpersonal Self or God, and which ones come from other sources.

It is not enough to know the difference between an inspiration that originates from God or the Transpersonal Self, and one that originates from a distorted subpersonality or an evil spirit. At times the retreatant/client has to choose between two goods. A choice has to be made as to which one is most in alignment with his/her purpose in life. It is not about being good and acting in a kind manner, it is about being faithful to God's call.

There is one major difference in the discerning process of Ignatius and Assagioli. Ignatius has a set of rules for discernment which he calls "Thinking with the Church." For Ignatius, if an inspiration contradicts the teachings of the church, then, it is leading the retreatant away from God. Assagioli would see this rule of discernment as being limited to a pre-determined set of outcomes. He would see this as a limit on the freedom of the individual to be open to an honest expression of the Transpersonal Self. Many of our modern thinkers would say that they do not allow their religion to set a limit on their beliefs. They see that being open to the inspiration of the Transpersonal Self as a high value.

New ideas and new truths is an asset to life in our world. At times a person may be led very personally, and the inspiration may contradict a church rule. One such example is that of a Cistercian monk who was led into the contemplative life, and took a vow of stability (never to leave the monastery) for life. However, he began

to experience a call to leave the monastery. He was quite shaken, but eventually came to believe the desire to leave was a call from God. He left the monastery and has accomplished a great deal for Christ in building the Kingdom of God on Earth. The discernment process of Assagioli would allow more openness to a creative outcome.

The Call and Service

Ignatius and Assagioli both understand the central role of the “Call” within each human being. Assagioli believes that life is a process of bringing into expression the energies of the super unconscious and the Transpersonal Self. (Brown, 1993, p. 94) Hearing and responding to a call is a fundamental aspect of Psychosynthesis. Within each client there is a blueprint that holds his unique purpose of life. It is the goal of Psychosynthesis to prepare the personal “self” to express the energies of his life purpose. The Transpersonal Self is always calling the personal “self” to awaken and enter into a deep loving relationship, where the “self” is free enough to surrender to the Transpersonal Will. (Firman, 2000, p.184) Many famous people heard a call. For example, Martin Luther King Jr. heard a deep call from within and answered it, thus liberating millions of people. King was sustained and strengthened by this deep inner voice that moved him beyond his limited individuality. Most of us are less famous and do not hear such a dramatic call, but nonetheless, we all hear a call. It could be as simple as a call to return to school, change a career, or express a latent talent.

Assagioli believes there is an ongoing relationship between the personal “self” and the Transpersonal Self, which is ever present. Therefore, hearing and responding to a call can occur every moment of every day. This immediacy of the Transpersonal Self communicating with the personal “self” can be experienced as an invitation to act from his highest values, his most cherished principles and his deepest sense of truth.

Assagioli did not believe it was enough to develop a well-integrated personality and to come into union with the Transpersonal Self. It only makes sense that this well formed personality, which is in union with the Transpersonal Self, expresses itself in loving, intelligent service.

Assagioli identified seven paths of service: 1. The Heroic way: this is the way of the will. The person who follows this path dedicates his life to a cause outside himself, and loses himself in service to all. 2. The way of inner illumination: on this path, meditation and prayer are used to shed light on life. Through this process a person loves all creatures and the earth at a deep level. 3. The way of action: the person following this path becomes disinterested in self-reward. He is prepared to sacrifice all for the sake of others. 4. The way of beauty: this person realizes that the divine is found in beauty. He opens, and allows the heart to be touched by things and people. 5. The way of science: this person sincerely investigates the physical universe to help humankind. 6. The path of devotion: through prayer, this person brings love to the world. 7. The path of ritual: this person uses rites of initiation to awaken spiritual consciousness, which expresses itself in service. (Ferrucci, 1990, p. 6-7)

The client discerns his particular path by asking which course of action is in keeping with his personal values. Secondly, does this type of service use the skills, talents, interests and personality characteristics that have been developing over time? And finally, does this call to service fit with present responsibilities and the diverse roles, which demand attention at the present moment? When the right path is chosen, the fruit of the service is most effective and satisfying.

