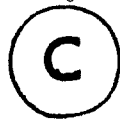PSYCHOSYNTHESIS: A BRIDGE BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL

AND THEOLOGICAL CONCEPTIONS OF HUMAN NATURE

BY

© ROSEMARY SULLIVAN

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate
Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Faculty of Religious Studies

McGill University

Montreal, Canada

March, 1980

# ABSTRACT

It is the aim of this study to examine psychosynthesis as an approach to human growth and show how its viewpoint bridges psychological and theological conceptions of human nature, the human possibility and the growth process. It will illustrate that while Roberto Assagioli situated psychosynthesis in the field of psychology, his presuppositions were theological. Spirit as a reality within the psyche and related to Spirit, an Ultimate Reality beyond it, is seen as integral to the continuum of human growth which evolves from the personal to the spiritual dimension. The human possibility allows for conscious cooperation in the process of transformation which involves working actively towards transcendence. The goal of human growth is held to be communion with the Divine expressed in active service in the world. This study demonstrates that because psychosynthesis places the bridge between psychology and theology within the psyche itself, it offers a new perspective from which these two disciplines may continue and enrich their on-going dialogue.

# RESUME

Ce travail a pour but d'étudier la psychosynthèse en tant qu'approche à la croissance humaine et de montrer que non seulement elle permet de développer les capacités de l'être humain et favorise son processus decroissance, mais qu'elle englobe aussi, dans une large perspective, les conceptions psychologiques et théologiques de la nature humaine. Cette etude démontrera en effet qu'Assagioli, tout en situant la psychosynthèse dans le domaine de la psychologie, entretenait des pre-suppositions théologiques. La croissance humaine, de la dimension personelle s'élargit à la dimension spirituelle; l'esprit est une réalité à l'interieur de la psyché, et cet esprit conduit à une réalité ultime que fait partie intègrant de la croissance humaine. L'être humain est capable de coopérer consciemment avec son propre processus de transformation qui implique un travail actif vers la transcendance. La communion avec la divinité, s'exprimant dans un service actif dans le monde, est envisagé comme le but de la croissance humaine. La conclusion de cette étude nous montre comment la psychosynthése, parce qu'elle allie dans la psyché la psychologie et la théologie, nous offre une nouvelle perspective, qui purrait être le point de départ d'un enrichissement mutuel et continu de ces deux modes de pensée.

# CONTENTS

# PREFACE

My first encounter with psychosynthesis was in 1968. I was
producing a mini-series on mental health for the International Service
of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. I had just concluded my work
on the new behavior therapies when I interviewed a psychiatrist and a
psychologist, the two people in Montreal who were in contact with the
Italian psychiatrist, Roberto Assagioli M, D., the founder of the first
Istituto di Psicosintesi in 1926, and who were both actively working and
writing on psychosynthesis I remember that interview well because most
of what was said made no sense to me at all. When I finally decided to work
on my own personal growth, it was to psychosynthesis that I was drawn not
because of the concepts but because of the personal qualities of the propo-
nents of this approach.

After six months experience of my own inner journey which the psycho-
synthesis exercises encouraged, I began to make decisions that changed the
direction of my life. I returned to university as a part-time student,
maintained a job and cared for my three school-age children. I was working
to complete my undergraduate degree in psychology and ended up with a
degree in psychology and religion. Despite my trepidation I applied to do
graduate work in religious studies at McGill University with an emphasis on

psychology and was accepted.

During these years, I gained a broader understanding of religious traditions and theologies other than the Roman Catholicism to which I had been exposed during twelve years of attendance at the Convent of the Sacred Heart. I was also continuing and increasingly committed to work on my own growth. I was involved in one-to-one personal sessions, interpersonal groups, meditation groups and seminars in psychosynthesis which exposed me to many related psychological techniques and approaches such as Gestalt Therapy, Transactional Analysis, Rogerian models, and bio-energetics. I decided to go into professional training in psychosynthesis at the Canadian Institute of Psychosynthesis in Montreal so that I could learn to apply its principles in both the personal and professional aspects of my life. After four years of learning helping skills, studying methodology, and being under supervision, as well as continuing my own self study in weekly as well as week-long training sessions, I was considered a graduate of continued training at the Institute.

My decision to choose the topic, "Psychosynthesis: A Bridge between Psychological and Theological Conceptions of Human Nature" for my thesis was a natural outgrowth of my own struggle to discover the relation between my own psychological and spiritual growth. Psychosynthesis made these connections for me both conceptually and experientially. My purpose in writing this thesis is to present clearly how psychosynthesis constitutes a bridge between psychology and theology, and specifically Christian Theology

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In order to demonstrate this I rest my case on my understanding of psychosynthesis as presented by Roberto Assagioli. I have drawn from his own writings as well as from articles reporting interviews with him I have also included references to writings and presentations on psychosynthesis by active practioners in the field where appropriate I include a bibliography of the material which has been available to me.

In Chapter 1, "Psychological Maps and Definitions used in Psychosynthesis", this viewpoint is shown to be grounded in psychology. I present Assagioli's view of the psyche and his particular use of psychological terms and make some comparison with the language of Freud and Jung. Assagioli's view of the functions of the psyche is shown to place special emphasis on the will. Within the maps and definitions themselves, Assagioli's spiritual orientation becomes evident.

In Chapter II, "Psychosynthesis as a Process of Human Growth and Change", Assagioli's concept of growth and synthesis is presented. This chapter is lengthy because it includes the stages of growth in both personal and spiritual psychosynthesis and notes the various means and techniques suggested for actively facilitating this process.

In Chapter III, "Paul's View of Salvation", the Jewish-Christian apostle's theology as generally understood by New Testament Scholars is presented. Paul's use of language, his view of human nature, the human possibility and the growth process by which the individual may be reunited to God through Christ, is emphasized. In Chapter IV, I juxtapose the view-point of traditional Christian theology, as illustrated by the study of Paul,

with Assagioli's concept of spirit as a reality within the psyche and in relation to Ultimate Reality beyond the psyche. I propose that psychosynthesis is based on a theological understanding of human nature. I reaffirm that Assagioli is not guilty of psychologism, of reducing spirit to a psychological reality, but rather that he expands his view of the psyche to include spiritual realities. The possibility that such a theological understanding is relevant to psychology, and that in turn the psychological process may be relevant to theology is suggested by reference to the ideas of various theologians, pastoral counsellors and psychologists. Assagioli's unique contribution to this topic is underlined.

I wish to acknowledge my debt to all those who have helped in the research and writing of this thesis. They are too numerous to list here. I must, however, make special mention of my family, Stephen and my three children Gwen, Michael and Patrick, without whose support I could never have undertaken this work.

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

# CHAPTER I

## PSYCHOLOGICAL MAPS AND DEFINITIONS USED IN PSYCHOSYNTHESIS

Psychosynthesis as first proposed by Italian psychiatrist Roberto Assagioli represents a new step in the development of psychological understanding that bridges psychological and theological conceptions of human nature and the growth process.[1]

It belongs to the field of psychology and, for the most part, shares its terminology. This will become apparent in the first chapter where I seek to clarify its definition of terms (pointing out those that are specific to psychosynthesis) and present the maps which illustrate its characteristic viewpoint. It is more in the way it approaches and conceptualizes the growth process, as outlined in chapter two, that we find an overlap with theology. For purposes of comparison I shall refer to other psychologists and, in chapter three, to the Hebrew Christian apostle Paul, though these references are not meant as a focus in themselves, but are rather intended to clarify the distinguishing features of psychosynthesis.

Assagioli, Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud were contemporaries, Freud being the oldest. Although both Assagioli and Jung came to disagree with the Freudian approach, both studied and respected Freud's contributions. All three agreed on the reality of the psyche, the internal

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dimensions of human experience. As in most approaches to person-
ality psychology, they proposed that although such experience cannot
be dissected under a microscope, it is no less real than the nervous
system. The insights of all three of these men were the result of
scientific observation of their own experience and that of their clients.
For the purpose of this thesis, I accept all such data as valid.

The graphic map (figure 1)[2] which expresses Assagioli's unique
view of the psyche has been called "the egg diagram"[3] by his students
because of its shape. This is the label which is still in use today. By
comparing this multidimensional map with the diagrams representing
the views of Freud and Jung, (figures 2, 3 and 4)[4], it is possible to see
the more detailed distinctions in Assagioli's view. Assagioli himself in
an interview conducted by Beverly Besmer in 1975[5] described
this map as a depiction of results, a report of subjective experience
rather than a theory. This linear conception was not meant
to be a complete or final delineation and it has been suggested by Tom
Yoemans, a Director of the Psychosynthesis Institute in San Fransisco
during a lecture given in 1975, that a three dimensional model
might more suitably portray the dynamic aspects of psychic functioning.[6]

Graphically the egg diagram clearly illustrates two of the aspects
which are central to psychosynthesis: the distinction between the lower
and the higher unconscious, and the inherent connectedness of the "I", the
center of personal consciousness, and the "Self", the higher transpersonal
center which is both immanent and transcendent. According to Assagioli,
the I and the Self are experiences of the same reality within the person
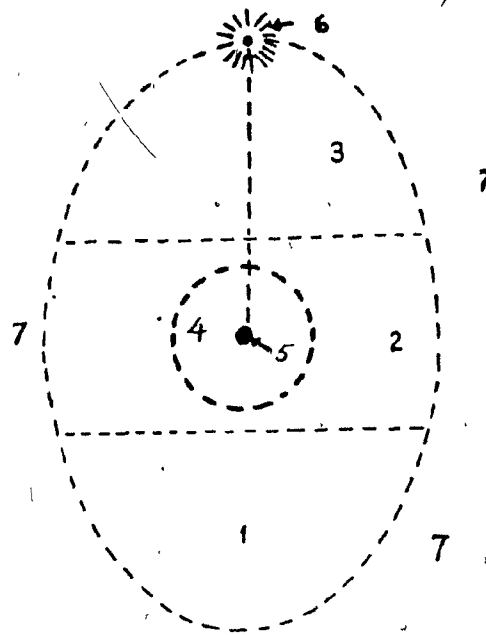
1. The Lower Unconscious
2. The Middle Unconscious
3. The Higher Unconscious or Superconscious
4. The Field of Consciousness
5. The conscious self or "I"
6. The Higher Self
7. The Collective Unconscious

Fig. 1. -- The Egg Diagram
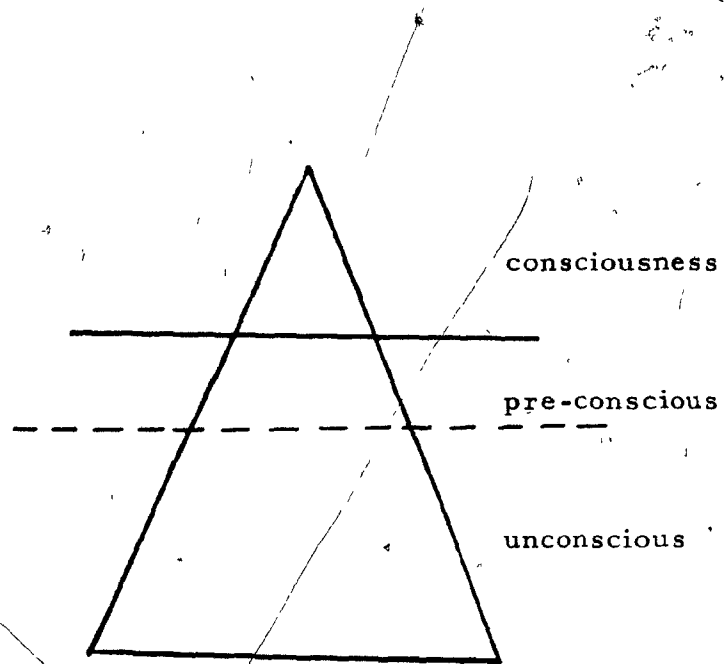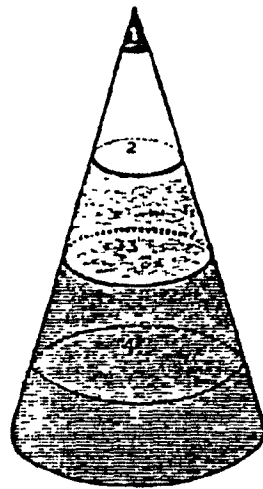
consciousness

pre-conscious

unconscious

Fig. 2. -- Freud's View of the Psyche

1. The ego.
2. Consciousness.
3. The personal unconscious.
4. The collective unconscious.
5. The part of the collective unconscious that can never be made conscious.

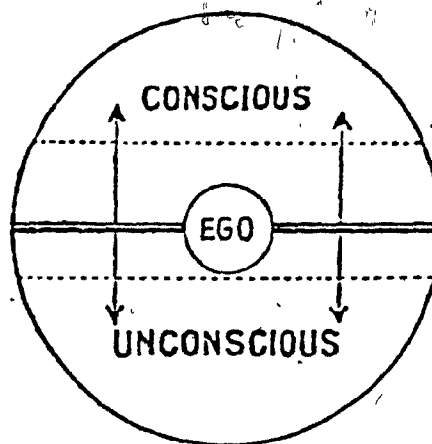Fig. 3. -- Jung's View of the Psyche



Fig. 4. -- Jung's View of the Psyche

which is experienced by the person as two separate realities. This view of the psyche which allows for higher and transcendent possibilities for the individual has been a strong force in expanding the vision of psychology over the past twenty years.

The unconscious had been the focus of Freud's psychoanalytic work for many years; indeed he was the first psychologist to study unconscious motivation while the other psychologists of his day were primarily concerned with consciousness. His systematic introspection led him to posit the existence of a structure called "the unconscious"[7] although a clear definition was not forthcoming. What can be gleaned from his writings is that he found it to be that area of the psyche which is the repository for drives, ideas and memories, about which the conscious is unaware, because of the intensity of resisting forces. Whereas Freud distinguished between two aspects of the unconscious, the preconscious where resistance is weaker and contents can more easily come into consciousness and the unconscious proper where the resistance is stronger, Jung added the collective layers which contain those universal or archetypal elements which are common to humanity.

Assagioli accepted these terms but stressed that "the unconscious should be considered an adjective, not a noun as it indicates a temporary condition of the psychic contents, many of which have been conscious and may become so again."[8] The distinction which Assagioli went on to make between the lower and the higher unconscious was not regarding the ease with which their contents can become conscious, but indicated qualitative differences between them.

In psychosynthesis the lower unconscious is defined as the seat of

> the elementary psychological activities which direct the
> the body; the intelligent coordination of the bodily function;
> the fundamental drives and primitive urges; many complexes,
> charged with intense emotion; dreams and imaginations of an
> inferior kind; lower, uncontrolled parapsychological processes;
> various pathological manifestations, such as phobias, obses-
> sions, compulsive urges and paranoid delusions.

This definition is similar to the Freudian view of the entire unconscious

which in Freud's interpretation of the tripartite structure of the psyche

came to be designated as the id. The id contained the energy used for

instinctual gratification by means of reflex action and wish-fulfillment.

Furthermore, the id is the only source of energy for the personality in

Freud's closed system. As we shall see, this is not the case in Assagioli's

psychosynthesis.

Following Freud's lead, many psychological approaches claim that

instinctual drives, which are either born out of the unconscious, or repressed

in the unconscious by the super-ego or re-directed by the ego, are the only

real motives to action and are the source of psychic energy available to

the person. The view of psychosynthesis is that these instincts and rep-

ressed drives are outside of conscious awareness and considers the area

of the psyche where they reside as the lower unconscious. Assagioli was

in the forefront of the movement in psychology to argue for the reality

and genuineness of higher as well as lower motives as natural to the human

species. Frank G. Goble in his book The Third Force: The Psychology of

Abraham Maslow    elaborates on the narrowness of the Freudian approach

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and presents Maslow's pioneering research of self-actualizing people as

evidence that higher forms of behavior are natural and not acquired. He

goes on to discuss Assagioli's work and considers that it is corroborated by Maslow's findings.

The middle unconscious is the area closest to what Freud and Jung called the preconscious. It is formed by psychological elements similar to those of our waking consciousness and is easily accessible to it. This is the inner region where experience is assimilated and ordinary mental and imaginative activities are elaborated and developed. This is where psychological gestation occurs, outside the immediate focus of the individual's consciousness. From this realm the individual can fairly easily retrieve information and memories.

The higher unconscious or "superconscious"[11] is that area of the unconscious which is the seat of the higher motives, impulses, ideas and experience to which psychosynthesis directs much of its attention. Assagioli stressed this dimension in his early writings especially because it had not been given much space by most psychological approaches, if it had been recognized at all. In reviewing some of his work in 1961, he acknowledged the work of a growing number of psychologists who were recognizing the importance and value of these religious tendencies in human nature ( Allport, Angyal, Baruk, Caruso, Frankl, Fromm, Jung, Maslow, May, Progoff, Rank, Sorokin, Urban and others.).[12] Assagioli also noted at that time, the concommitant danger of the unconscious and emphasized the need to recognize the whole picture in order to facilitate true personality integration. Just because the human personality includes the higher unconscious, he pointed out, does not mean that it is automatically functioning harmoniously. This framework

recognizes the need for psychological work within all dimensions of the psyche and all aspects of the person.

The higher unconscious is described as that region of the unconscious from which the individual receives "higher intuitions and inspirations - artistic, philosophical or scientific, ethical imperatives and urges to humanitarian and heroic action".[13] It is experienced as the source of altruistic love, genius and states of contemplation, illumination and ecstasy-all of which, according to observation, have a transforming and regenerating influence on the personality. Assagioli claimed that these latent higher psychic functions and spiritual energies are "real in the pragmatic sense because they are effective in the inner and outer world and are known through direct experience."[14]

The word "spiritual" is often used in psychosynthesis. It seems important here to include Assagioli's own clarification of its use:

> We are using the word 'spiritual' in its broader connotation which includes, therefore, not only the specific religious experience, but all states of awareness, all the functions and activities which have as a common denominator the possessing of values higher than average, values as the ethical, the esthetic, the heroic, the humanitarian, and the altruistic.[15]

It is in this sense that Assagioli used the word in discussing the process of spiritual awakening. This process, as we shall see in the next chapter, involves the direct experience of the contents of this superconscious or higher unconscious dimension. Whereas previous psychologists had investigated and defined such experience as religious, mystical, cosmic or parapsychological, Assagioli was in the forefront of a movement to redefine such experience and to claim one source for it

within human nature.