As the client attempts to respond to the call in love to the best of his ability, regardless of the stage of his development, he realizes that being a servant and a loving person not only helps others but, at the same time, creates an inner sense of wholeness for himself. The act of loving also challenges the development of

talents and qualities that would otherwise remain dormant. By participating in the service of others, inner fears, doubts, and outmoded beliefs often come to the surface demanding attention and healing. If the client is successful in dealing with issues as they arise, he will become more whole and loving.

As growth and healing continue and identification with the Transpersonal Self deepens, love and service become his natural states of being. Service will automatically find expression. Human beings yearn to use their potentials in service to the human family. The greatest satisfaction and fulfillment are found in making a contribution to the world in a unique and personal way.

Ignatius also places great emphasis on the call. In fact the purpose of the Spiritual Exercises is to free the retreatant to such a degree that she can hear the call and respond with great generosity. Often during the second week the retreatant hears the call and makes a life commitment to Jesus in a particular way. Ignatius leads the retreatant into a very deep personal relationship with Jesus. He also teaches the retreatant how to discern spirits so she can distinguish the true call of Jesus and respond.

Ignatius uses the word election to summarize the process of choosing a state in life. (Dyckman, 2001, p. 280) During the exercises, the retreatant is becoming more acquainted with the person of Jesus and more acquainted with the workings of the Spirit. She has become more experienced in discerning her innermost movements and recognizing her deepest call. From this experience come the big questions. Why ultimately am I here? How do I understand myself before God? How can I live my call most deeply? (Dyckman, 2001, p. 282) The whole point of discernment of spirits is to be able to recognize the call of Jesus and gradually to order all aspects of her life towards her ultimate identity and purpose.

The retreatant with the help of God comes to a deep knowledge of herself. The Spiritual Exercises is a time to stop listening to her story from outside sources. Since the day she was born, people have been telling her who she is and what she should be. Before long she begins to believe these stories. However, during the Spiritual Exercises she begins to hear her real story. She listens to who God says she is. Only God knows her true story and her identity. During the Spiritual Exercises she comes to know her true identity. (Schemel, 2000)

As the retreatant listens to God telling her who she truly is, she is drawn into union with God and hears a call to go forth and become a co-creator in the kingdom of God.

The particular expression this mission takes depends upon the retreatant's "Name of Grace." God gives her a particular name of grace. She experiences a very personal, individual, unique relationship with God. God calls her by her name. That name is an ontological calling; God calls her into existence, into a personal relationship with Him and then sends her on a particular unique mission. For example, St. Francis of Assisi was called "God's Little Poor Man," a very specific name of grace. That is what Francis was to reflect to the world: that aspect of God that could somehow be symbolized by Francis' being, God's Little Poor Man. St. Therese of Lisieux, "the Little Way," is another very discernible name of grace. The Little Way was St. Therese's way, her name of grace, her identity, vocation and mission. (Schemel, 2000, p. 10 - 15)

Ignatius has a very unique spirituality. Many spiritualities focus on union with God. The person flees from the world to be with God. For Ignatius this is not enough. He calls his spirituality "apostolic." His spirituality is incarnational. God came into our world; therefore, the retreatant should not flee the world, but rather become involved with the world. Ignatius leads the retreatants to become contemplatives in action, finding God in all things.

Ignatius and Assagioli have very similar ideas about the call and service. The difference lies in the focus. Ignatius is strictly Christocentric and Trinitarian. Ignatius leads the retreatant into a very deep and personal relationship with The Father, Son and Holy Spirit and with Mary the mother of Jesus. Assagioli leads his clients into a deep relationship with the Transpersonal Self. The Transpersonal Self does not seem as intimate and close as the relationship with Jesus, but Assagioli saw this relationship as a very deep and intimate one. Assagioli's life, his inspirations, creativity and joy reflect a deep and intimate relationship with the Transpersonal Self. His writings do not come across expressing this deep and intimate relationship because Assagioli was writing for an intellectual, scientific audience. He may not have been free to express what he was really experiencing. Vivian King states that she gave her Transpersonal Self a name; she called it Viva, which means to life. (King, 1998, p. 78)

Appendix A

The Spiritual Exercises

In this appendix there are a number of exercises and meditations used in the Spiritual Exercises (Daily Particular Examen, The Call of the King and Contemplation to Gain Love.)