Assagioli went even further in his argument to suggest that such experience can be encouraged and evoked through active exercises. Whereas Abraham Maslow in the 1960's popularized the case for the scientific investigation of spiritual experience outside the domain of religion[16], investigation which had been proposed by psychologist William James in his book The Varieties of Religious Experience,[17] Assagioli developed active techniques to demonstrate how such experience could be fostered to facilitate personality integration. As early as 1911, Assagioli's writings were emphasizing the importance of the higher unconscious as a source of spiritual experience within human nature.

To describe the difference between the higher unconscious and the lower unconscious Assagioli used the analogy of energy. He proposed that while the psychodynamics and laws are the same for the entire unconscious, the contents of the higher unconscious are energies having a higher frequency than those of the lower unconscious.

> At this stage, since we do not have scientific instruments which enable us to measure these energies directly, we still have to rely on essentially a phenomenological position, in the sense of insisting on the experience itself and hoping that sooner or later... science will attack this problem on a rigourous 'energy' basis... this science should advance on two fronts: one purely in terms of energy, which may perhaps lead to the genius physicists, the Einsteins of the future; and the other, the psychological, experiential approach.[18]

Assagioli's purpose in using this analogy was to emphasize a difference which might someday be verifiable quantitively, but which is experienced as different qualitatively.

It is my opinion that Assagioli was giving a different value to
these areas which is indicated by their labels of "higher" and "lower".
He did in fact address himself to this question of values and science by
proposing that it is scientific to admit to "the function of valuation"[19] as
a "natural, necessary and useful activity of the normal human psyche.
The existence of different levels of being having different values is an
evident and undeniable manifestation of the great law of evolution as it
progresses from simple and crude stages to more refined and highly
organized ones".[20]  In other words, observation has to be followed by
valuation.  Assagioli's opinion was that science, particularly psychological
science, cannot avoid valuation.  Abraham Maslow has elaborated on this
in his books The Psychology of Science[21] and Motivation and Personality.[22]

I would like to make an observation here which I feel is essential
for a clear understanding and critique of Assagioli's work.  It is impor-
tant to note that such a structuring of the psyche, which distinguishes
between higher and lower and which places more value on the higher
aspects, is not necessarily dualistic. This distinction does not connect
the higher aspects of the psyche with the mind or the lower aspects with
the body. In Assagioli's work, the mind, the body and the emotions are
equally valued as vehicles of self-expression in the world. Sensations,
emotions or thoughts may arise into consciousness from the middle,
lower or higher unconscious.  To put it another way, the individual
experiences sensations, emotions and thoughts, impulse-desires,
imaginings and intuitions of both a higher and lower nature.  Because
of this, psychosynthesis stresses the need for discrimination to determine

the origin of such experience, and the importance of deciding on the right response in each particular case.

Assagioli's distinctive contribution to our understanding of the psyche lies in this area. He exposed his conclusions to ontinual scientific research. Through his study of genius, which will not be described here but which is examined at length in his book, Psychosynthesis[23], he distinguished the two ways by which the person becomes aware of this higher dimension of the unconscious: descent and ascent. This process will be presented in detail in the next chapter.

The field of consciousness is a term used to designate that part of the personality of which we can be immediately aware. Here reside thoughts, images, feelings, desires, impulses and sensations of which it is possible to become conscious at any moment, if we choose to give our attention to them. There is no repression here. This is ordinarily what is called the conscious personality.

The conscious "I" or "personal self"[24] is distinguished from the changing contents of awareness found in the field of consciousness. It is "the point of pure self-awareness"[25] separate from any content where we are aware of ourselves as distinct individuals; "the existential experience of being a living self"[26]. The term "self-consciousness" is not used by Assagioli in the customary sense of egocentric or "neurotic self-centeredness"[27]. He uses it rather to distinguish human consciousness from that of the animals. The "I" is that which in each person is most closely related to the function of will and directly expresses itself through acts

of will.

Because this concept of "I" is central to psychosynthesis, it is

important to spend some time differentiating if from the more well

known concept of the ego as popularized by Freud. For Freud, the ego

was the psychological system which mediated between the person and the

world, controlling and governing the id under the influence of the superego

as it functions by reality testing to protect the individual from internal

and external dangers.

> Since the ego was also assigned the agencies of
> thinking, reasoning and prudence, this made it a
> poor creature, owing service to three masters
> protecting the individual from the external world,
> from the libido of the id, and from the severity of
> the superego. Thus the ego was confined and op-
> pressed to such a degree that it also became the
> actual seat of anxiety.[28]

It is important to note here that the id along with the ego and the superego

are the three major systems which according to Freud make up the total

personality. The sole function of the id is to provide for the immediate

discharge of quantities of excitation (energy or tension) that are released

in the organism by internal or external stimulation. "This function...

fulfills the primordial or initial principle of life which Freud called the

pleasure principle....The id is the primary source of psychic energy and

the seat of the instincts.... It lacks organization as compared with the

ego and the superego. Its energy is in a mobile state so that it can be

readily discharged or displaced from one object to another."[29] The id does

not change with the passage of time. The third major institution of

personality, the superego is the moral or judicial branch of personality.

"It represents the ideal rather than the real, and it strives for perfection rather than for reality or pleasure.... It develops out of the ego as a consequence of the child's assimilation of his parents' standards regarding what is good and virtuous... the superego enforces its rules by rewards and punishments... upon the ego."[30]

Assagioli proposed that his description of the "I" be closer to Jung's concept of the "ego"[31] as distinguished from the "persona"[32] and to Tournier's "La Personne" as the central inner self[33]. Jung defined ego as

> a complex of ideas which constitutes the centre of my
> field of consciousness and appears to possess a high
> degree of continuity and identity.... In as much as
> ego is only the centre of my field of consciousness, it
> is not identical with the totality of my psyche, being
> merely one complex among other complexes.... The ego
> is only the subject of my consciousness."[34]

He saw the "persona", a function complex which operates between the person as an individual, (as in the experience of the ego), and the outside world. This difference is illustrated in the accompanying diagram (figure 5).[35] The "I" as the center of consciousness, the observing self, can be made explicit, a lived experience, when we disidentify ourselves from the contents of our consciousness. This experience of seeing ourselves as distinct from the color of our skin, from the ideas we hold about the world and from our joys and pains, leads us to an experience of the "I". Assagioli claims that this experience does not happen spontaneously; which may explain why some people even deny the very essence of their being. The experience of the "I" needs to be consciously evoked.

Psychosynthesis does not expect nor want people merely to read about and accept these definitions. That is why Assagioli repeated over
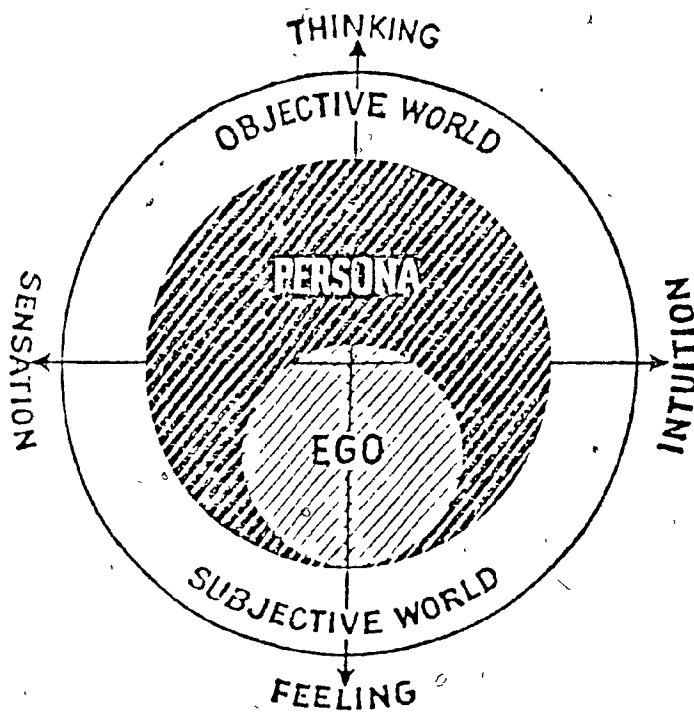
Fig. 5. -- Jung's Differentiation between Ego and Persona

and over again that his approach was based on lived experience and not simply on a set of theoretical conceptions. It is necessary for the individual to verify such definitions as valid descriptions of human reality through personal experience. It is from living experience that the individual can say, " I am aware of being and willing". Assagioli calls "being" the introspective aspect and "willing" the dynamic charac-teristic of the "I".[36]

The Higher Self, Transpersonal Self or Self with a capital "S", is the psychological term used in this model to denote the spiritual Self. This Self is what in existential terms is called the "essence of Being"[37]. In 1973, just a year before his death, Assagioli explained in an interview why he thought the Self was coming into the forefront of psychology, not only in psychosynthesis, but in existential approaches, in Jung's work and in the humanistic and transpersonal movements spear-headed by Maslow and Sutitch in America[38]:

> One major reason why the Self is coming back into currency is the tremendous search for self identity. Formerly, an individual took himself - so to speak - for granted. He accepted himself as he was, or more frequently, he iden-tified himself with the group to which he belonged, -family, tribe, clan, class, nation - or, if he was religious, with some great Being or with God. But in our time, which may well be a time of total crisis, all these identifications fall away, and the individual is thrown back on himself. This baffles him, he does not know who he is, and this is the chief reason for the widespread 'existential anguish'. Now this search frequently takes people into a whole set of new identifications - with some temporary group, or with their sexuality, or with their profession or with a hobby. But sooner or later these identifications fail and the crisis returns. The way out of the crisis is through investigation and discovery of who we are - through the awareness of the personal self independant of all identifications, and further, of this self as a reflection of the Transpersonal Self.[39]

This Self is an experienced reality as is the personal self. It is moreover an entity at the center of the higher functions elaborated in the discussion of the higher unconscious from which spring such experiences as artistic inspiration, ethical insight, and scientific intuition. This Self is what is discovered in spiritual awakening as "the unifying and controlling principle of our life"[40] experienced within us.

> Our spiritual being, the Self, which is the essential
> and real part of us, is concealed, confined and
> 'enveloped' first by the physical body, with its
> sense impressions; then by the multiplicity of
> emotions and the different drives (fears, desires,
> attractions and repulsions); and finally by the
> restless activity of the mind. The liberation of the
> consciousness from these entaglements is an indis-
> pensable prelude to the revelation of the Spiritual
> Center.[41]

There are two points being made here. The first is the distinction between the center point, the center of pure consciousness and any content of consciousness. When the individual experiences being "I", a center of pure consciousness, this experience is transcendant, as well as one of a separation. It is an experience of being more than any of the contents of consciousness without denying or repressing these contents. The recognition of the difference between the "I" and the way in which the "I" can be expressed in the world, the various contents of consciousness, is necessary so that the individual knows that the full human possibility is to be able to choose which thoughts, emotions, sensations and roles to encourage as they are and which need to be changed. When I choose to step back and consciously experience my center of consciousness

as different from any of the thoughts, sensations, feelings or roles available to me, I experience something more. This more is the Self. When the total human experience is consciously recognized, the "I" or the personal self experiences being touched by something other, being penetrated by the divine.

The second point is that there is no conflict between the "I" or the personal self and the Self and in fact these two experiences are but two aspects of the same Self. Assagioli stated clearly that " far from opposing each other they integrate with each other."[42] He went on to point out that what he called the Higher, Transpersonal or spiritual Self is often referred to as the "Inner Christ"[43] in the Christian tradition, and furthermore:

> The real distinguishing factor between the little self
> and the Higher Self is that the little self is acutely
> aware of itself as a distinct separate individual and
> a sense of solitude or of separation sometimes comes
> in the existential experience. In contrast, the experience
> of the spiritual Self is a sense of freedom, of expansion,
> of communication with other Selves and with reality, and
> there is a sense of Universality. It feels itself at the same
> time individual and universal.[44]

The distinguishing quality of the Self then, is this experience of synthesis, the concurrent realization of individuality and universality.

This Self was also recognized by Jung, who helped bring it into popular discussion in recent years. Because Jung's system has been closest to psychosynthesis, it seems important to clarify what distinguishes Assagioli's definition of the Self from Jung's. As Assagioli pointed out in a series of lectures he presented on Jung in 1966, during fifty years

of research and writing Jung produced many volumes of material and
defined the Self in different ways.[45] Sometimes he defined the Self
as the intermediate point in which the conscious and the unconscious
meet.[46] At other times, Jung called the Self "a quantity that is
supraordinate to the conscious ego. It embraces not only the conscious
but also the unconscious psyche, and is therefore, so to speak, a
personality which we also are."[47] He also stated that "the self is not
only the center but also the whole circumference which embraces both
conscious and unconscious; it is the center of this totality, just as the
ego is the center of the conscious mind"[48]. Looking at the Self as an
archetypal figure he wrote: "From the intellectual point of view, the
Self is none other than a psychological concept, a construction aimed
at expressing an essence, imperceptible and inconceivable as such
because it surpasses our comprehension".[49] Jung went on to conclude,
"the idea of a Self is in itself a transcendent postulate justifiable soley
from the psychological point of view and without possibility of scientific
proof".[50]

The Self in psychosynthesis, on the other hand, is regarded as a
reality, "a living Entity, direct and certain knowledge or awareness of
which can be had"[51]. The Self demonstrates itself through direct experience
and is considered one of the "immediate data of consciousness".[52]
Assagioli collected a considerable body of testimony in support of this:
his own experience, that of students and clients and the writings of well
known authors. I include here a description written by one of Assagioli's
American clients which also serves to differentiate the Self from the super-

ego:

> The Higher Self, insofar as I know him, is not like the
> superego. The Higher Self does not issue orders, he
> is not compelling, he is not harsh. He makes suggestions,
> he indicates ways - he is more mental, in a pure sense of
> the word. The superego, on the other hand, has a lot of
> emotional voltage. He pushes and urges....The Self
> appears serene... strong (though dimly seen) and radiant -
> like Fra Angelico's The Transfiguration. He speaks to
> me...He has the quality of a teacher. Interested and
> concerned but detached. If he demands anything, he
> demands to be embraced. He opens himself to that.
> Take him or leave him, is what he says. He is there.
> He is to be CHOSEN.
>
> I imagine my superego, instead, as dark, more fleshy
> and even stonelike. There is a scowl on his face, a hammer
> in his hand. He bangs and chips away. He threatens and
> coerces. He exhausts me and he compels me. One is the
> principle of Freedom and Love, the other the dark principle
> of Bondage...[53]

Diagrammatically, the Self is placed partly outside the periphery of

the individual psyche to indicate the union of the Self with transcendent or

Ontological Reality[54] and partly within the psyche to indicate the Self's

relationship with the individual's own higher unconscious. It is important

to note here that there is a distinct difference between the Self and the

higher unconscious. Awareness of the higher unconscious does not

automatically mean a discovery of the Self, just as the experience of

the Self does not automatically mean Self – Realization. The process by

which the personal "I" undergoes profound transformation and experiences

what in this approach is called Self-realization, will be discussed in the

next chapter.

The collective unconscious is also a term used in both Analytical

Psychology and Psychosynthesis. Assagioli felt Jung's use of the term

corresponded closely with his own understanding. Jung described it as the source of the voice of uninfluenced primal nature. In his view the collective unconscious comprises memories that are pre-infantile, that is "residues of ancestral life".[55] "The collective unconscious contains the whole spiritual heritage of mankind's evolution born anew in the brain structure of every individual".[56] In his later writings Jung came to call it "the objective psyche" because he felt it was neutral or impervious to the critical and ordering activity of consciousness.[57] He considered that the contents arising from this area of the unconscious to represent the supra-personal foundation of psychic life.

Assagioli did not feel that Jung's definition of this term was entirely clear. He adopted it, however, and used it to mean those deeper levels of the unconscious that contain certain archetypal images which express themselves through symbols. As the egg diagram indicates he used the term to denote the processes of "psychological osmosis... which....are going on all the time...with the general psychic environment".[58]

Assagioli designated various levels in the collective unconscious such as the biological and the spiritual and therefore insisted that contents from this realm be distinguished as to their origin, nature, quality and value. He criticized Jung for disregarding these distinctions and confusing the archaic or racial images that originate in the ancient collective unconscious with the principles that are higher and in the spiritual sphere. Whereas Jung spoke of both as archetypes of the collective unconscious, Assagioli claimed that there is a definite antagonism between these two

conceptions and that they should not be confused. As a result of this
difference, Assagioli proposed that a different approach should be taken
towards the contents of the collective unconscious. My own experience
corroborates Assagioli's criticism of Jung in this respect. Jungian
clients are expected to be in awe of and yet fearful of these archetypes
at the same time. This tends to encourage a passive attitude in relation
to the contents of the collective unconscious.

Therapists with psychosynthesis training, on the other hand, while
recognizing the powerful energy residing in this area of the unconscious,
take a more active stance in relation to its contents. They resemble
Robert Desoille whose work made a powerful impact on Assagioli. Desoille
took an active position in relation to both the personal and the collective
unconscious and developed a technique called the "waking dreams"[59] which
engages these dimensions in a dynamic way. Such techniques will be
discussed more fully in the next chapter.

The map Assagioli designed to describe the operation of the psyche
specifies seven functions (figure 6)[60]: sensation, emotion-feeling, impulse-
desire, imagination, thought, intuition and will. This is much more
inclusive than the previous conceptions held by either Freud or Jung.

Freud's map, which was based on the concept of causal determination,
included only ego functions and those of the super-ego and the id. He
viewed psychic functioning as the automatic interplay of these forces. He
restricted himself, therefore, to the investigation of what he considered
"instinctive mechanisms"[61] He concluded that the ego's thinking function
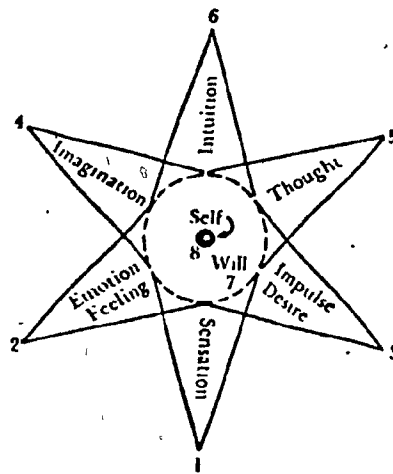
1. Sensation
2. Emotion - Feeling
3. Impulse - Desire
4. Imagination
5. Thought
6. Intuition
7. Will
8. Central point:
   The I, or personal self.