Daily Particular Examen

The goal of this exercise is to change habits of sin by focusing attention on one particular sinful action or omission.

In the morning, immediately upon rising, the retreatant ought to propose to guard herself with diligence against that particular sin or defect which she wants to correct and amend.

After lunch she asks God our Lord for what she wants, namely, the grace to remember how many times she has fallen into that particular sin or defect, and to amend herself in the future.

Then she makes her first Examen. She takes stock of that particular thing she has set herself to correct or amend by going through the day hour by hour from the moment she woke up to the time of the Examen. The chart at the end of this section is designed to record her observations.

On the first line of the chart D... she marks one dot for each time she has fallen into that particular sin or defect. Then she resolves anew to amend her ways until the second Examen.

After the evening meal, she makes her second Examen using the same method as before, commencing at the first Examen and continuing up to the present time.

She marks on the second line of the same D-----one dot for each time she has fallen into that particular sin or defect. (Tetlow, 1999, p. 64)

Four additions

These four additions will help to get rid of a particular sin, or failing, more quickly.

First addition Each time she falls into that particular sin or defect, let her put her hand on her heart, grieving for having fallen. She can do this, even in a crowd, without having anyone notice.

Second addition The first line of the D----- records the first Examen, and the second line, the second Examen. So in the evening she ought to see whether she has made any improvement from the first line to the second, that is, from the first Examen to the second.

Third addition She can then compare the second day with the first; that is, the two Examens of the present day with the (other) two Examens of the previous day, to see if she has improved herself from one day to the next..

Fourth addition She can then compare one week with another, and see if she has improved herself in the present week over the last week. It is to be noted that the first (large) D----- which follows means the Sunday: the second (smaller) d the Monday: the third, the Tuesday, and so on.

D _____

d _____

d _____

d _____
 _____ (Tetlow, 1999, p.64)

The Call of the King

The call of an earthly king helps the retreatant contemplate the life of the Eternal King.

A prayer of preparation is said to dispose the soul for the graces of the exercise.

The First Prelude is an imagination exercise, seeing with the mind's eye the synagogues, villages and towns in which Christ our Lord preached.

The Second Prelude is the time to ask for the grace which is desired. Here the retreatant asks our Lord for the grace to be open to His call, and ready and diligent to fulfill His most holy will.

First part

The first point is to see, with the mind's eye, a human king chosen by God, our Lord Himself and to whom all leaders and all Christian people show reverence and give obedience.

The second point is to observe how this king speaks to all his people, He calls them saying: "It is my will to conquer all the domains of the infidels. If anyone wants to accompany me, she will have to be content to eat as I eat, to drink as I drink, to dress as I dress, and in all things to imitate me. At the same time, she will have to work with me during the day and watch with me during the night. In this way, having shared with me in the labor, she will share with me in the victory."

The third point is to consider the response that a good subject should give to such an open and noble king. If anyone should reject the invitation extended by the

king, she would be denying herself the right to “belong,” and would become an outcast in the society.

Second part

The second part of this exercise is to apply the material from the above meditation on the earthly king to Christ our Lord, the Eternal King, using the same three points.

The first point is to consider that if the call of an earthly king deserves attention, how much more worthy of consideration is the call of Christ, the Eternal King. He calls all the people of the Earth to Himself. He gives His call: “My will is to bring all people to an awareness of the Kingdom, and to overcome darkness, wherever it may show itself. In this way, I will enter into the Kingdom and the glory of My Father. Whoever wishes to accompany me must share the labor with me, so that following me through the suffering she may also follow me into the glory.”

The second point is to consider that all those who have a sound mind and good judgment will offer themselves entirely for this work.

The third point is to consider those who feel great devotion to their eternal King and universal Lord, and who want to distinguish themselves by serving him completely. They will not only offer themselves for this work, but also, going against their sensuality and against carnal and earthly love. They will make offerings of greater worth, saying, “Eternal Lord of all things, in the presence of your infinite Goodness and before your glorious mother and all the saints of the heavenly court, with your grace and help, I make this offering. I want and desire, and it is my deliberate determination – provided only that it would be to your greater service and praise – to imitate You in bearing all injuries, all reproaches, and all poverty, actual as well as spiritual, if your Divine Majesty will choose me for such a way and state of life and receive me into it.”

This exercise should be made twice during the day, in the morning on rising and an hour before the evening meal.

During the Second Week, and from then on, it is very profitable to spend some brief periods reading from the book "Imitation of Christ," or from the Gospels and the lives of the Saints. (Tetlow, 1999, p. 93)

Contemplation to Reach Love

Begin by praying the Our Father.

In the First Prelude the retreatant is to compose herself. She will see herself standing before God our Lord, and of the angels and saints, who are interceding for her.

In the Second Prelude the retreatant is to ask for what she wants. The retreatant asks for interior knowledge to understand all the great good she has been given. She does this so she might acknowledge the generosity of God and be able to love and serve Him more.

During the first point the retreatant brings to mind the favors she has received in creation and in redemption and her concrete gifts. The retreatant ponders with a deep feeling of how much God her Lord has done for her, and how much He has given her of what He has. Everything suggests that this same Lord of hers wishes to give Himself to her as far as He can, according to His divine design.

Then the retreatant reflects on herself. She considers why she ought to offer and give herself to the Divine Majesty. She then offers everything including herself with deepest affection.

Prayer:

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my intellect, and my entire will, all that I have and possess. You have given it to me; I return it, Lord to You. Everything is yours; dispose of all according to Your will. Give me Your love and grace; for me, that is enough.

During the Second Point she considers how God dwells in His creatures, in the elements, giving them being; in the plants, giving them life; in animals, sensation; in humans, understanding. And so He dwells in her and gives her existence, life, sensations and understanding. More, He makes a temple of her, since she is created in the image and likeness of his Divine Majesty.

Once again she reflects on herself in the way given in the first point. In some way she feels better.

The same procedure will be followed in the points given below.

During Third Point the retreatant considers how God works and labors for her in all created things on the face of the earth. As the learned say, "He conducts himself after the manner of one who labors."

So again in the heavens, in the elements, in plants, fruits, flocks, and in everything else, He gives existence, preserves, makes grow, gives sensation, and so on.

Afterward the retreatant reflects on herself.

During the Fourth Point the retreatant considers the way all the good gifts descend from above. Thus, her limited power comes from the supreme and infinite power above, and so with justice, goodness, devotion, mercy, and the rest. It is the way rays come from the sun, or water from a wellspring.

Afterwards the retreatant will finish by reflecting about herself, as has been said.
She ends with a Colloquy and an Our Father. (Tetlow, 1999, p. 148)

Appendix B

Psychosynthesis

In appendix B there are a number of exercises and meditations used in Psychosynthesis, (The Wise Being, Letter from the Transpersonal Self, Evoking desired qualities, Reflective meditation, Receptive meditation, Creative meditation, Subpersonalities getting acquainted, The Dis-identification exercise, The Inner Kingdom.) The guide may suggest the client work through one of the following exercises during the course of therapy.

The Wise Being

Imagine that it is a summer morning. You are in a valley. Gradually, you become aware of your environment; the air is clean and the sky intensely blue, there are flowers and grass all around you. The morning breeze gently caresses your cheeks. Feel the contact of your feet with the ground. Be aware of what clothing you are wearing. Take some time to become clearly conscious of all these perceptions.

You feel a sense of readiness and expectancy. As you look around, you see a mountain. It towers above you, and looking at its summit gives you a sense of extraordinary elation. Then, you decide to climb the mountain. You begin by entering a forest. You can smell the pleasant aroma of the pine trees and sense the cool dark atmosphere.

As you leave the forest, you enter a steep path. Walking uphill, you can feel the muscular effort demanded of your legs and the energy that pleasantly animates your whole body.

The path is now ending, and all you can see is rock. As you keep climbing, the ascent becomes arduous; you now have to use your hands.

You feel a sense of elation; the air is getting fresher and more rarefied; the surroundings are silent.

Now your climb brings you into a cloud. Everything is whitish, and you can see only the mist that envelops you. You proceed very slowly and carefully, just barely able to see your hands on the rocks in front of you.

Now the cloud dissolves, and you can see the sky again. Up here, everything is much brighter. The atmosphere is extraordinarily clean, the colors of the rocks and sky are vivid, and the sun is shining. You are ready to move on. Climbing is easier now; you seem to weigh less, and you feel a magnetic attraction from the top and you are eager to reach it.