Fig. 6. -- Functions of the Psyche according
to Assagioli

alone was capable of controlling psychic energy and of moving the psyche
toward integration.

In order to clarify how Freud defined the thinking function of the
ego, we should note his views on the functioning of the id and the superego.
The id is defined as the source of instinctual energy automatically moving
towards need gratification by means of reflex action and wish fulfillment.
The super-ego operates in a rewarding or punishing manner to block the
discharge of this instinctual energy. Depending on the dominant mode
of functioning, the individual may become immobilized by conscience or
pushed to action, striving always toward perfection of the "ego-ideal".
Like the id, the super-ego functions irrationally, distorting and falsifying
reality.

As Freud's theory developed, he attached more and more importance
to the ego-function. In ego functioning, logical thinking takes the place
of wish fulfillment. By means of identification, identifying external reality
as separate from mental events, more energy is available for the develop-
ment of realistic thinking. Freud's conclusions in support of rational man
were in keeping with his time. Near the end of his investigations in 1938,
he put it this way:

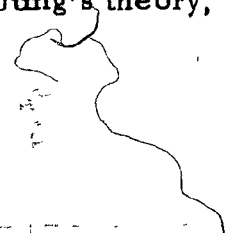> Being conscious...remains the one light which illuminates
> our path and leads us through the darkness of mental life
> In consequence of the special character of our discoveries,
> our scientific work in psychology will consist in trans-
> lating unconscious processes into consciousness and thus
> filling the gaps in conscious perception. [63]

In other words, in Freud's system, the dominant function is thinking.

All other functions such as feeling, desiring, sensing, imagining are assigned to the id or super-ego. This elevates "thinking" to the dominant and only valuable function of the psyche.

Jung on the other hand, allowed for four basic functions: thinking, feeling, sensation and intuition (figure 7).[64] He defined a psychic function as "a certain form of psychic activity that remains theoretically the same under varying circumstances"[65] and is completely independent of its momentary contents. Function suggests an emphasis on the way in which content emerges in consciousness. Jung saw both thinking (which gives meaning and understanding) and feeling (which weighs and values) as rational functions because they involve evaluating and judging, whereas sensation, which perceives through the senses, and intuition which tells of future possibilities and gives us information of the atmosphere which surrounds all experience, are irrational because they merely perceive but do not discriminate.

Jung's theory of psychic functioning included his theory of types according to which he classified personalities in terms of the elements which happened to be dominant. The diagram used for illustration represents the relationship of psychic functions for a personality in which thinking is the dominant or superior function. The inferior function, or that which is opposite the superior one, Jung confines to the unconscious, while the two others are seen as lying partly in consciousness and partly in the unconscious. Jolande Jacobi, who designed this diagram to explain Jung's theory, reiterates that diagrams are of course only theoretical
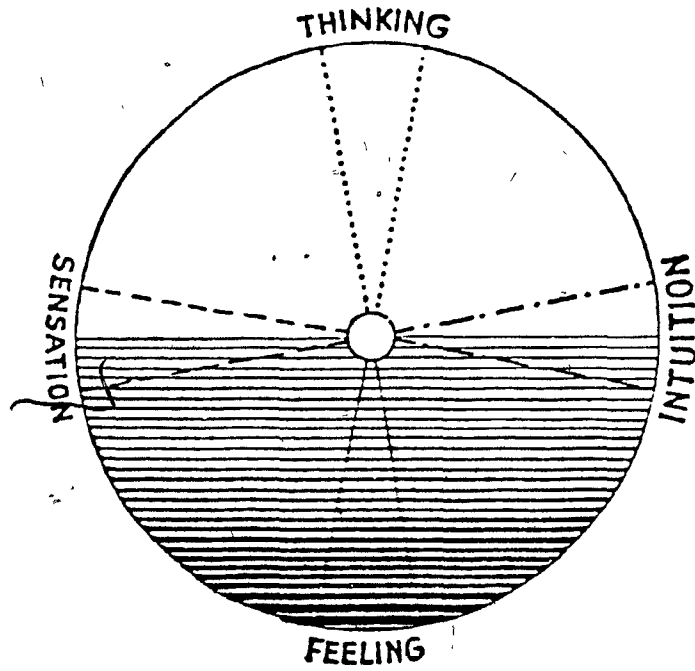
Fig. 7. -- Functions of the Psyche according
to Jung

models and in actual practice such a radically one-sided development of functions are never encountered.[66] The goal here is not for one function to dominate as in Freud's system, but rather for all functions to become conscious so that the individual may have the complete range of possible experience consciously available.

While Assagioli agreed with this goal, he did not agree that these four functions exhausted all possibilities and from his observations proposed the expanded map presented previously. Like Freud, he placed one function in a more prominant position. This was the willing not the thinking function. In the diagram (figure 6), the will function is placed along with the "I" at the centre of the other functions, because it is central to the experience of the personal self, and through it the "I" can direct the other psychological functions. Assagioli used this quotation from the Italian Encyclopedia which expressed clearly his own view of the intimate relationship between the I and the will.

> Volitional activity is in close connection with the conscious-
> ness of the I as both an active and a unifying center of
> all the elements of psychic life. The I, which is at first
> an obscure subjectivity, a point of reference of every
> psychic experience, affirms itself gradually as it succeeds
> in distinguishing itself, as a source of activity, from every
> one of its particular elements (feelings, tendencies, instincts,
> ideas). The will is just this activity of the I which is a
> unity, which stands above the multiplicity of its contents,
> and replaces the previous impulsive, fractional, centrifugal
> action of those contents. I and will are correlated terms;
> the I exists in so far as it has its own specific capacity
> for action which is the will; and the will exists only as a
> distinctive and autonomous activity of the I. [67]

By will, Assagioli did not mean the Victorian will. The will as the central function of the psyche is multifaceted. Will is not only will power. Through the dynamic aspect of the will the "I" can direct all the

psychological functions. Along with the "I", it is able to decide what
action to take, to apply all means necessary to bring this action about and
to persist in a task in the face of all obstacles and difficulties. To define
the will function, Assagioli described three categories or dimensions
which can be observed phenomenologically: he spoke of aspects, qualities
and stages in acts of will.

The major aspects or principle facets which are found in a fully
developed will are : strength, skill, goodness and transcendence. In other
words, in a fully functioning individual, a strong will needs to be balanced
by skill, "the ability to obtain desired results with the least possible
expenditure of energy"[68], and by goodness defined as a sense of love or
compassion which leads to the choice of right goals. For some, growth to
this stage of development is sufficient, but for those who experience a
yearning for more, there is also the transpersonal aspect which can be
developed, the aspiration toward unitive consciousness, ultimate meaning,
and the sacralization of everyday life.

This transpersonal aspect of the will, which "is essentially the activity
of the Self which stands above the multiplicity"[69] enables the individual to
live in unity with a higher purpose or higher will expressed in the well
known prayers, "Thy Will be done" (Matt 6:10) or "Lord, make me an
instrument of your peace."[70] According to Assagioli, the goal of human
growth is in fact fusion with Universal Will Itself. This will be taken up
more fully in the next chapter.

The qualities of the will-in-action are enumerated as: " 1) Energy-

Dynamic Power - Intensity; 2) Mastery - Control - Dicipline; 3) Concen-
tration - One-Pointedness - Attention - Focus; 4) Determination -
Decisiveness - Resoluteness - Promptness; 5) Persistence - Endurance -
Patience; 6) Initiative - Courage - Daring; 7) Organization - Integration -
Synthesis."[71] These can be consciously evoked according to the needs of
the individual, the particular situation and the specific aspect of the will
being called upon. Some qualities tend to overlap and others have opposite
characteristics and these differences need to be taken into consideration.
Some situations may call for use of direct power or force towards a goal,
whereas others may require effortlessness and the choice not to use
force. Responding to a powerful on-coming force with equal power may
not be appropriate and may require a more subtle use of will. Such choices
can only be made when the entire range of responses are available to the
individual. The point is that, according to Assagioli, these qualities exist
in some measure in every human being. From the viewpoint of psychosyn-
thesis, it is the human possibility to become aware of and consciously work
with all of these aspects and qualities so that they can be equally available
when needed.

.There are six sequential stages to any act of willing. These are:
" 1) The Purpose, Aim, or Goal based on Evaluation, Motivation and
Intention; 2) Deliberation; 3) Choice and Decision; 4) Affirmation; the
Command, or 'Fiat' of the Will; 5) Planning and Working Out a Program;
6) Direction of the Execution."[72] Assagioli compared these stages to
links in a chain and proposed that the will can only be as successful as its
weakest link. Ideally every act of will passes through this sequence

requiring at least some attention to each phase.

For Assagioli, the will is central to the growth process because it directs the interpenetration and interaction of the other various psychological functions. In his book, The Act of Will, Assagioli proposed ten laws which he considered directly connected with the functioning of the will.[73] These laws provide a framework for the active approach taken toward the training of the will. From the standpoint of psychosynthesis, the functioning of the psyche does not have to be left to chance or to old patterns of programming. Knowledge of these laws can be a first step towards activating the will in the reorganizing of the personality and changing its habitual behavior. This emphasis on participation in the growth process will be the focus of the next chapter. It is sufficient to note here that this approach to the will is one of the basic points that distinguishes psychosynthesis from other psychological points of view.

When 'will' is mentioned in psychology, many people refer to Alfred Adler ( 1890 - 1937). Adler's Individual Psychology contributed much to psychological understanding of the uniqueness of the personality and the concept of the creative self. Adler proposed that our choices are determined by social interest, as compensations for deficiencies in childhood and by fictional goals we imagine in the future. Unlike Assagioli, he declined to assert that the ideal self was real. Adler's theory of motivation changed over his years of research from the concept that aggression is the strongest mover, to the 'will to power' and finally to 'striving for superiority'. which he called 'the great upward drive'. My purpose here is to note that Assagioli's active approach to will training coupled with his view

of the Self are different from Adler's.[74]

Assagioli also specified along with the will, impulse-desire and imagination as functions. Whereas Freud certainly recognized desires and impulse, Assagioli saw this function as more than an instinct, as having a dynamic energy of its own which can consciously impel to action. Whereas Jung certainly recognized the imaging capability of the person, he believed that it evidenced itself in the other four functions. Assagioli, by calling it a function, gave it its own fundamental place in psychological life.

In respect to typology, it will be recalled that Jung designated the fundamental psychological attitudes as "extraversion" and "introversion".[75] He used these terms to describe the direction of the person's vital interest; that is, whether the person's prevaling inclinations, choices and actions lead outwards into the world or more deeply inside.

By combining these attitudes or ways of reacting to outer and inner experience with the four psychological functions, Jung classified eight types: extraverted sensory, extraverted feeling, extraverted intuitive extraverted thinking and the four corresponding introverted types. To be more specific, Jung labeled as an extraverted type, someone whose thought is directed towards the outside world, who is interested in facts and material and whose ideas are derived from tradition or from the atmosphere of the time or from what is generally considered "reality". The intraverted thinker type is someone whose thinking arises from a purely subjective orientation "that is neither determined by objective facts nor directed toward objective data... [but rather]...proceeds from subjective data

and is directed towards subjective ideas or facts of a subjective character".[76]

Assagioli was not satisfied with these distinctions and warned against using them on the grounds that they were over-simple classifications. He pointed out that different directions can be associated simultaneously with different levels in the same personality. A person may be extraverted physically and emotionally introverted. He went on to elaborate as fundamental other directions of vital interest: the active-passive modality, which Jung only mentioned but never developed, subversion, as the direction downwards toward the low, and supra-version, as the direction upwards towards the high.

It is easy to see how the distinctions between subversion and supra-version as prominant directions are important in the scheme of psychosynthesis which emphasized the difference between the lower and higher. The tendency to plumb the lower unconscious as in depth psychology was one of Assagioli's main criticisms of Freudian psychoanalysis. It is this tendency which, as it dominates this whole movement, can dominate an individual personality. Jung, on the other hand, recognized the tendency towards supra-version, towards the higher aspects of the psyche, towards the experiences called spiritual. He was also aware of the psychic damage done in the personality by "repression of the sublime".[77] Nevertheless, he did not include either of these directions in his typology.

Some criticism of psychosynthesis has been based on the supra-version tendency of some of its practioners to emphasize the higher realms and ignore the lower. This was not Assagioli's intent;

> excessive supraversion can be used to escape from
> the problems of life. The psychosynthetic goal is to
> acquire the ability to direct energies at will - in any
> direction and fashion, according to specific purposes,
> intentions, needs and demands. This can be called
> poliversion. [78]

This discussion serves to illustrate how important and influential these

directions of interest can be if left unrecognized for what they are.

Assagioli maintained that there are also differences in quality as

well as the differences of direction. It is not just a matter of going up

or down, or in or out, but of doing so in a particular way. He distinguished

between an inferior kind of supraversion found in the dreamer, the passive

idealist, the utopian on the one hand, and on the other, a superior kind

of subversion found in the scientific investigator who explores the lower

aspects of the unconscious.

It is my opinion that these distinctions Assagioli added to work

Jung had already done: **they can bring even more clarity to the analysis of**

personality structure and functioning. There is a great difference

between the passive extravert, who is endowed with excessive sensitivity

and when reacting to external opinions and ideas is dominated from the

outside, and the active extravert who wants to dominate others.

Assagioli concluded that the human personality is so complex that

it is impossible to label it from any single viewpoint. The personality

may be analyzed from the viewpoints already mentioned above as well

as by looking at the structure itself. Some individuals could be said

to be well shaped even rigid while others are pliable or always changing

and yet others could be habitually contradictory.

Psychosynthesis sees all these concepts at best as imperfect and subject to many variations. What distinguished Assagioli's emphasis was his effort to turn such observations into a practical approach which could enable people to participate in their own growth. It is his understanding of this process that will claim our attention in the following chapter.

NOTES


CHAPTER 1


1
Roberto Assagioli, Psychosynthesis: a Collection of Basic Writings
(New York; Viking Press, 1971), p. 16.
This is the first of Assagioli's books
and the basic manual used in psycho-
synthesis. This note indicates but one
of many instances in which he emphasizes
that the scientific approach is not de-
pendent on the subject matter but the
method. This is also the point of view
held by the other psychologists mention-
ed in this thesis.

2
Ibid. p. 17.

3
Stuart Miller, "Work in Progress:Roberto Assagioli - The Rebirth of
the Soul", Intellectual Digest (August,
1973), p. 8.

4
Calvin S. Hall uses this image to describe Freud's vision of the relation-
ship between the unconscious and conscious-
ness in A Primer of Freudian Psychology
(New York:New American Library, 1954),
p. 54. Jolande Jacobi uses these two
diagrams to illustrate Jung's view of the
psyche in The Psychology of C. G. Jung:
an Introduction with Illustrations (Eigth
edition;New Haven:Yale University Press,
1973) p. 33 and p. 6.

5
See Beverly Besner, "Psychosynthesis:Height Psychology Dis-covering
the self and the Self" (New York Psycho-
synthesis Research Foundation, 1975)

6

Tom Yeomans, Unpublished Lecture, Psychosynthesis Training · Program, Deerfield, Mass., Summer 1975.

7

Ralph Norman Haber and Aharon H. Fried, An Introduction to Psychology (New York; Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1975) pp. 234 and p. 407.

8

Assagioli, Psychosynthesis. p. 20.

9

Ibid. p. 17.

10

See Frank G. Goble, The Third Force:The Psychology of Abraham Maslow (New York: Pocket Books, 1970).

11

Assagioli makes a clear distinction between the superconscious dimensions of the psyche and superconsciousness. The latter he defined as "a higher state of awareness or spiritual consciousness" or as "self-realization". The recognition of the superconscious and utilization of its energies can be a step toward superconsciousness. How psychosynthesis understands and approaches this process will be discussed fully in the next chapter. Psychosynthesis. p. 198.

12

Ibid. p. 36.

13

Ibid. p. 17.

14

Ibid. p. 6.

15

Ibid. p. 38.

16

See Abraham Maslow, Religion, Values and Peak Experiences (New York; Viking Press, 1970).

17

See William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience (New York; Modern Library, 1936).

18

Assagioli, Psychosynthesis. p. 194.

19

Roberto Assagioli, The Act of Will (New York; Penguin, 1979) p. 98.

20

Ibid. p. 98.

21

See Abraham Maslow, <u>The Psychology of Science</u> (New York:Harper
and Row, 1966).

22

See Abraham Maslow, <u>Motivation and Personality</u> (New York:Harper
and Row, 1970)

23

Assagioli, <u>Psychosynthesis.</u> pp. 199-202.

24

<u>Ibid</u>. p. 86 and p. 113.

25

<u>Ibid</u>. p. 18.

26

<u>Ibid</u>. p. 126.

27

<u>Ibid</u>. p. 211.

28

Calvin S. Hall, <u>A Primer of Freudian Psychology</u> (New York; Mentor
Books, 1954), p. 28.

29

<u>Ibid</u>. p. 22 ff.

30

<u>Ibid</u>. p. 22 ff.

31

Carl Jung, <u>Psychological Types</u>. Trans. H. G. Baynes (Princeton, N. J.:
Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 452.

32

Jacobi, <u>Psychology of Jung</u>. p. 27.

33

Assagioli, <u>Psychosynthesis</u>. p. 76,

34

Jung, <u>Psychological Types</u>. p. 452.

35

Jacobi, <u>Psychology of Jung</u>. p. 27.

36

Assagioli, <u>Will</u>. p. 12.

37

Assagioli, <u>Psychosynthesis</u>. p. 113.

38

In <u>The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology</u>, Vol. 8., No. 1., 1976,
p. 5f., Anthony Sutitch's story of the
emergence of the transpersonal orientation
in psychology in America was published in
memoriam. Together, he and Abraham
Maslow founded <u>The Journal of Humanistic
Psychology</u> and launched the Association of
the same name in 1961. In 1969 they went on

to found The Journal of Transpersonal
Psychology to publish research and articles
on the transpersonal process, peak experi-
ences, transcendence of self, spirit, syner-
gy, cooperation and related concepts, ex-
periences and activities.