As you approach the very top of the mountain, you become filled with an increasing sense of height. You pause and look around. You can see other peaks near and far, the valley in the distance, and in it a few villages.

You are now on top of the mountain, on a vast plateau. The silence here is complete. The sky is a very deep blue.

Far off, you see someone. It is a person, wise and loving, ready to listen to what you have to say and tell you what you want to know. The person first appears as a small, luminous point in the distance.

You have noticed each other. You are walking towards each other, slowly.

You feel the presence of this person, giving you joy and strength.

You see this Wise Being's face and radiant smile, and feel an emanation of loving warmth.

You may ask this being for advice about anything happening in your life, any issue or concern you have, or what your next step might be. Ask any question you may have and just be receptive to whatever comes, in whatever form. Notice what you feel, see, hear, and sense, from this Wise Being.

This Wise Being may have something to tell you besides what you have asked, a special message for you. If you are willing to receive it, tell the Wise Being that this is so and wait for a response.

Turn now and look at any issue in your life, with the Wise Being beside you. Allow yourself to see the situation as the Wise Being sees it....

Perhaps you want to make a choice about your role in the situation, about how you want to be..... Tell the Wise Being about your choice...

Imagine yourself calling upon the wisdom and love of this Wise Being to help you sustain your choice...

Now take leave of the Wise Being, knowing you can return any time to find guidance and strength. When you are ready, open your eyes and take time to make some notes about your experience. (Brown, 1993, p. 61)

Letter from the Transpersonal Self

Close your eyes and pay attention to your breathing. Just notice the breath as it comes and goes, without trying to change it in any way....

Now gently follow the breath inside your body. As you turn your attention inward, do you notice sensations of ease and pleasure anywhere in your body? Go to these places and enjoy the opening you find there...

Now see if there are any parts of your body that feel tight or constricted, and imagine the sensations of ease and pleasure expanding into those places of tension or discomfort...

If you need to move and adjust your position to be more comfortable, do so. Allow the sense of looseness, openness, and pleasure to slowly permeate the cells,the tissues, the muscles.....

You may have noticed certain feelings arising as you focus on the tightness or discomfort in you body. What are those feelings? What feelings are connected with the sensations of ease and pleasure? Let those feelings be as rich and full as they want to be, and enjoy them....

Thoughts may arise as you focus on your feelings, just notice them: those that go with the discomfort, and those that go with the ease. Gently direct your attention to the thoughts that affirm your openness and pleasure, and appreciate them...

These are all aspects of you, of who you are at this moment. Hold them all lightly; notice whom it is that is holding them and who made the choice to direct attention to one aspect or another.

Now allow yourself to step back from all that you have been holding. Move to an inner perspective that you can discover at this moment, to the deepest inner place that is available to you....

Let yourself drift back to that moment and be in touch again with the Transpersonal Self, feel the gratitude you have for the experience of your life....

Embrace the love and wisdom and clarity that are your birthright and claim them as fully as you can right now...

From this place of compassion and total acceptance, look at yourself sitting here today, look at all the events in your life that brought you to this moment...

From this identification with the Transpersonal Self write a letter to yourself.

What do you need to say to your self? What do you need to remind yourself of?

Allow wisdom, guidance and love to pour forth on to the page before you.

When you have finished the letter, put it in the envelope, seal it and address it to yourself. Give it to a friend to mail later, when it seems right to your friend to do so. It will return to you at the moment when you need to read these words and will be open to its message.

Now take some time to write in your journal about your experience in this exercise. How did your letter strike you? Did it seem wise or ordinary? Were you able to look at your personality and your life from a deeper, wider perspective? What, if anything, got in your way? Do you find any clues about how you respond to spiritual awakening, and how ready you are to identify with your Transpersonal Self? (Brown, 1983, p. 99)

Evoking Desired Qualities

For the purpose of demonstration "trust" will be used as the transpersonal quality. However, any quality desired may be chosen.

1. Find a relaxed, comfortable position and take a few deep breaths, now think about the idea of trust, hold the concept of trust in your mind and reflect on it. What are its qualities, nature and meaning? As you develop insights, ideas, or images associated with trust, record them in your journal.
2. Open yourself to further ideas and images related to trust that might emerge from the unconscious and write them down.

3. Realize the value of trust, its purpose and use. Praise trust in your mind and desire it.
4. Assume a physical attitude of trust... relax all muscular and nervous tension. Breathe slowly and rhythmically.... allow trust to express itself on your face. It may help to visualize yourself with that expression.
5. Evoke trust directly. Imagine that you are in a place that fosters trust. It could be a place where you have experienced trust before. Repeat the word 'trust' several times. Let trust permeate you until you seem to become trust.
6. Imagine yourself in a circumstance common to your daily life, which in the past would have been frightening. Now see yourself hold an attitude of trust.
7. Resolve to bring trust into your day increasingly. to be a living example of trust... to radiate trust...
8. Make a sign with the word trust using colors and letters that best convey this quality to you. Place this sign where you can see it daily and if possible at the time when you need trust the most. Whenever you look at it, recall within yourself the feeling of trust.
9. Gather together poetry, symbols, music, drama, artwork, photography, dance and biographical excerpts all evoking, or in some way symbolizing, trust. (Brown, 1983, p. 105)

A Word of Caution: In a minority of cases this exercise may create anxiety or other adverse reactions. This indicates that there is a core of negative emotion

that blocks the development of the desired quality. It is important to stop the exercise and explore and release the negative emotion before continuing with the exercise. (Brown 1983 p. 105)

Meditation

Reflective meditation

By thinking about a quality, such as strength, love or joy the quality is created and manifested in the person's life. In reflective meditation the meditator deliberately picks a psychological quality and thinks about it.

1. Choose one of the qualities in the following list.

Joy	Vitality	Wisdom
Gratitude	Simplicity	Cheerfulness
Love	Openness	Loyalty
Will	Strength	Peace
Courage	Creativity	Understanding
Serenity	Power	Wonder
Generosity	Inclusiveness	Freedom
Humor	Clarity	Risk
Compassion	Energy	Truthfulness

2. Reflect on the quality chosen for a period of ten to fifteen minutes.
3. As a subject for reflective meditation, a meaningful phrase may be chosen.
For example: "Gratefulness is heaven itself" We are not troubled by things, but rather by the opinions which we have of things.

Note: At some point during the meditation, the meditator will reach the stage of believing that the subject is exhausted. At this point it is important to keep

meditating. This feeling of going up a blind ally often occurs just before achieving insight. (Brown, 1993, p. 122)

Receptive meditation

Take some time to settle into yourself, into silence and peacefulness. Notice any feelings that have been aroused by the reflective process and let them gradually subside.

Now imagine gathering up all the thoughts, images, ideas, insights and feelings from your reflections on your seed thought. Imagine holding them all in a beautiful container, a bowl or basket or whatever. Then imagine holding this container up to the light of the sun, to let its rays shine upon all that is there.

Let the sunlight pour down upon you as well. Imagine your mind to be a lake, unruffled by the wind, deep, clear, and mirror like, reflecting all that lies around it.

Now you must wait, receptive to any further understanding or insight that will come. Notice any thoughts, feelings and sensations that arise and let them gently pass by.

If inspiration occurs, either dramatic or subtle, breathe into the experience. Give it time to flower. Notice your feelings and thoughts in response... then, when you are ready, make some notes or a drawing to remind you of what you received.

If nothing comes, wait a little longer. Notice any impatience or fear you feel. Breathe. Acknowledge the difficulty of this kind of patient receptivity, how different it is from our usual mode of thinking and acting. Breathe again.

When you decide to end this stage, affirm to yourself the possibility of receiving more understanding and insight at a later time, either from something you hear or

read, or from your dreams or journaling, or during another meditation. Inspiration may come from surprising places once you have opened yourself to it through this practice. (Brown, 1993, p. 168)

Creative meditation

Begin this stage by breathing, relaxing, and observing your sensations, feelings and thoughts... when you feel ready, recall the major insights you had in the receptive phase.