39
Miller, "Work in Progress". p. 6.

40
Assagioli, Psychosynthesis. p. 24.

41
Ibid. p. 214.

42
Ibid. p. 20.

43
Ibid. p. 206.

44
Ibid. p. 87.

45
See Roberto Assagioli, Jung and Psychosynthesis (A Series of Three
Lectures given in 1966 at the Instituto di
Psicosintesi, Florence, Italy, and publish-
ed in New York by Psychosynthesis Research
Foundation in 1967). In Stuart Miller's
interview previously cited, Assagioli also
commented on how Jung's concept of the
Self changed over the years.

46
Jacobi, Psychology. p. 127.

47
Carl G. Jung, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology. Trans. R. F. C.
Hull (Princeton, N. J. :Princeton University
Press, 1966) p. 177. This was originally
written by Jung in 1928.

48
Carl G. Jung, Psychology and Alchemy. Trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton,
N. J.:Princeton University Press, 1968) p.
41. This was originally published in 1944.

49
Assagioli, Jung. p. 15.

50
Ibid. p. 15.

51
Ibid. p. 15.

52

Assagioli uses this expression of Henri Bergson from his work, Two Sources of Morality and Religion (New York;Doubleday, 1954).

53

Miller, "Work in Progress". p. 7.

54

Assagioli, Will. p. 260-261. Here Assagioli further discussed the relationship between the Transpersonal Self and Ontological Reality which he names the Universal Self. There will be more discussion on this in chapter II on the process of spiritual psychosynthesis.

55

Jung, Two Essays. p. 77.

56

Carl G. Jung, The Structure of the Psyche, Trans. R. F. C. Hull, (Princeton, N. J.;Princeton University Press, 1960) p. 158. These comments were originally written by Jung in 1927/31.

57

Jacobi, Psychology. p. 35.

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Assagioli, Psychosynthesis. p. 19.

59

Ibid. p. 309.

60

Assagioli, Will. p. 13.

61

Liliane Frey-Rohn, From Freud to Jung:A comparative Study of The Psychology of The Unconscious, Trans. Fred E. Engreen and Evelyn K. Engreen (New York;Delta, 1976).

62

Hall, Primer. p. 48.

63

Sigmund Freud, Some Elementary Lessons in Psycho-Analysis, (1938) Trans. Anna Freud, Starchey, Tyson and Richards, Ed. James Starchey (New York; Macmillan, 1953). p. 286.

64

Jacobi, Psychology. p. 11.

65

Carl G. Jung, Psychological Types, Trans. H. G. Baynes, Revised R. F. C. Hull (Princeton, N. J.;Princeton University Press, 1971) p. 236. This was first published in 1921.

66

Jacobi, Psychology. p. 13.

67.

Professor Calo, Encyclopedia italiana di scienze, lettre ed arti ,
(Rome, 1929-1939, Vol. 35) p. 559.

68

Assagioli, Will. p. 15.

69

Sam Keen, "The Synthetic Vision:a Conversation with Roberto Assagioli",
Voices and Visions (New York;Harper and
Row, 1974) p. 208.

70

James Meyer O. F. M., The Words of St. Francis:an Anthology (Chicago,
Ill. :Fransiscan Herald Press, 1952) p.
169-170.

71

Assagioli, Will. p. 19.

72

Ibid. p. 135.

73

Ibid. pp. 51-61.

74

See Calvin Hall and Gardner Lindsey, Theories of Personality, third
edition, (New York;John Wiley & Sons, 1978)
p. 157ff

75

Assagioli, Jung. p. 5.

76

Jung, Types. p. 383-4.

77

Frank Haronian, "The Repression of the Sublime", Synthesis;The
Realization of the Self. (Redwood City, Ca.
The Synthesis Press, 1974) p. 125.

78

Assagioli, Will. p. 257.

CHAPTER II


PSYCHOSYNTHESIS AS A PROCESS OF HUMAN GROWTH AND CHANGE


Now that we have looked at the definitions and maps used by

Assagioli to explain the psychological structure of the person, we may

consider how he understood the process of human growth. To do this

we shall review his understanding of human nature and the human

possibility and the process by which human growth is achieved.

Assagioli viewed the person as part of the larger system of life

and proposed that the individual's life energies follow growth patterns

found in all organic life. In 1934, he called for the development of a

psychodynamics of human growth science which would understand and

utilize such energies psychologically:

> The transformation of energies is a natural process
> going on at all times, both 'horizontally', within
> each level- physical, biological, and psychological -
> and 'vertically', between all levels, where it can be
> seen as sublimation or degradation, according to
> whether energy is carried to a higher or lower level.[1]

Through his own psychological investigation of personality and behavior

change he found that the human possibility for growth involved a movement

toward higher levels of integration through a process of energy transfor-

mation.

This view was corroborated by the findings of two-time Nobel prize

winner biologist Albert Szent Gyoergyi who discovered a "drive in living

matter to perfect itself".[2] He called this impulse "syntropy"[3] and defined

it as the tendency to harmonize and synthesize various aspects at ever higher levels of organization. It was Assagioli's view that this natural impulse, syntropy, found in all organic growth is the foundation within human nature for the principle of synthesis he found operating in human growth and change. "Synthesis" is in fact the psychological term Assagioli used to describe the human possibility. Thus "psychosynthesis" means the process by which the individual consciously cooperates with the natural movement of evolution towards ever higher levels of integration and synthesis.

Assagioli compared his view of the principle of synthesis to what paleontologist and theologian Teilhard de Chardin found in all nature and called the "complexification of forces"[4] and "convergence"[5]. In Teilhard's view, this movement became conscious in humanity as growth "toward and including a superindividual and cosmic center"[6] which he calls the Omega point.[7] It is not within the perameters of this paper to delve further into Teilhard's views as that would take us away from our main interest. The purpose here is to point out that Assagioli found and acknowledged others who had come to similar conclusions, and one specifically from the domain of Christian theology. He was aware, however, that other writers in the same field had included the term synthesis in their writings. He noted, for example, Janet's use of "synthesis mental"[8], that Freud wrote about the "synthesizing function"[9] of the ego, and that Jung mentioned "synthesis"[10] in his discussion of the transcendent function. He noted also that Maeder, Caruso, and

Stocker, amongst others used "synthetic psychotherapy"[11] to indicate

· the "development of an integrated and harmonious personality, including

both its conscious and unconscious parts".[12]

It is important however, to look at the specific psychological meaning

Assagioli gave the term. In his formulation of psychosynthesis, synthesis

is that process in which opposites, becoming balanced and synthesized,

establish a dynamic equilibrium "without resorting to compromise but

rather by regulation from higher level".[13] The difference between synthesis

and compromise is fundamental to Assagioli's approach. In synthesis

two elements or polarities "are absorbed into a higher unity endowed with

qualities which transcend those of either."[14] In psychosynthesis, the

possibility of synthesis within the person includes not only the conscious

and unconscious aspects of the personality, but a resolution of the

fundamental polarity between the human personality as a whole and the

Higher, Transpersonal Self. His distinctive view included what he called

"inter-individual synthesis"[15] in terms of which each individual becomes

included in and part of spiritual, super-individual Being.

> Whether we conceive it as a divine Being or as cosmic
> energy - the Spirit working upon and within all creation
> is shaping it into order, harmony, and beauty, uniting
> all beings (some willing but the majority as yet blind
> and rebellious) with each other through links of love,
> achieving - slowly and silently, but powerfully and
> irresistably - the Supreme Synthesis.[16]

For Assagioli, synthesis is both the goal and the means by which the

psychosynthesis of the person is achieved. It is the human possibility.

Assagioli's view shows similarities to and differences from an

existential understanding. Both psychosynthesis and existential psy-

chotherapy start from within the personality, see growth as on-going and give central importance to the issues of meaning, values, choice and responsibility. They also acknowledge the place of anxiety and suffering in life, the fact of loneliness, the need for a clear awareness of motivation in determining choices, and the future's dynamic role in the present. Psychosynthesis is distinctive in 1) holding the view that the self can be experienced independently of any content, that this is a true phenomenological experience and an inner reality which can be empirically verified; 2) giving a central place to the will; 3) acknowledging the existence and role of the higher unconscious, of peak experiences and the Self; 4) encouraging the use of active techniques which help the individual to acknowledge the temporary nature of experiences such as loneliness and pain and to work towards the planned reconstruction of the personality around a new unifying center in such a way that transformational change occurs.

> The main contention of psychosynthesis is that no mere analytic treatment is sufficient to bring about true integration and growth, which require the use of active techniques and of other help.[17]

In his use of transformational language Assagioli spoke as if he were already in the domain of religion. Yet he was never content merely to outline the higher possibilities of human nature. He went on to describe the stages of the process and the means or facilitating techniques whereby these possibilities could be achieved. To a consideration of these we may now turn.

The process of psychosynthesis occurs in the growth of the in-

dividual when the human personality is regenerated and consciously built around a new higher center. This process by which a higher life is said to begin is described under two headings: personal psychosynthesis and spiritual psychosynthesis. The separation of this process into a personal and a spiritual phase represents an attempt to express a cyclical organic process in a linear explanatory form. What Assagioli claimed to observe was that these processes of personal and spiritual growth are in a dynamic relationship with each other. In other words, both phases are present in all human growth to some extent whether consciously recognized or not. The important point to note here is that in the viewpoint of psychosynthesis, spiritual experience is a natural part of human growth and can be the catalyst for a drastic transformation of the personality.

In his work with people, Assagioli discovered that some of them were content with all that could be achieved through personal psychosynthesis while others yearned to continue their growth towards higher levels of integration. Abraham Maslow's work seemed to verify this experience. Maslow's research on "self-actualizers"[18], people who had achieved a successful and satisfying level of functioning, led him to create another category which he called transcendent self-actualizers. These people were he described as having a stronger need for transcendence, not in the dichotomous sense but in an "hierarchical - integrative"[19] way in which the higher is built upon and includes the lower.

Assagioli saw personal psychosynthesis as leading to self-actualization in the general understanding of the term, and spiritual psychosynthesis as

a way to self-realization, that is, to the realization of the Self. Here there is "the experience and the awareness of the synthesizing spiritual Center."[20]

In the process of personal psychosynthesis, the person moves through four stages. These do not always occur one at a time because of the organic nature of human growth. Although the four stages tend to come one after another, they may be experienced again and again as in the diagram of the spiral (Figure 8)[21] which illustrates how the process can be both on-going and yet have a goal. I shall present each stage, the inner experience connected with it, the way the experience comes about, and how the individual participates in the process.

The first stage calls for basic awareness or movement towards a thorough knowledge of the personality. In day to day functioning, most peoples' conscious awareness can be represented as a continous flow and variety of thoughts, feelings, sensations and images. Becoming conscious of one's inner state is a prerequisite for participating in one's own growth process. To gain a thorough knowledge of the personality then, it is essential to become aware of the present situation, the inner as well as the outer environment.

Sometimes experiences push their own way into the focus of consciousness by becoming so strong that they displace everything else, as when the sensation of hunger becomes so great that the individual can think only of his stomach. The emotion of sorrow may be so overwhelming, that the person forgets to eat. This is quite different from consciously choosing to pay attention to the many different contents which
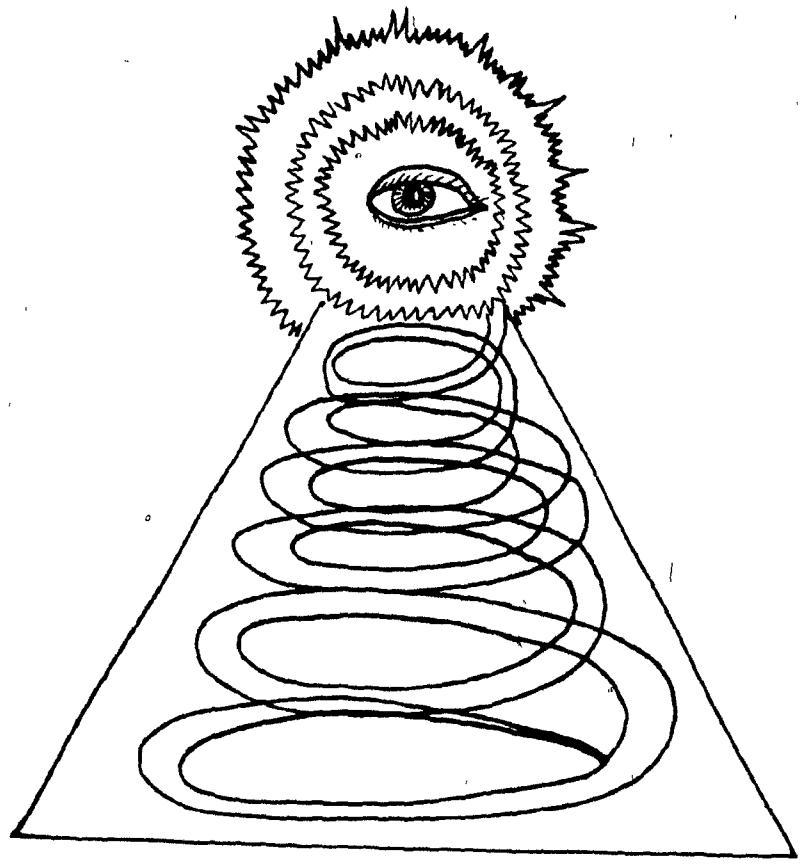
Fig. 8. -- Spiral of Growth

may be present in awareness in different intensities and at different
levels of consciousness at any particular moment. When there is a
conscious choice to pay attention, there is a growing awareness that
accompanies that choice. As the person decides to pay attention to what
is happening, s/he is moving into active participation in their own
unique growth process.

Choosing and re-choosing to give one's present mental process one's
full attention is demanding. Assagioli therefore suggested a variety of
techniques to facilitate this and to help overcome obstacles. These
procedures consist of relaxation, meditation, the recording of dreams,
insights and inspirations in a journal, spontaneous drawing, guided imagery,
body movement (either spontaneous or willed), music, "live it again
excercises"[22], and "assuming the witness position".[23] In psychosyn-
thesis the purpose of using a particular technique must be kept in mind.
so that the technique itself does not become the focal point of attention.
The emphasis is always put on what the individual experiences as most
important for her growth and why. The assumption is that the individual
truly knows what is best for her own growth. The purpose of this first
step is to help the person develop trust in her own inner knowing and
gain increased knowledge of the terrain she is exploring, whether the
middle, higher, lower or collective unconscious. It also has a larger
purpose:

> This awareness, this attitude of maintaining a conscious
> inner 'presence' does not stop with the observation of
> what 'happens' within oneself and in the external world.
> It makes possible the active intervention and commit-
> ment on the part of the self, who is not only an observer,

> but also a will-er, a directing agent of the play
> of the various functions and energies.[24]

The second phase of personal psychosynthesis involves learning

to control the various elements of the personality. In order for the

individual to grow, it is necessary that the energies made conscious

be regulated, redirected or sometimes transformed into higher energies.

Awareness is not an end in itself but is the first step on the path to self-

identification and eventually to Self realization. As mentioned in Chapter

1, Assagioli's observations led him to conclude that awareness of the

"I" does not happen spontaneously. It is the "I" which can direct and

redirect the other aspects of the personality once it is known and ex-

perienced. The basic method used to achieve this is called "Dis-iden-

tification".[25] This technique which takes many forms is based on what

Assagioli designated as the fundamental psychological principle:

> We are dominated by everything with which our
> self becomes identified. We can dominate and
> control everything from which we can disidentify
> ourselves.[26]

Once the individual is able to separate the unique self from images and

complexes, those constellations of energy which are but projections of the

self, it then becomes possible to differentiate between the self and the

vehicles of the self. An example would be the distinction between the

feeling of anger and the subject who has the feeling. When the person

becomes aware of the experience of anger and is able to observe the

experience, then the "I" is no longer controlled by the anger. The "I"

is then in charge and can choose what to do with the feeling or how to

express it. The effectiveness of this technique is its experiential

quality. For this reason, I include a sample exercise:

I have a body, but my Self is not my body. My body may experience various conditions of health or sickness, pleasure or pain, rest or fatigue, but these alternations of physical states do not affect my essence - my true Self. I value my body and seek to maintain it in good health. It is my precious instrument of experience and action in the world, and it brings me great delight. But it is only an instrument; it is not my self. I have a body, but my Self is not my body. Now let us take a minute to reflect on the central thought here: 'I have a body which my Self uses, but I am not my body', and try to realize this as an experienced fact in your consciousness.

I have emotions, but my Self is not my emotions. I experience an endless variety of emotional states, frequently contradictory and always changing. My feelings may swing from love to hatred, from calm to anxiety, from sorrow to joy, and yet my essence, my true Self, does not change. At times my emotions seem to control me, to take me over, but I can learn to direct and integrate them. Though a wave of fear or anger may threaten to submerge me, these temporary states will pass in time. I can acknowledge my emotions without fear, as I am the one in control of my own life and am not identified with passing emotional states. I can observe and understand my emotions, and gradually learn to direct and harmonize them. I have emotions, but my Self is not my emotions. Take a moment now to reflect on the central thought here: 'I have emotions', and try to realize this as an experienced fact in your consciousness.

I have a mind, but my Self is not my mind. My mind is a valuable tool of discovery and expression. It is an organ of knowledge in the inner and outer worlds, but it is not myself. The contents of my mind are constantly changing as it embraces new knowledge, thoughts, and experience. Sometimes it refuses to obey me, so it cannot be myself. I have a mind, but my Self is not my mind. Now let us take a moment to reflect on the central thought in this passage: 'I have a mind, which my Self can use, but I am not my mind', and attempt to realize this as an experienced fact.