Now imagine how your life would be different if you acted on these insights. Imagine yourself in various situations and notice any differences these insights produce rippling out into your community, region, country, and throughout the world. How may this understanding transform the world? Let your imagination play with this idea, presenting various scenes to your inner eye, ear and senses... Make some notes when you feel finished. (Brown, 1993, p. 169)

Subpersonalities: Getting Acquainted

Choose a subpersonality with whom you want to become acquainted. In order to experience it more fully and consciously, you may want to make a mask or dress like this subpersonality. In your imagination, see yourself going about your daily life as this particular subpersonality. See to whom you are attracted, repulsed, or in collusion with. What type of people stimulates you, and who pushes your buttons?

After you are familiar with this subpersonality and have really identified with it, see your self being interviewed by a newspaper reporter. Answer the following questions, you may want to tape this interview so you will be able to remember it. What is your name?

How long have you been around?

What do you do?

What type of people do you get along with best?

What are your needs?

What are your desires?

How do you see the world?

After the interview, it is time to dis-identify from this subpersonality. It is helpful to do this ritually. Take off your mask or costume, stand up and move around.

Say the following affirmation: I am the “self” and I have a subpersonality. (King, 1988, p.154)

The Dis-identification Exercise

Sit in a comfortable position, relax your body, and take a few deep breaths. Then make the following affirmation, slowly and thoughtfully.

1. I have a body but I am not my body. My body may find itself in different conditions of health or sickness, it may be rested or tired, but that has nothing to do with my Transpersonal Self, my real ‘I’. My body is my precious instrument of experience and of action in the outer world, but it is only an instrument. I treat it well, I seek to keep it in good health, but it is not myself. I have a body, but I am not my body.

2. I have emotions, but I am not my emotions.

My emotions are many, contradictory, and changing. Yet I always remain I, myself, whether in joy or pain, whether calm or annoyed, whether hopeful or despairing. Since I can observe, understand and label my emotions, and then, increasingly dominate, direct, and utilize them, it is evident that they are not myself.

3. I have an intellect but I am not my intellect.

It is more or less developed and active.

It is my tool for knowing both the outer world and my inner world,

But it is not myself.

I have an intellect but I am not my intellect.

4. I am a center of pure self-consciousness.

I am a center of will, capable of mastering and directing my intellect, my physical body, my emotions and all my psychological processes.

I am the constant and unchanging Transpersonal Self. (Ferrucci, 1982, p. 115)

The Inner Kingdom

1. Sit comfortably and relax. After closing your eyes, take a few deep breaths.

Imagine a walled kingdom with a mote in front of you. Make it as real as you can. Note all the details of the mote and wall, imagine that all your subpersonalities live inside the kingdom behind the walls.

2. Now notice the drawbridge coming down. You see yourself riding your horse across the bridge and into the kingdom. Just observe your main subpersonalities. Do not get involved. Be aware of them.

3. Gradually focus on some of the most important or interesting ones. And, of these, choose one which seems most central, or which interests you most. If the one you have chosen is part of a pair, take them both and change the following directions accordingly.

4. Approach the subpersonality and begin to relate to it. Talk to it, listen to what it says to you. See what you have to say to each other.

5. Ask it what it wants and ask it what it needs to be whole. Make a mental note of the answers.
6. Now let yourself become the subpersonality. Identify with it and experience what it is like to be it. As this subpersonality, how do you feel? What is the world like to you? Ask your self: What do I want? What would I like to do? What do I need?
7. Now be your self again. See the subpersonality in front of you. Ask yourself: “What would my life be like if that subpersonality fully had its own way, if I were that subpersonality all the time?”
8. Now take another look at the subpersonality and examine carefully what you like and what you dislike about it.
9. See yourself outside in the sunshine with the subpersonality. Imagine that it is a beautiful, sparkling day and that the sun is shining brightly. Now imagine that a special warm beam of sunlight slowly comes towards you, and envelops you and the subpersonality in the light and warmth. The energy of the sun will make something happen.
10. Is the subpersonality different in any way now? If it is still there, turn towards it, and again begin to relate to it. See if you can improve things, if you can arrive at some better relationship with it. Take all the time you need to do this.
11. Now write about what happened. What did you like and dislike about the

subpersonality? What does it need? Were you able to reach an understanding with it? You may find it helpful to make a small drawing of the subpersonality. (King, 1988, p.106)

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