I engage in various activities and play many roles in life, but my Self is something more than the roles I play. At different times I may play the role of parent or child, wife or husband, teacher or student, nurse or artist or executive. I can choose the roles I wish to play and

learn to play those I choose as well as possible. When
I remain aware that I am not only the actor playing these
roles, but also the author of the script and the director
of the acting, I can play my roles more consciously,
freely, and skillfully. Let us concentrate for a moment
on the central thought here: 'I play many roles in life, and
can learn to do so increasingly from my own center, but
I am not these roles of outward activities', and attempt to
realize this as an experienced fact in your consciousness[27]

This is one particular way of achieving dis-identification and is
suggested for use by individuals outside structured settings. It is worded so
that through reading and repetition, it will evoke "the inner experience of
pure self (-I consciousness) awareness independent of any content or function
of the ego in the sense of personality".[28] This experience can also be
facilitated by a therapist in individual or group work using other appropriate
means. Assagioli proposed specific psychological principles or laws as
the rationale for the effectiveness of all such techniques; these will be
presented later in this chapter. The over-arching purpose of the exercises
is to make the principles conscious, so that individuals can take respon-
sibility for their own actions in any setting.

Practising dis-identification leads to the next stage in the process,
"self -identification"[29], the conscious experience of the "I" as a stable,
permanent, unifying center pointing to the experience of a higher center,
the Self. In other words, it is through the experience of the individual
personal self, the "I" as distinct from any of the vehicles of body, mind,
emotions or the various roles, that the discovery of the true nature or
reality of the Self becomes possible. The first stage is the experience
of the personal self or "I" and in the second stage the personal "I"
consciousness expands so the Higher or Transpersonal Self is

recognized. This expansion can happen suddenly as in moments of illumination or it can be facilitated gradually by deliberate and appropriate techniques. The Self-identification exercise, which always accompanies the dis-identification exercise outlined previously, is one example of such a technique:

> What am I then? What remains when I have disidentified from my body, my emotions, my mind and my outer roles and activities? It is the essence of myself - a center of pure consciousness and of creative energy. It is the permanent factor in the ceaseless flux of my life - that which gives me a sense of being, of continuity, of inner peace and balance. Let us take a few minutes right now to identify with this center, to enter into it and experience the quality of its energy. (pause) I recognize and affirm myself as a center of pure consciousness, a center of creative love and will. (pause) By remaining in contact with my true Self, I can realize my highest destiny in the world and my oneness with all beings. I can bring all the aspects of my personality into harmony and alignment with the will of the Self.[30]

This self-identification exercise is always followed by an exercise in reappropriating the personality vehicles such as:

> Having experienced our identity with the Self, with the source of Creative Energy, let us now bring back this energy to infuse and revitalize the various aspects of our personality so that they can become more fully an expression of the Self.
>
> Let us first of all infuse our mind with the energy of the Self. Let us experience it flooded with the light and power of the Higher Intelligence which dwells at the center of our being. Feel that your mind is now able to function with greater clarity, ease, and understanding, nourished by the energy of the Self, the Source.
>
> Now let us infuse our emotions with the energy of the Self. Let us feel that we can experience them now more deeply and authentically. We can acknowledge without fear or shame our negative emotions and feel better able to channel them constructively with the will and wisdom of our true Self. We can allow ourselves to be

more open to the expanding, positive emotions of love,
joy, beauty, and oneness which flow from the Source,
revitalizing our own lives and those of others. We are
more and more able to remain centered in the storms
of life, responding in a positive way to the challenges
which are sent to strengthen us.

And now let us infuse our body with the energy of the
Self, feeling it filled in every cell with new life, health
and harmony. As we draw on the energy of the Source,
we can feel greater awareness, a new aliveness, in all
our senses. We gain a new respect for and delight in
our body and in our senses as a means of entering into
fuller contact with the world around and within us, as
a means of experiencing the glory, the wonder, the
beauty, the pain and the mystery of spirit in matter.

To conclude, let us take a few moments to realize
how the Self, the center of consciousness and creative
energy, can revitalize and harmonize all the aspects
of ourself: our mind, our emotions and our body.
Allow yourself to experience as fully as possible the
healing energy-the vitality, the joy,the strength, and
the peace - of the Source infused in all aspects of your
being. Stay with this experience as long as you wish,
and when you feel ready, you can open your eyes again.
When your eyes open, you will feel fully present in the
here and now - more peaceful, alive, and aware than
you did before, and able to use this energy to renew your
life.[31]

The "sub-personality map"[32] is another means which facilitates

disidentification. Sub-personality is a term Assagioli used to indicate

semi-autonomous aspects of the person, the different "selves"[33] which

often act independently and unconsciously and with which the individual

may become identified. The map illustrates the problems and polarizations

which can result from unconscious identification. The purpose of sub-

personality exercises[34] is to make it possible for the individual to

dis-identify from each subpersonality, move to the position of the observer

and closer to the experience of the "I". From this new standpoint the

individual is free to choose which aspect of the personality s/he wishes

to express in a particular situation, to direct rather than be controlled
by the inner multiplicity. This approach is said to be based on the
active participation of the person in "recognition, acceptance, coor-
dination, integration and synthesis"[35] and to avoid repression. The goal
is an integrated personality in which sub-personalities have been trans-
formed and have become expressions of the qualities and will of the Self.
The process is illustrated by the diagram, "stages of personality integ-
ration" ( figure 9 ).[36]

The recognition of the "I" and its connection with the Self is also
encouraged by techniques based on the "ideal model".[37] In such exercises,
the individual is encouraged to visualize the ideal or authentic personality
adequate to his present stage of development and psychological type as
an outward projection of their own true self:

> While it does not represent the most direct way or the
> highest achievement, it may, despite appearances,
> constitute for the time-being a satisfactory form of
> indirect self-realization. In the best instances the
> individual does not really lose himself in the external
> object but frees himself in that way from self interests
> and personal limitations; he realizes himself through
> the external ideal or being. The latter thus becomes
> an indirect but true link, a point of connection between
> the personal man and his higher Self, which is reflected
> and symbolized in that object.[38]

The diagram ( figure 10 )[39] should help to make this process more clear.
The purpose of making this connection with the Higher Self at this time
is to facilitate the process of disidentification and Self-identification.
This is an example of how spiritual and personal psychosynthesis overlap.
The energies of the Higher Self are needed for growth even at the personal
level whether or not the individual chooses to pursue conscious realization
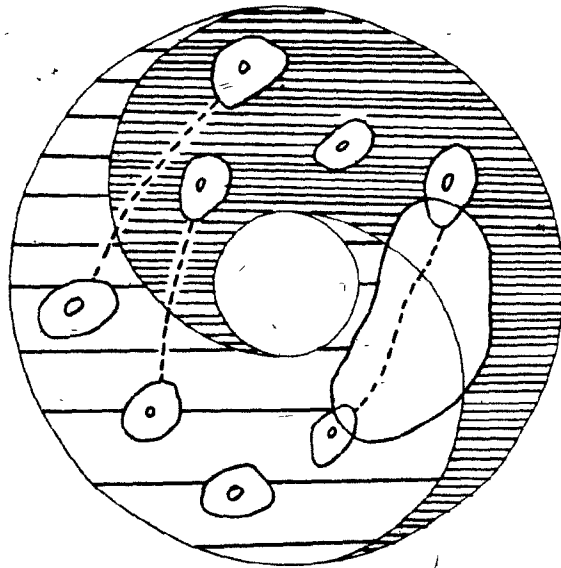
A POORLY INTEGRATED PERSONALITY    A MODERATELY INTEGRATED PERSONALITY    AN IDEALLY INTEGRATED PERSONALITY
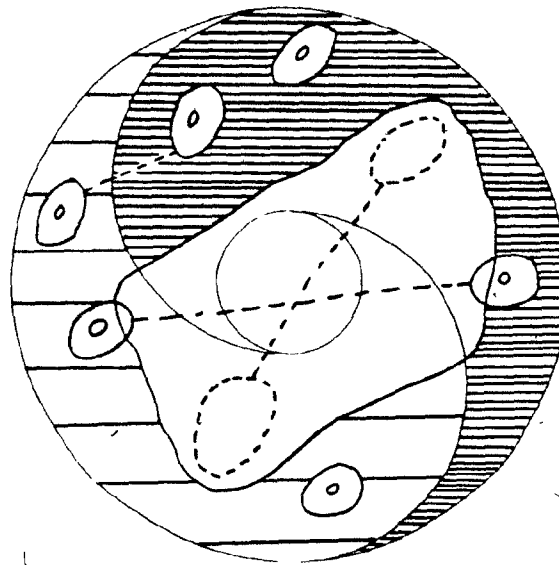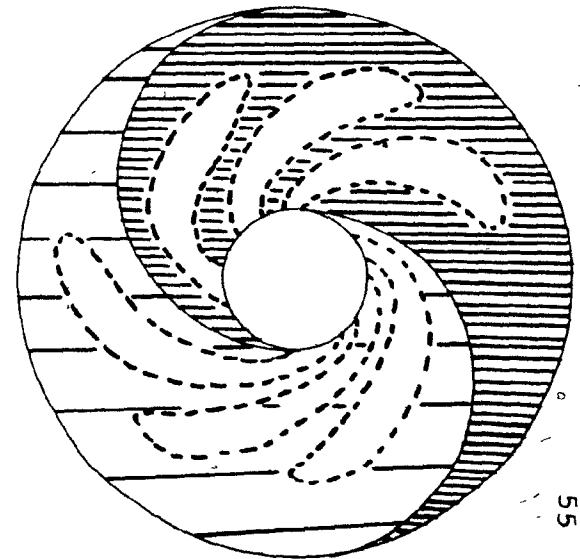
CODE: - The yellow area represents that which is the realm of conscious awareness.
      - The circle in the center represents the "I" or integrating center of the personality.
      - The comma-shaped striped areas represent polarities within the personality such as love and will, mind and feelings,
        or expression and receptivity.  The shape is taken from an ancient version of the yin-yang symbol.
      - The cell-like entities represent subpersonalities.  Many are connected by a dotted line to indicate that they are
        often found in relationship to an opposite pole.

Fig. 9. -- Subpersonalities
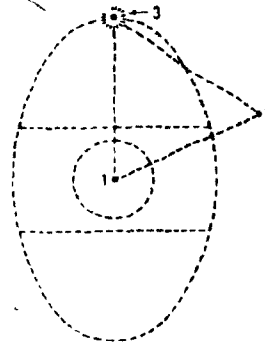
1. Conscious self or "I"
2. External Unifying Center
3. Higher Self

Fig. 10. -- The Ideal Model

of this higher spiritual Self.

The last step in this phase of the growth process is the development of a plan or inner program for the reconstruction of the personality around the new center. This building of a new personality is the actual psychosynthesis, which calls for active cooperation in the evolutionary process. There are two main ways this task can be approached. The individual may develop a plan or inner program by visualizing the purpose to be achieved and clearly seeing the tasks involved. This is called the path of ascent. The other way is by a conscious widening of the channel of communication with the Self which involves eliminating obstacles and resistances and letting the creative power of the Spirit act by descending into the personality. These, ascent and descent, are the two aspects of the process mentioned in the preceding chapter by which the individual can become aware of the activity and energies of the higher unconscious as well as the Higher Self.

Each approach is valid and may be more appropriate at different times, or in varying degrees, for different individuals. Whichever approach is emphasized the process includes the utilization and transmutation of all the available energies released from the unconscious so that the individual can bring about the desired change in personality. Once there is a clear picture of the total personality and a knowledge of the psychological laws operating, the individual is able to proceed in the work of facilitating change. In order to achieve the goal of a well grounded and continually growing personality, the will is necessary to help coordinate other functions and to transmute the released psychological

energies. Transmutation will be discussed in more depth as a part of the process of spiritual psychosynthesis. The important point to note here is that the more consciously the "I" is experienced, the more actively the will can be called upon to participate in the growth process. This is what Assagioli referred to as the intimate connection between the I and the will. Furthermore, as the "I" wills, this experience of conscious choice strengthens the experience of the Self. No matter what techniques may be employed to quieten the mind, body and emotions or to activate the imagination to facilitate the experience of the I-Self, all require the will.

Will training is involved in all aspects of personal psychosynthesis involving the experience of the "I" and the recognition of the will. When individuals are able to observe how the will is, or is not, operating in their lives, they have taken the first step. Assagioli affirmed that there is always enough will to work on the will.

To assist this process, Assagioli indicated the various aspects of the will he identified as operating in human choice: its strength, skill, goodness, transcendence, and universality. Experience reveals that a strong will is not sufficient. With the best intentions, a person may choose to oppose a particular function or need, such as desire, but to no avail. What is often lacking is not strength but skill, or an understanding of how the will functions. This is necessary in order to work with obstacles to growth, because obstacles often need to be transformed in some way rather than be overcome.

To this end, Assagioli outlined ten psychological laws operating in

the growth process and proposed that knowledge of these, and use

of techniques based on them, are necessary if the individual is to

participate in this process and achieve psychosynthesis. These laws

are especially important in learning how to use the will skillfully. For

our purposes, it will be sufficient to list them, through a much more

extensive examination is to be found in The Act of Will:[40]

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

2. Attitudes, movements and actions tend to evoke cor-
responding images and ideas; these, in turn (according
to the next law) evoke or intensify corresponding emotions
and feelings.

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

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

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

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

7. Repetitions of actions intensify the urge to further re-
iteration and render their execution easier and better,
until they come to be performed unconsciously.

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

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

10. Psychological energies can find expression: 1. directly
(discharge - catharsis ) 2. indirectly, through symbolic

action 3. through a process of transmutation.[41]

Once these laws are understood, the individual can practice applying them; this choice in itself strengthens the will. Through this increased awareness, the individual can take responsibility for the "self-training"[42] of whatever aspects of her personality need developing. Unlike behavior modification, psychosynthesis emphasizes the individual's awareness of why and how behavioral changes take place. This emphasis is essential to psychosynthesis because it is based on an individual's ability to take full responsibility for his actions.

The purpose of will training is to achieve more than just strength and skill.

> ...In reality the isolated man does not exist; he is in
> constant interaction with his family, his working as-
> sociates and society in general. His relationships
> are many and diverse. However strong and able he
> may be, an individual who fails to take these relation-
> ships into consideration inevitably arouses reactions
> and conflicts that often defeat his aims...The individual
> will face another and higher task, that of diciplining
> itself and choosing such aims as are consistent with the
> welfare of others and the common good of humanity.[43]

This approach clearly differentiates the work of psychosynthesis from many contemporary approaches which emphasize self awareness, self assertion and self satisfaction as overriding goals. In psychosynthesis the development of right relationships is considered essential for growth and is said to be dependent on "the active development and expression of good will"[44] together with the elimination of the obstacles of selfishness, "self-centeredness, the tendency to refer everything to the personal self and to consider everything from the angle of one's own personality",[45]

and the lack of understanding of others. The important point to note here is that active means are considered necessary in order to develop a good will, "a will that chooses and wants the good".[46]

One active means which Assagioli proposed is the development and use of empathy. This approach encourages "genuine existential understanding"[47] rather than merely intellectual knowledge about others. Technology has made it possible to aquire more and more information. We can learn all about people in a distant country, their customs, their culture, their suffering and yet not truly understand them, let alone truly love them. Closer to home, we can love our children yet fail to understand them. Assagioli suggested that empathy, the projection of one's own understanding into the experience of another, is the missing factor in these situations. His point was that empathy can be actively aroused and trained because of the essential unity of human nature.

> It gives us insight into the wonder and mystery of
> human nature, in which so many and such contrasting
> elements are found side by side: the core of goodness
> and the possibilities for change existing in the criminal,
> as well as the foibles, imperfections, and primitive
> drives to be found in every great man. We become
> aware of the conflicts going on within both these extreme
> human types and in all intermediate ones, and of the
> consequent suffering involved; and we recognize them to
> be similar to our own. Thus we are induced to drop
> the ordinary attitude of passing judgment on others.
> Instead a sense of wide compassion, fellowship, and
> solidarity pervades us.[48]

The development of the good will involves a balanced integration and union of love and will. In The Act of Will, Assagioli reviewed the various types of love and the ways in which love can be developed by will.

In his discussion of fraternal, altruistic, humanitarian love, he referred to P.A. Sorokin's "Altruistic Love: a Study"[49] and to Martin Luther King's The Strength of Love.[50] These reflections are reminiscent of Eric Fromm's work on maternal, paternal, fraternal and erotic love in The Art of Loving.[51] For the purpose of this discussion however it is important to note Assagioli's insistence on the need for will to develop love for "what is higher and best in ourselves".[52] He emphasized the role such love could play in dispersing egoistic self-love and developing love for others based on empathy, compassion, intellectual understanding and spiritual communion. Furthermore he proposed that the love of God exists innately within all of us and urged us to unify with that Reality whatever name we may give it.

Discipline, patience and persistence are the qualities of the will which are needed to practive love well according to Assagioli because human love "is not simply a matter of feeling, an affective condition or disposition."[53]

> The establishment of a successful love relationship entails
> the possession, or acquisition, of an adequate amount of
> physical, psychological, and spiritual knowledge paralleling
> and in large measure the same as, that required
> for good willing. Thus good will and good love are
> closely related. As with good willing, the knowledge
> relevant to good loving concerns the structure of the
> human being, his various functions and the laws gover-
> ning them.... After such a preparation, the specific
> tasks leading to the harmonization and unification of
> love and will can be undertaken effectively. There are
> three methods suitable for this purpose:
> - The first consists in developing the weaker of the
> two, making both loving and willing equally available.
> - The second aims at awakening, and then manifesting,
> the higher aspects of both.

- The third is bringing them into operation together in alternation, in such a way that each arouses and reinforces the other... and aims at a gradual fusion of love and will and their resultant synergy.[54]

What is significant in Assagioli's exposition is the stand he took in relation to the individual's responsibility. He pointed again and again to the need for individuals to take action, to respond to their higher inner urges, to take responsibility for their lives, their growth, their relationships with others, with all humanity and with God.

This approach goes far beyond "I'm O. K. , You're O. K."[55] to suggest that the human possibility transcends simple self assertion. People are not always O. K.; change is not only possible but is a responsibility. Individuals can choose to become conscious of where they are in their development personally, interpersonally and transpersonally and can choose to bring about necessary changes. This view does not claim that people should strive to become perfect. It suggests, rather, that it is an essential part of human nature to participate in transformation and that "the choice is always ours".[56] Assagioli viewed the process of growth as including the possibility of transcendence, transcendence of the little personal self and the personal will with a view to union with Self and with higher energies and qualities. Animated by good will

> an individual tends to establish close relationships with other human beings, and will be ready to ally his [her] will with that of others for constructive ends...We can deliberately choose to stimulate and foster this natural process of development and growth by means of skillful application of various techniques used in psychosynthesis.[57]

Assagioli recognized that not everyone will choose to pursue the transcendent aspect of the will , but whether it is consciously developed

or not, the human possibility can never be realized without it. Indeed, the need for transcendence remains as an enduring factor in human nature This constitutes a continuing challenge to the will since "every need arouses sooner or later, a corresponding will".[58]

Assagioli went on to claim that there is a fundamental human need and therefore "will to transcend personality limitations through union with someone or something greater and higher."[59] The need and will to transcend the limitations of normal consciousness may be experienced in different ways. For Assagioli all such ways converge in the process of spiritual psychosynthesis. Described by him, this process recognizes the place of transcendence and spiritual experiences in the natural growth process of the person. Here, the individual finds himself impelled by the higher needs and urges emerging from the higher unconscious. While the particular means may vary, spiritual psychosynthesis involves the increasing unification of personal identity, the personal "I" with the Self. The goal of spiritual psychosynthesis is the transcendence of the limitations of personal consciousness, without losing the center of individual awareness, through union with someone or something greater and higher. Transcendence may be achieved through meaning as described in Frankl's work Man's Search for Meaning;[60] transpersonal love; transpersonal action; beauty; and Self-realization.

As a result of the descriptions he received from clients and the research he did on the many types of transcendent experience, (e.g. conversion, mystical states), Assagioli developed a particular viewpoint.

He distinguished between: 1) temporary Self-realization, or the momentary blending of "I" consciousness and the Self after which the individual might lapse back into old patterns of functioning, and Self-realization, proper, the permanent unity of the "I" and the Self; 2) sudden illumination on one hand and on the other the gradual development of the integrated personality to include the superconscious elements and then to achieve unity with the Self; 3) experiences of the super-conscious as in spiritual awakening and peak experiences, on one hand and the experience of the Self in which the contents of consciousness are forgotten and there is a wholly other quality, a total experience of transcendence; 4) spontaneous descent in which "a product of psychological functions active at a level outside and above that of the normal conscious personality"[61], enters into the field of consciousness, and spontaneous ascent, in which individual consciousness is temporarily projected towards superconscious levels sometimes getting very near the Self.[62]

It is clear that Assagioli was addressing himself to religious experience. Psychosynthesis maintains that the individual is naturally drawn to this dimension of growth. Once a basic level of harmony is experienced within the personality, there can still follow a "sense of boredom, ennui, emptiness and meaninglessness which leads to a more or less blind search for 'something other', 'something more' .... It is both the drama and glory of man that this higher level, most often latent, sooner or later demands satisfaction, it demands to be taken into account and lived."[63] In other words, human nature is obliged to answer a call from the Beyond.

So we need to face courageously and willingly the re-
quirements for transcending the limitations of personal
consciousness, without losing the center of individual
awareness.  This is possible because individuality and
universality are not mutually exclusive; they can be
united in a blissful synthetic realization.  At this point
it might be objected that there have been many instances
of spontaneous sudden, unexpected illumination, without
any previous conscious striving or exertion.  In these
cases the initiative is taken by the Transpersonal Self,
which exerts a 'pull' from above.  This fact can be under-
stood by considering the psychological constitution of
human beings...that the will is the function in closest
relation to the self, the most direct expression of the
self.  This is true both for the personal self and for the
Transpersonal Self.  Just as there is a personal will -
so there is a Transpersonal Will, which is an expression
of the Transpersonal Self and operates from the super-
conscious levels of the psyche.  It is its action which is
felt by the personal self, or 'I' as a 'pull' or 'call'....
And this experience has been reported by many, often
interpreted as a call from God or some higher being.
I shall not discuss the interpretation...but the reality
and nature of this process should be recognized.[64]

It is important to mention here that Assagioli acknowledged that "an

individual may have genuine spiritual experiences without being at all

integrated; i.e., without having developed a well organized, harmonious

personality."[65]  In such cases, it is part of the therapist or guide's

responsibility to help the individual integrate such experiences which may

require more personal psychosynthesis.  On the other hand, a person

may have a spontaneous intense experience in which the individual

consciousness has been temporarily projected upwards toward the super-

conscious levels, sometimes getting very near the Self, and not knowing

what to make of it.  These experiences are often labeled religious or

pathological.  In Assagioli's view, helping professionals need to ap-

preciate the nature of these experiences if they are to provide adequate

guidance and support.

On the other hand, experiences such as depression or growing dissatisfaction, a deeper questioning of the meaning of life, nervous insomnia, increasing sensitivity, guilt, remorse and even the thought of suicide can be signs of the positive disintegration involved in spiritual awakening and not a symptom of pathology. Assagioli agreed that such "manifestation of crises are similar to some of the symptoms regarded as characteristic of psychoneuroses and borderline schizophrenic states."[66] He emphasized the importance of understanding persons in the whole of their existential reality to verify whether or not these experiences are spiritual in origin. When the conflict is caused by something new emerging from within, it should be considered carefully as part of the growth of the personality. In his book Psychosynthesis Assagioli devoted a chapter to Self realization and psychological disturbances in which he discussed at length the crises preceding spiritual awakening, the crises caused by spiritual awakening and reactions to spiritual awakening.[67] Spiritual awakening does not necessarily lead to Self realization and therefore Assagioli called for conscious participation in the process to assist positive integration at each stage of growth.

Acknowledging that there may be a painful side to spiritual growth, Assagioli affirmed that the human possibility calls for conscious participation in the process of Self-realization. To this end he described the process, techniques to facilitate it, and the means by which the individual can take responsibility for it. It will assist our present purpose if we devote some

attention to this process and to the techniques accompanying it.

The process of Self-realization, through which the human personality as a whole is united with the Self, involves the transmutation and transformation of psychological energies. These are energies which have either been released by analysis and by the disintegration of unconscious complexes or are latent and exist at various psychological levels. Transmutation of energy is a process going on all the time. Assagioli used the metaphor of heat and its transformation into motion and explained that this is the very same process that occurs when our emotions and impulses are changed into physical actions or into imaginative and intellectual activities or when "ideas stir up emotions or are transformed into plans and hence into actions."[68]

> Transmutation and transformation occur in two different
> ways, in two opposite directions, but ways which are
> not in opposition; they alternate and complete each other.
> The first is transmutation through sublimation [elevation];
> the second is transformation produced by the descent,
> the eruption of superconscious energies into the person -
> ality including the body   Their combined action brings
> about a complete bio-psychosynthesis.[69]

In spiritual psychosynthesis, transmutation involves changing psychological energies by re-directing them to higher purposes or a higher goal. Drives arising from the lower unconscious are not condemned or repressed. The individual knows through the awareness gained in the process of personal psychosynthesis that these lower aspects exist.

> Everyone is a little world, a microcosm in which all
> the kingdoms of nature are represented: the mineral,
> in bones etc; the vegetative life; the animal instincts;
> then the 'human conditions' from primitive man to the
> highest human possibility.  At present time we represent

the sum of all the evolution of the past from the mineral
kingdom on; but evolution does not stop with so-called
Homo sapiens: evolution is continuous, and our task
is to carry forward and foster this great evolutionary
impulse, without, however, repudiating the preceding
stages.[70]

Transmutation through sublimation involves recognizing the whole

picture including the lower drives and then the decision to accept them,

redirecting them to a higher goal. As the Talmud directs: "Serve God

with your bad impulses and with your good impulses".[71] In this way, the

psychological energy behind the drive is changed, transmuted and elevated.

Spiritual psychosynthesis calls for specific techniques to achieve

transmutation such as elevation, purification, interiorization, extension

or amplification, outer expression, the synthesis of opposites, and

substitution. The basic principle behind all these methods is that energy

follows thought. This has been elaborated in the psychological laws

mentioned previously under will training. In order that an individual may

have a sincere desire to change, it is necessary to know what needs

changing and the limitations and pain caused by the situation as it is. In

other words, spiritual psychosynthesis builds on personal psychosynthesis.

Once persons are aware that some of their psychological energy is bound

in patterns antithetical to their own growth or the growth of others, they

can work towards change. It will be sufficient if the various methods are

now briefly described.

In "elevation"[72], sexual energies experienced as physical sex drives

can be changed into emotional love; "possessive love into oblative love;

craving for sensuous pleasure into aspiration to experience aesthetic,

intellectual and spiritual joys."[73] Assagioli discussed this aspect of

transmutation at length in the chapter "Transmutation and Sublimation

of Sexual Energies".[74]

"Purification"[75] has to do with motivation which, if found to be

limiting, can be changed by consciously choosing a higher motivation

with a similar intention. For instance, in growing vegetables as a summer

hobby, the individual may discover that her intention is to hoard the

produce. By seeing this and by consciously deciding to share a specific

amount freely with those members of the community who are in need,

the individual may lift her motivation to higher levels, and thus purify it.

"Interiorization"[76] transmutes "vanity and pride into a sense of

inner dignity; personal self-assertion into spiritual affirmation; aggressive

drives into a tool for dealing with inner 'enemies'".[77] In this process an

extraverted negative attitude may be changed by utilizing its higher aspects

for constructive inner purposes.

"Extension"[78] changes egoistic love by amplifying it into ever

widening circles: love of family, of friends, of fellow workers, ones

country, and of humanity. This could be brought about in a situation where

parental love no longer has an outlet, as when children leave home, at

which point the individual may choose to redirect this energy of love into

involvement with handicapped children, orphans or refugees. Today,

many individuals are choosing not to have their own children. If they

consciously choose to use the energy of parental love by adopting or

by caring for society in some way, the outcome would be very different

from allowing their goals to remain self-centered.

"Outer expression"[79] is similar to extension in that it involves

service to humanity. Here aggressive tendencies are changed and these

may be directed towards the solution of social problems or dedicated to

an ideal. In all these cases, Assagioli warned against pseudo-sublimation

and affirmed that in this process it is the intention that counts.

The "synthesis of opposites"[80] involves the acknowledgement of inner

polarities whether they be physical, emotional, mental, spiritual or social,

and an attempt to reconcile them in new ways. Here the process of trans-

mutation involves "a protracted series of conflicts, approaches, and

contacts, each producing partial, increasingly expanded fusions... which

is the process of spiritual psychosynthesis".[81] The diagram (figure 11)[82]

indicates how it is possible to include and absord "the two elements into

a higher unity endowed with qualities differing from those of either of

them".[83]

"Substitution"[84] involves deliberately replacing a negative attitude

or assumption with the opposite positive thought. This can be achieved

through repeated affirmation, meditation on positive qualities or character

traits such as patience, peace, simplicity and joy, or through the use of the

"as if" technique.[85] The first step to the "as if" technique involves

visualizing oneself "as if" one already possessed the desired traits. The

second step entails the actual acting in life situations "as if" one did posses

these qualities.

Transformation has already been mentioned in the preceding discus-

sion of energies descending in spontaneous unbidden spiritual experiences.
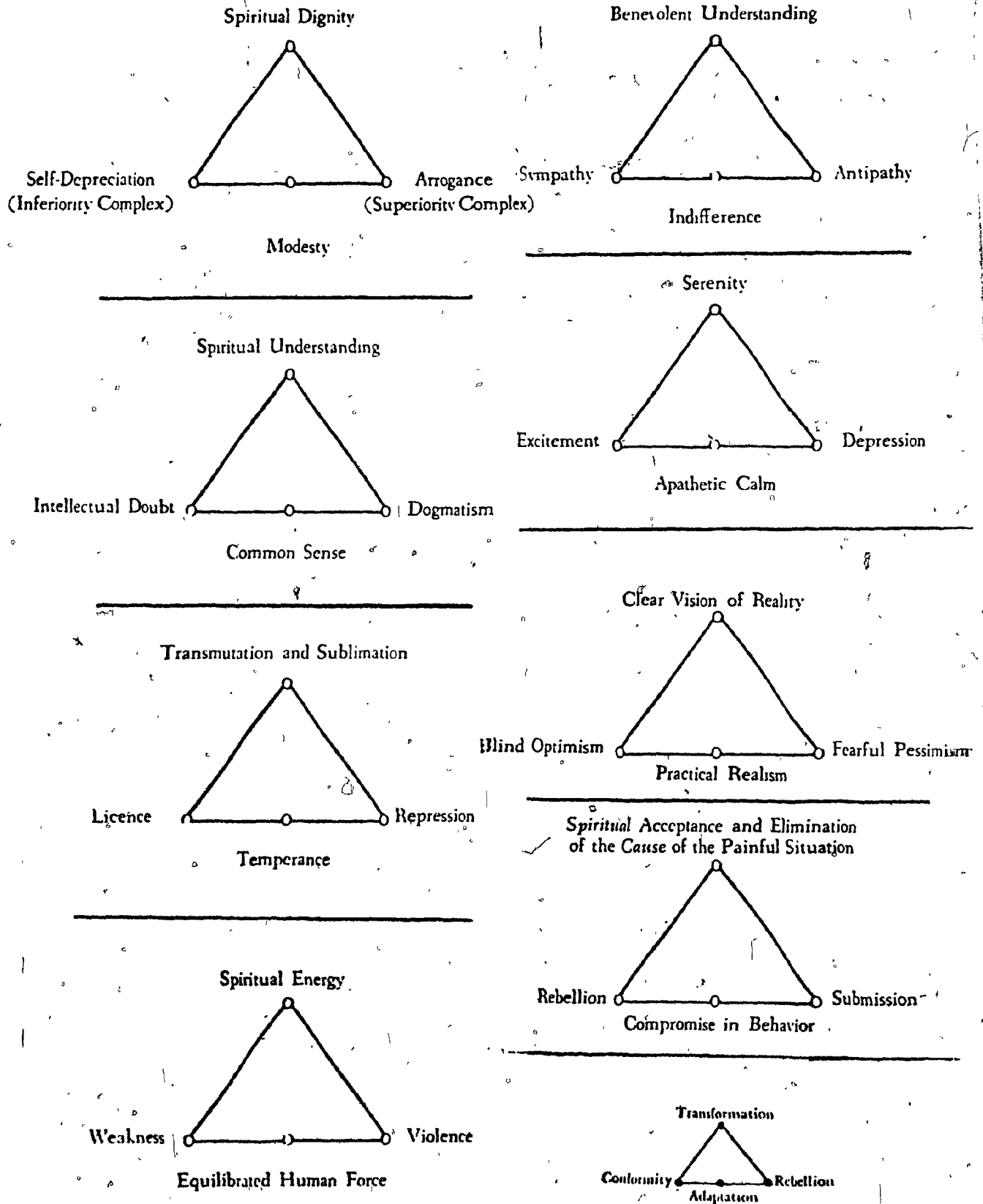
Fig. 11. -- Synthesis of Opposites.

Here, it is important to be aware of what is happening and how to integrate the experience into the total personality. Transformation may also involve consciously evoking the energy of the higher unconscious and the Self, as in the techniques of conversion,. symbol utilization, inner dialogue, guided affective imagery, and music. The development of intuition and insight, and the active utilization of the power of love are also means of evoking these higher energies. All of these can assist the person in moving closer towards the goal of spiritual psychosynthesis

"Conversion" [86] techniques transmute negative energy itself into something positive by applying the energies of the Self. This approach makes it very clear that "the energy we expend in negative ways is the very same energy that can be transformed into positive creative expression". [87] Methods of conversion include "turning the switch", [88] adopting an attitude which views obstacles as opportunities for growth, meditating on seed thoughts such as: "Cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light" (Romans 13:12).

The technique of symbol utilization involves using abstract or personified symbols to help overcome the difficulty our ordinary consciousness has in experiencing the Self. Abstract symbols would include such things as the star, the sun, the rose, the lotus and geometrical symbols such as this triangle. [89]
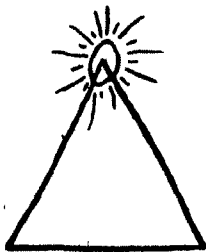
It is the personified symbol of the Inner Christ which is best known by Christians and often used by Christian mystics, although Assagioli noted that there is a further distinction to be made between the Inner Christ as a personification of the Self and the Biblical Christ, the son of God speaking inwardly to the individual. Assagioli did not elaborate on this point, but simply described its psychological use.

This method of using symbols can be combined with a technique of Inner Dialogue, in which the individual is encouraged to make an inner journey to discover the answer to a question or reach some insight to a problem that is difficult and for which the conscious self has no solution. Assagioli recalled Thomas a Kempis' use of such a technique in his famous book The Imitation of Christ, [90] in which he carried on a dialogue between his "aspiring personality and the Self as the Inner Christ". [91] Once again, Assagioli's stand was that the distinction between the historical Christ and the personification of the Self as the Inner Christ is not important if it enables the individual to move closer to what is real and wise.

Assagioli emphasized that mystical experience in itself is not the goal of spiritual psychosynthesis.

> the goal of spiritual psychosynthesis has the very
> practical purpose of increased creativity, of increased
> ability to give of oneself to some chosen field and that
> for certain types of individuals this may be achieved
> without any mystical experience whatsoever. There
> are many ways in which one may make living contact
> with the Self, which have no mystical quality at all. . . .
> The dialogue between the spiritual Self and the personality
> can be unaccompanied by any emotional exaltation; it can
> be on a clear, mental level, in a sense impersonal,
> objective and therefore unemotional. [92]

He proposed other exercises in which spiritual or transpersonal symbols can be used. "Higher introversion"[93] involves thinking about and reflecting on the meaning of a symbol, introjecting the symbol or identifying with it, and experimenting practically with it in daily life by keeping it present in the mind and seeing how much use can be made of it. Written reflection is encouraged to record ideas or experiences, as well as concentration, contemplation, invocation and silence, all of which clarify the meaning of a symbol. Symbols may also be used as a means of "guided affective imagery".[94] This approach has been used for years in therapy and for personal growth under various names such as the waking dream by Desoille, active imagination by Jung and Initiated Symbol Projection by Hanscarl Leuner. The method has some similarities to Freud's technique of Free Association and Dream Analysis. Guided Affective Imagery is different in that it is not passively dependant on the uncontrolled appearance of dreams whose forgotten language is obscure and difficult to understand. It "permits the initiation of psychological experiences similar to dreams almost at will".[95] The choice of symbols suggested is determined by the purpose of the imagery, that is whether it is being used to facilitate some aspect of personal or spiritual growth. Here again there is a dynamic relationship between these two dimensions that cannot be ignored. In exercises designed to encourage some spiritual awakening or insight, Assagioli himself developed guided imagery around the experience of the blossoming of a rose, Dante's Divine Comedy and the Legend of the Holy Grail. Similar guided imagery techniques, based on incidents por-

trayed in the Bible, are also used in the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius
Loyola.

Music can play an important role in evoking the energies of the Self.
Assagioli was aware of and encouraged the field of music therapy. He cited
the powerful healing influence of music in his chapter on "Music as a cause
of disease"[96] Music has "the magic touch which reawakens and warms
the heart and restores communion with nature, humanity and God".[97] The
use of music has of course been recognized by many religious traditions
and, for many centuries in our culture, the sole purpose of music was to
praise God and to speak to the highest in an individual, even in the face of
pain and difficulty. In Music and Your Mind [98], Helen Bonny and Louis
Savory S. J. express their affinity with Assagioli's work. In their book
they refer to these reflections of composer-conductor Aaron Copeland:

> Beethoven's finest works are the enactment of a triumph -
> - a triumph of affirmation in the face of the human
> condition. Beethoven is one of the great yeasayers
> among creative artists; it is exhilarating to share his
> clear-eyed contemplation of the tragic sum of life.
> His music summons forth our better nature; in purely
> musical terms Beethoven seems to be exhorting us to
> Be Noble, Be Strong, Be Great in Heart, yes, and be
> Compassionate.
> These ethical precepts we subsume from the music, but
> it is the music itself - the nine symphonies, the sixteen
> string quartets, the thirty two piano sonatas-that hold
> us, and hold us in much the same way each time we
> return to it.
> I have been concerned with the creation of music for
> more than thirty years, with no lessening of my sense
> of humility before the majesty of music's expressive
> power, before its capacity to make manifest a deeply
> spiritual resource of mankind.[99]

In the practice of psychosynthesis, music is often combined with guided

affective imagery to explore the non-ordinary levels of human consciousness and to facilitate experiences of the higher realms of the unconscious.

Another technique proposed by Assagioli for contacting the Self is the development of intuition as a cognitive function which can be active on the personal or spiritual level. Assagioli defined intuition as the means of apprehending directly the totality of a given situation or psychological reality, rather than from proceeding from part to whole as the analytic mind does:

> It is immediate and direct, not mediate and progressive
> as is thinking; it is synthetic or holistic i.e. it is an
> immediate apprehension of a whole, one could say of
> a gestalt, and not of different parts put together to
> form a whole.[100]

According to Assagioli, this function has been unrecognized and devalued. The technique he proposed includes a psychological "cleansing of the field of consciousness"[101], eliminating the obstacles which stand in the way of its use, then giving it attention, using the will which has an evocative power to wait quietly, and finally writing down immediately and precisely what comes. Other means of developing intuition would include meditation, consciously evoking serenity or other transpersonal qualities and developing inner silence[102] all of which allow the "I" to be drawn upwards toward the Self.

Developing insight into the true nature and significance of experience is a part of both personal as well as spiritual psychosynthesis. Techniques such as "mental television"[103], and "re-owning of projections"[104] involve choosing to take a fair witness position which draws on the transforming power of the Self to dissolve negative attitudes. When the individual chooses to step back from identification with a situation, a conflict, or a polarity,

the experience is transcended, and there is a turning towards the Self.

Consciously evoking the power of love involves calling upon the transforming power of the Self which operates by love as well as through insight and will. Techniqes which develop empathy and enable people to experience genuine love from each other, as in "meditative dyads"[105], are an important means of discovering the transforming power of love energy. Assagioli considered three types of love through which transcendence may be achieved: full human love; agape; and mystical love. Transcendence occurs in full human love when there is a "relationship between the superconscious levels in both persons".[106] In such a relationship, there may or may not be union at the sexual and emotional levels of personality. Agape or altruistic love as a path of transcendence is manifested through compassion and is considered to be an expression not of the personal good will but the Transpersonal Will. Transcendence through mystical love involves "the aspiration to unity with the Supreme Being, generally called God or Universal Reality".[107]

In concluding this discussion of spiritual psychosynthesis, it is important to remember that its purpose is the achievement of Self-realization and the transcending of the limitations of personal consciousness. The first two stages in the process have been noted: the activation and expression of the energies of the superconscious and the direct awareness of the Self culminating in the unification of the I and the Self, the personal will and the Transpersonal Will. The third stage is the communion of the Self with the Universal Self, the individual will with the Universal Will.

These stages are pictured in the diagram which Assagioli used to illustrate the experiential realization between conscious "Being"[108] or the individual's consciousness of being a living self and the Universal Self or Being (figure 12)[109] These stages of spiritual growth are facilitated by the individual's conscious participation in the process. The techniques and exercises mentioned can only be integrated into life as they are experienced. The subject is required to take active responsibility for his growth, and must regard every action as an opportunity for realising the best in himself. He is to realise his human possibility in relation to others and in communion with the Divine.

That Assagioli accepted the existence of the Divine and the possibility of communion with "ultimate Universal Reality"[110] is beyond question. To explain this possibility he used the analogy of the relationship between a drop of water and all the waters on the earth. The human being, "can have intuitive realization of his essential identity with the supreme Reality"[111], as the drop of water, if it had intelligence, could be aware of its relationship to all waters. He further posited that all human qualities and functions "are partial 'reflections' in the etymological sense (as images in a mirror or light through a prism) of qualities and aspects of the transcendent Reality".[112] Assagioli claimed that human beings are able to experience and affirm the relationship between the will of the Self and the Universal Will. He pointed out that there are many testimonials of this experience.

> The harmonization, communion, unification, and fusion
> of the two wills has been - and is - the deep aspiration
> and one might say, the highest, even if often unrealized,
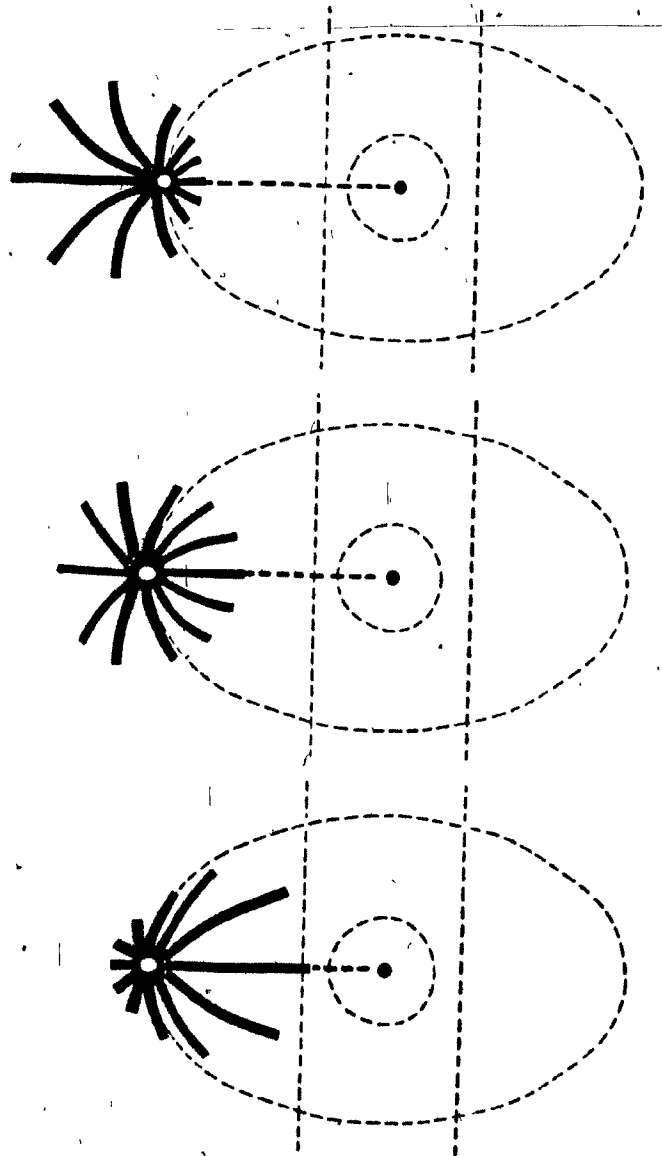
Fig. 12. -- Stages of Spiritual Growth

need of humanity. It has been felt and expressed in
various concepts of Reality held by the different types
of human beings. Essentially, it means tuning in and
willingly participating in the rhythms of Universal
Life.[113]

We must now consider how all this compares with the notion of sal-

vation as outlined in the Pauline literature.

CHAPTER II

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"While psychologists such as Jung use the
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aspects of the human being, to be attained
through what they call a process of indi-
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the terminology generally used by Christian
writers, uses the words 'personality and
the process of personalization' to describe
the higher aim above and beyond the' indi-
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85

    Ibid. p. 45.

86

    Ibid. p. 47.

87

    Ibid. p. 48.

88

    Ibid. pp. 47-8.

89

    Martha Crampton, Diagram used in workshops at the Canadian Institute of Psychosynthesis, 1973-5) Unpublished Material.

90

    Saint Thomas à Kempis, Trans. Leo Sherley-Price, <u>The Imitation of Christ</u>, (New York: Penguin, 1952).

91

    Assagioli, <u>Psychosynthesis</u>. p. 206.

92

    <u>Ibid</u>. p. 207.

93

    <u>Ibid</u>. p. 209.

94

    Hanscarl Leuner, "Guided Affective Imagery:An Account of Its Development", <u>Journal of Mental Imagery</u> 1977, 1, pp. 73-92. Even in the five years since Assagioli's death, work in this field has advanced rapidly with the founding of the Association and the <u>Journal of Mental Imagery</u> in the United States in 1977 to provide a forum for clinicians and scientists to work more closely together to explore the human capacity for imagery.

95

    Assagioli, <u>Psychosynthesis</u>. p. 288.

96

    Assagioli, <u>Psychosynthesis</u>. pp. 237-266.

97

    <u>Ibid</u>. p. 247.

98

    See Helen Bonny and Louis Savory, <u>Music and Your Mind</u> (New York: Harper and Row, 1973) p. 53.

99

    <u>Ibid</u>. p. 53. and p. 116.

100

    Assagioli, <u>Psychosynthesis</u>. p. 48.

101

    <u>Ibid</u>. p. 219.

102

    Many of these exercises appear in Assagioli's book, <u>Psychosynthesis</u>, are amplified in the journal, <u>Synthesis:The Realization of the Self</u> and Frances E. Vaughan's <u>Awakening Intuition</u> (Garden City: Doubleday, 1979) or are offered in training programs and workshops available through the centers and institute listed in Appendix A.

103

    Crampton, "Transformations". p. 52.

104

"Ibid". p. 51.

105

"Ibid". p. 53.

106.

Assagioli, Will. p. 197.

107

Ibid. p. 117.

108

Ibid. p. 126.

109

Ibid. p. 127.

110

Ibid. p. 123.

111

Ibid. p. 125.

112

Ibid. p. 126.

113

Ibid. p. 130.

# CHAPTER III

## SALVATION ACCORDING TO PAUL

Pauline Theology is a vast and complex field. For the purpose of this study, I am limiting myself to the briefest possible outline of Paul's view of human nature and the human possibility. While acknowledging that the apostle had a well developed psychology, I wish to point out here that my present purpose is to consider Paul as a theologian. As theologian, he viewed human nature and human actions in relation to God, the source and goal of the human potential.

Paul himself did not know the historical Jesus but his entire life was changed after an experience, several years after Christ's death and resurrection, in which he was confronted by Jesus, the Christ. As a result of this encounter with the Risen Christ, his personality, his world view, and his relationship with God was changed. His theological system will be most helpful in illustrating the bridge which psychosynthesis makes between psychology and theology because it is based on, and stresses, experience rather than doctrine. Paul's theology, in fact, grew out of the experience he had, the drastic change he underwent and his reflections on them.

During the years following this change, and as Paul shared the good news, preached, travelled, wrote letters to, lived with and founded various Christian communities, he had the opportunity to observe the effect the

living Christ had on the personality and behavior of others. The four letters which will be central in this discussion, and which all scholars agree in attributing to Paul's authorship, are those to the communities in Galatia, Corinth and Rome.

It is important to note that in these letters Paul addressed himself to specific life situations and needs in the communities to which he was writing. One of the tasks of New Testament theology has been to analyze them and extract from them those elements that transcend their particular cultural contexts. There seems to be agreement on the chronology and major themes of these letters. The letter to the Galatians, written about 53 A.D., contains a discussion of the way of salvation, and points to the difference between those who held firmly to the Jewish law and those who considered salvation to result from an act of faith. To Paul, however, the most important consideration was the ensuing new life in the Spirit and the transformation this effected in the life of the believer. The letters to the Corinthians are believed to contain fragments of perhaps three or four letters in all. In them, Paul gave basic instructions to early Christians on how to open themselves to God's grace, and indicated the importance of the doctrine of the resurrection in their present lives. At this time many Christians anticipated the future resurrection and the early return of Christ. The letter to the Romans and parts of the second letter to the Corinthians emphasize the influence of Christ's death and resurrection in the present life of the believer and show how Christ lives in a new way within the individual. This is our concern here. We shall not be considering

Paul's eschatology or view of final salvation.

As we examine Paul's view of human nature and the process of personal salvation, we shall pay particular attention to his language. On two points there seems to be general agreement, namely, that Paul wrote from a highly sophisticated Hebrew background in a Greek dominated culture, and that his use of language was not precise. Words were used in different contexts to mean the same thing and in similar contexts to mean different things. The words which are relevant for our purpose are: psyche (soul), eso (inward), pneuma (spirit), psychikos (natural), pneumatikos (spiritual), soma (body), sarx (flesh), sarkinos (fleshy in the physical sense), sarkikos (fleshy in the ethical sense), nous (mind), and kardia (heart).

In Hellenistic usage psyche conveyed the idea of the soul as the spiritual, immaterial essence of the person which was good, in contrast to the body which was bad. It seems clear that this was not the sense in which Paul used this word. As Anderson Scott suggested in Paul: The Man and The Teacher , the English word which comes closest to Paul's use of the term is the word personality, or that which in man is "the centre of consciousness, thought, feeling and will".[1] Here are some examples:

> ... Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul [psyche]
> of man that worketh evil...(Romans 2:9)

> Let every soul [psyche] be in subjection to the higher
> powers. (Romans 13:1)

> And I will most gladly spend and be spent for your
> souls [psyche]. ( 2Cor. 12:15)

Here Paul seems to suggest that each individual has personality, that the

person posseses outward (physical) characteristics and inward aspects,
but that the whole is affinity or totality. As W. David Stacey noted in The

Pauline View of Man:

> Paul's approach to anthropology was synthetic, not
> analytic. The Hebrew did not see man as a com-
> bination of contrasted elements, but as a unity that
> might be seen under a number of different aspects.
> Behind each aspect was the whole personality. [2]

Most Scholars agree that these passages indicate that Paul was true to his

Hebraic roots and did not succumb to Hellenistic influence in the sense of

becoming a metaphysical dualist who saw the material as bad and the im-

material as good.

Stacey also proposed that Paul's use of eso, (inward) along with

anthropos (man), pointed to an inner self yearning for something more:[3]

> Wherefore we faint not; but though our outward man
> is decaying, yet our inward man [eso anthropos] is
> renewed day by day. ( 2 Cor 4:16)

> For I delight in the law of God after the inward man
> [eso anthropos]; but I see a different law in my
> members, warring against the law of my mind, and
> bringing me into captivity under the law of sin in my
> members. Wretched man that I am! Who shall
> deliver me out of the body of this death? (Romans 7:22-24)

He was in agreement with C.H. Dodd's interpretation that often Paul was using

the Greek language and popular ideas to convey a new possiblity. [4] Even

though people find that parts of their being are in conflict or seem to pull

them away from God, they do not have to be bound in this old situation

because Christ has shown them a new way in which the whole of the person

can be redeemed. This passage verifies that Paul was not affected by

Greek dualism, that he did not see the mind as superior or as exhibiting more affinity with God. The good news was that Christ could deliver the whole person, mind and flesh, out of this bound situation.

Paul acknowledged the reality of psyche and the inner aspect of the person but discovered something more important for a new understanding of the human possibility. Stacey put it this way:

> Spirit stands at the centre of the Pauline view of
> man. Into it was gathered what for the time we
> might call the higher side of psyche so that psyche
> itself receded in importance and was less cons-
> picuous in the New Testament than spirit in the Old. [5]

Paul's emphasis on the spirit within human nature is based on his under-standing of the Spirit beyond, and the dynamic relationship between the Divine and human aspects of pneuma (spirit). When spirit is used to mean the Spirit beyond, it indicated the transcendent Divine, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ or the Spirit of God as in these passages:

> For who among men knoweth the things of a man,
> save the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even
> so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit
> of God. ( 1 Cor 2:11)

> Now the Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of
> the Lord is, there is liberty. (2 Cor 3:17)

> The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit
> that we are children of God (Romans 8:16)

> Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace
> in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the
> power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans: 15:13)

While Paul never wrote a formal theology on the nature of God, he used Spirit to refer "that divine energy or power which he recognized... was released within him... when he was in close touch with Christ"[6] as in:

> But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if·so be
> that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man
> hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And
> if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin;
> but the spirit is life because of righteousness. (Romans 8:9-10)

"Spirit bridges the gap between man's transcendence and immanence"[7]

The Spirit is given to man by God to animate, sanctify and glorify, to renew

all aspects of the person, to bring about radical change.

Paul used the word spirit to refer to evil, seducing disobedient spirits

which bring fear and bondage, as well as to the spirit within the person which

can be divinely influenced to experience new abilities, qualities and freedom.

This aspect of spirit within the person overshadows the psyche in impor-

tance. It indicates the "higher side of the human... the superhuman"[8], as-

pect of the individual which can directly experience the dynamic action of

the Spirit.

Paul found the terms psyche and spirit in Hebraic sources but built

a new understanding of them out of his own experience. He also used the

Greek derivatives of these words as adjectives psychikos (natural) and

pneumatikos (spiritual) which have no Hebrew counterparts. Because these

words were used frequently by Hellenistic mystery cults, it is important

to clarify that Paul used the word natural to mean that common aspect of

all human life which is capable of corruption and spiritual to refer to the

special gift of God which is life-creating within the human person. The

important point which distinguishes Paul from the cults of his day is that

for him spiritual man remains entirely human.

Soma (body) is another word which Paul used many times and to

which he attached a special meaning. Sometimes he used soma as a
synonym for flesh to mean the mortal body or the physical presence.

> Always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus,
> that life also of Jesus may be manifested in our
> body. For we who live are always delivered unto
> death for Jesus sake, that the life of Jesus may be
> manifested in our mortal flesh. (2 Cor 10-11)

> But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the
> dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus
> from the dead shall give life also to you mortal bodies
> through his Spirit that dwelleth in you (Romans 6:12)

> For if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by
> the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye
> shall live. (Romans 8:13)

> Sin is not to reign over your mortal bodies and make
> you obey their passions. (Romans 6:12)

What is significant in these passages is the notion that, although the body

identified as flesh can be a door for sin, the person can experience the body

in a new way. Human behaviour does not have to be determined solely by

instinct because the body of flesh through Christ's death and resurrection

may become the temple of the Holy Spirit.

> Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy
> Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and
> ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price:
> glorify God therefore in your body. (1 Cor 6:19)

Paul also used _soma_ (body) to mean the individual person, the self

acting as a whole organism in passing from one phase to another. In this way,

he again emphasized that the person is not transformed by becoming disem-

bodied, by leaving the body of flesh behind, but rather through the progres-

sive creation of a new body, a new self. Dodd proposed that the sinful body

is the self as an organization of sinful impulses which are often but not al-.

ways experienced through the flesh. [9]

> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of
> God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy,
> acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. (Romans 12:1)

The sinful body is the self organized out of disharmonious elements which

need to be sacrificed or disintegrated so that the new self can be created

around the center supplied by Christ. The person does not leave the

physical state for some superior non-physical condition, the whole person

becomes subject to change, including the physical aspects of her personality.

To clarify Paul's understanding of body, we should consider his use

of the term sarx (flesh) in the form of the adjectives sarkinos , indicating

the physical aspect and sarkikos , suggesting the lower ethical aspect of

human nature. In some translations, sarkinos (fleshy) is interpreted to

mean unspiritual and to indicate the inherent sin of the flesh. According

to contemporary exegesis, this is a distortion of Paul's real intent which

was to emphasize the humanity of the individual, his/her solidarity with

all other persons as part of creation. Sarkikos (fleshy) sometimes means

"the lower ethical level"[10] as in:

> And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the
> flesh [sarkikos] with the passions and lusts thereof (Gal 5:24)

This does not mean that the flesh is the origin of sin. Whitely points out

that

> when 'flesh' is used in a moral sense it does not
> necessarily have a physical meaning, since most
> of the sins ascribed to the lower nature (sarx) could
> well be practised by a disembodied-spirit. The main
> argument for the view that St. Paul did not regard
> the flesh as inherently evil is this: sarx sometimes
> means 'flesh' and sometimes lower nature or sin;

the mere fact that the same word can mean both 'sin'
and 'flesh' does not justify us in concluding that flesh
is inherently sinful.[11]

Paul's purpose here was to acknowledge that there is an aspect of the person

which is at war with the individual's better nature.

The natural instincts... may yet assert themselves in
wrong ways, unless by constant attention to the higher
ideal they are organized into a new dominant sentiment.[12]

The source of the person's separation from his or her better self and from

God is not the flesh or the body.

In the human struggle towards higher possibilities the weakness of the

heart, the mind and the will were also acknowledged by Paul. <u>Kardia</u> (heart)

can be enlightened or hardened. Like other aspects of the personality, it

can be influenced by good or bad factors. Both higher and lower emotions

spring from it.

But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest
up for thyself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation
of the righteous judgment of God... (Romans 2:5)

For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but
their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech
they beguile the hearts of the innocent. (Romans 16:18)

Seeing it is God, that said, Light shall shine out of dark-
ness, who shined in our hearts to give the light of the
knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
( 2 Cor 4:6)

The heart is presented both as the seat of emotions, and as the whole person;

but clearly it "is not a higher principle in man".[13]

Similarly, <u>vous</u>, which is often translated mind, was not considered

by Paul to be the higher principle of human nature. <u>Vous</u> was used to mean

the function of knowing, understanding and judging. Such functioning was

not an end in itself but always implied action and a willing as well:

> And be not fashioned according to this world: but be
> ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye
> may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect
> will of God. (Romans 12:2)

Paul viewed vous as that aspect of the whole person which approves a course of action but still needs the spirit to supplies the energy to perform it.[14]

The purpose of this brief review of Paul's language has been to obtain a clearer picture of his view of human nature. We may conclude that Paul acknowledged different dimensions of the personality, inner and outer, higher and lower. He wrote about the physical, mental and emotional aspects of the person while maintaining a vision of the person as a whole. He emphasized the spirit within the person, which is related both to the psyche and to the Spirit of God, and which, when activated by Christ, takes a more significant place in the growth process. Paul affirmed the human possibility involves the struggle between the lower nature and the higher self as well as the transforming power of the Spirit. He described the human struggle against sin more vividly and dramatically than any of his Jewish forebearers but never succumbed to Hellenistic dualism. His view was based on the experience of his own struggle and transformation.

In view of the experience of change in his own life, Paul accepted that such a transformation was a possibility for everyone. The word he used to describe this process of change was soteria (salvation). Its end result was "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor 5:5). It is the process of change as it unfolds in the present and moves toward this ultimate goal, that will be our focus. Paul viewed this process

as liberation from bondage, a movement toward the final goal of communion with the Divine. The process had been initiated by God through Christ's Incarnation in the world and confirmed through Christ's death and resurrection. He also proposed that human beings were responsible in their own lives for participating in this process. In other words, salvation calls for Divine action and human response. We must give some attention to both aspects.

Paul used different metaphors to indicate God's saving action. There is general consensus on the various forms salvation takes and the terms used to describe them: justification or redemption, reconciliation, and adoption. Paul's notion of justification flows directly from his experience on the road to Damascus. Paul, as Saul the persecutor of Christians, did nothing to deserve what happened to him. At one moment he was separated from God and at the next, for no apparent reason, he experienced the Divine penetrating into the depth of his being. This experience resulted not only in a change in his own name from Saul to Paul, but altered his way of addressing God. His previous conception of God as the God of judgement and the Law changed to an experience of God as love and acceptance. Hence the new address, Abba, Father. This was the phenomena Paul described as being justified.

> For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained to be
> conformed to the image of his Son, that he might
> be the first born among brethren: and whom he
> foreordained, them he also called: and whom he
> called, them he also justified: and whom he jus-
> tified, them he also glorified. (Romans 8:29-30)

Through justification, human beings through no merit of their own are

once again set in a right relationship to God through God's freely given grace or unconditional love.

> It is the same justice of God that comes through faith
> to everyone, Jew and pagan alike, who believes in
> Jesus Christ. Both Jew and pagan sinned and for-
> feited God's glory, and both are justified through
> the free gifts of his grace by being redeemed in
> Christ Jesus. (Romans 3:23-24).

Paul's revolutionary idea was that God acts within humanity, without humanity deserving it. God's actions are not dependent on people keeping the law. God did not wait for human beings to become worthy of forgiveness; he forgave them by sending his Son to participate in the experience of alienation while they were still bound in the sinful state of separation. For Paul, the mediator of this experience was Christ who spoke to him in these words: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" (Acts 9:4). Through Christ, God interrupted Paul's journey, made His living presence known to him, redeemed and delivered him from his state of bondage.

> God has done what the Law because of our own un-
> spiritual nature was unable to do. God dealt with
> sin by sending his own Son in a body as physical
> as any sinful body, and in that body God condemned
> sin. He did this in order that the Law's just demands
> might be satisfied in us, who behave not as our un-
> spiritual nature but as our spirit dictates. (Romans 8:3-4)

Reconciliation is that action in which God shows His love to humanity by renewing His image within the individual through the living Christ enabling the person to experience love in a new way.

> But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself
> through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of recon-
> ciliation; to wit that God was in Christ reconciling the
> world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their tres-
> passes and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation
> (II Cor 5:18-20)

It is through grace, God's love, that humanity is reconciled, and not because of adherence to the law.

> For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are
> not under the law but under grace. (Romans 6:14)

In its original meaning grace stood for a quality of character or "love in motion, love making its arrival in the experience of men".[15] Paul insists that grace is superior to law. Through God's reconciling action, human nature is once again in communication with the Divine through the Spirit.

The last principle metaphor Paul used for Salvation is adoption.

> The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that
> we are children of God, and if children then heirs, heirs
> of God and joint heirs with Christ. If so be that we suffer
> with him that we be also glorified with him. (Romans 8:16-17)

> For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, those are
> the sons of God. (Romans 8:14)

Adoption is that action which leads to the final "self-realization of Christ".[16] Now human nature is not only capable of reflecting the image of God through the Spirit within but is responsible for so doing.

We turn now to consider what Paul suggested the individual could do to participate in salvation. He did not offer specific conditions or techniques, although he does mention baptism and the laying on of hands. He did, however, write about the experience of Christ in his own life and specified actions which he discovered could lead the individual toward the goal of salvation, and to union with God. Although Paul did not develop his thought in a systematic way there are four directives which he repeated again and again:

1) the time has come; know your true possibility, know your weakness, know that because of Christ you are able to be in a new relationship with God

even in your weakness; 2) let go of your old ways of being and allow
God's love to transform you; 3) experience the Spirit within, Christ
within as a new way of being; 4) act on what you experience, on your new
knowledge. With Christ as your model acknowledge your new relation-
ship with God and change your relationships with others. He expected
people to participate actively in the salvation process.

Paul urged people to act in the present since "now is the day of sal-
vation". (2 Cor 6:2)

> Already it is time for you to awake out of sleep;
> for now is salvation nearer to us than when we
> first believed. (Romans 13:11)

He wanted people to know that even though they were not already perfect,
even though they did not follow the letter of the law, they had the possibility
of not being bound by their weakness.

> But now being made free from sin and become ser-
> vants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification
> and the end of eternal life. For the wages of sin is
> death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ
> Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:22-23)

> For the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus made
> me free from the law of sin and death. (Romans 8:2)

Paul called people to know that through the grace and love available to
them through Christ, they were to discover strength as well as
weakness in their humanity and move toward change.

> There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger
> of Satan to buffet me, that I should not be exalted over-
> much. Concerning this thing I besought the Lord thrice,
> that it might depart from me. And he hath said unto
> me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for my power
> is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly there-

> fore will I rather glory in my weaknesses,
> that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Wherefore
> I take pleasure in weakness, in injuries, in necessities,
> in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake: for
> when I am weak, then I am strong.(2 Cor 12:7-10)

When the individual is able to acknowledge human limitation, difficulties

can be seen as challenges which call up new strength. His first step is to

face himself as he is. Doing this he becomes aware of something new

trying to emerge, of a need to change, a need for something more.

> We are weak, but ye are strong; ye have glory, but
> we have dishonor. ( 1 Cor:4-10)
>
> Wherefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature,
> the old things are passed away; behold they are become
> new. (2 Cor 4:17)

Paul also pointed to choice, that the individual needs to choose not

to follow old ways and consciously to put himself in a disposition of open-

ness to God's transforming love.

> Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin
> but alive unto God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore
> reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts
> thereof: neither present your members unto sin as instru-
> ments of unrighteousness but present yourselves unto
> God, as alive from the dead, and your members as instru-
> ments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not
> have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but
> under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are
> not under law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye
> not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto
> obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of
> sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?
> (Romans 6:12-16)

Paul did not suggest that any parts of the personality should be repressed,

but rather that the individual should not allow those parts to be occasions

of sin. Sin is death, but through the triumph of Christ, victory over sin

becomes possible:

> But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that
> exceeding greatness of the power may be of God,
> and not from ourselves; we are pressed on every
> side, yet not straightened; perplexed, yet not unto
> despair; pursued, yet not forsaken; smitten down,
> yet not destroyed; always bearing about in the body
> the dying Jesus, that life also of Jesus may be
> manifest in our body. For we who live are always
> delivered unto death for Jesus' sake that life also
> of Jesus may be manifest in our mortal flesh.
> (2 Cor 4:7-11)

In order to move toward a new way of being, the believer must: choose to

open himself to God (Romans: 1:28); be concerned with his own responsibility

(Gal 6) and not spend time judging others (Romans 14:13); pay attention to

and control inner thoughts and intentions ( 2 Cor 10:5); recognize that there

are both higher and lower impulses (Romans 7:25); do good and not evil

(Romans 2:9); be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good (Romans

12:21); cleanse ourselves from the lower impulses (2 Cor 7:25); exercise self

control (1 Cor 9:25); allow God's love to transform life (Romans 2:4);

> Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors
> through him that loved us. (Romans 8:37)

> So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to
> live after the flesh, ye must die; but if ye live by the
> Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall
> live (Romans 8:12 -13)

> ... therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us
> put on the armour of light. Let us walk becomingly,
> as in the day; not in revelling, and drunkeness, not in
> chambering and wantoness not in strife and jealousy.
> Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not pro-
> visions for the flesh, to fulfill the lust thereof. (Romans 13: 12-14)

Paul encouraged his readers to: try themselves, check out whether they

were acting according to their new possibility, and satisfy themselves that

Christ was genuinely at work in them.

> Try your own selves, whether ye are in the faith;
> prove your own selves. Or know ye not as to your
> own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you? (2Cor 13:5)

> Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust
> of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit
> and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are con-
> trary to one another; that ye may not do things that
> ye would... Now the works of the flesh are manifest,
> which are these: fornication, jealousies, wraths,
> factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness,
> revellings, and such like; of which I did forewarn you,
> that they who practice such things shall not inherit
> the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love,
> joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, fait-
> hfulness, meekness, self control; against such there
> is no law. And they that are of Christ Jesus have
> crucified the flesh with the passions and lusts thereof.
> (Gal 5:16-24)

According to Paul, the believer is meant to co-operate in this process, fully

to experience God's love, to act on the new knowledge God has given her

to direct her life in a different direction so that His gift should not be in vain

(2Cor 6:1). The Spirit of God must be recognized in the interior life if

Christ is to be formed within (Gal 4:19):

> And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin;
> but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if
> the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead
> dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the
> dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through
> his Spirit that dwelleth in you. (Romans 8:10-11)

The Spirit within can give direction and help the individual to achieve the

human possibility.

> ... The Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not
> how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh
> intercession for us with groanings which cannot be ut-
> tered: and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is
> in the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession

for the saints according to the will of God. ( Romans 8:26-27)

The help of the Spirit may be realized through a deep inner search.

> ...for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of the man which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth save the Spirit of God. But we received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God. (1 Cor 2:10-12)

It is through the Spirit which God sends into the heart that union with Christ is achieved (Gal 3:26). By the Spirit believers become intimately related to one another and free to go beyond the small differences that separate them from each other (Gal 5:12). Paul reaffirmed the fact of human solidarity when he challenged people to realize that their own experience of the Spirit was not just an individual possibility but a possibility for all humanity. (2 Cor 10:7)

> Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit, And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal. For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit; to another faith, in the same Spirit, and to another gift of healings, in the one Spirit; and to another prophecy; and to another discernings of spirits; to another divers kind of tongues; and to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will. (1 Cor :12:4-11)

For Paul, salvation, the goal of the human process meant unity, within and without. The Christian community was to be transformed into the Divine image and reflect the Divine glory. Human beings were called to be rep-

licas of Jesus Christ; they were to mirror his image in daily living and walk in newness of life. And what was true for the Christian community was possible for humanity as a whole. The vision which beckoned was nothing less than the achievement of unity in love.

Paul was careful, however, to ground this vision in the realities of daily life. While the farther reaches of human nature remain as an ideal, they impinge on individuals the responsibility of choice, choice about the way life should be lived. Husbands and wives, for example, need to be mutually supportive. Daily work must be done conscientiously. Standards of sexual morality must be upheld. Envy and spite must be abandoned along with all tendencies to judge others. Generosity and kindness must prevail everywhere. Those who hold such a vision must be true to it and seek that grace for its realization that God offers.

NOTES

## CHAPTER III

1
Charles A. Anderson Scott, Saint Paul: The Man and the Teacher (Cambridge/University Press, 1936) p. 77.

2
W. David Stacey, The Pauline View of Man (London:Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1956) p. 222.

3
Ibid. p. 211.

4
Ibid. p. 231.

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6
C. H. Dodd, The Epistle to the Romans (London:Hodder and Stoughton, 1932) p. 124.

7
N. Q. Hamilton, The Spirit and Eschatology in Paul (London:Oliver and Boyd Ltd., 1957) p. 6.

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Stacey, Pauline View. p. 133.

9
Dodd, Epistle. p. 91.

10
D. E. H. Whitely, The Theology of St. Paul (Oxford:Basil Blackwill, 1964) p. 39.

11
Ibid. pp. 39-40.

12
Dodd, Epistle. p. 94.

13
Stacey, Pauline View. p. 196.

14
Ibid. p. 201.

[15] Anderson Scott, *Saint Paul.* p. 110.

[16] *Ibid.* p. 106.

# CHAPTER IV

## BRIDGING PSYCHOLOGY AND THEOLOGY

In the early part of this study we reviewed psychosynthesis as a theory of personality and as a process which brings about behavior change as a result of personal and spiritual growth. It was quite apparent that Assagioli situated his observations of human nature and growth, its goal and process, in the field of psychology. He explicitly stated

> that psychosynthesis does not attempt in any way to appropriate to itself the fields of religion and philosophy. It is a scientific conception and as such it is neutral towards the various philosophical doctrines, excepting those which are materialistic and therefore deny the existence of spiritual realities. Psychosynthesis does not attempt to give a metaphysical nor theological explanation of the great Mystery - it leads to the door but stops there.[1]

Psychosynthesis is scientific in that it is based on observation and research, but it does not align itself entirely with scientific psychology which approaches human nature and the universe from the point of view of quantity and measurment. This system emphasizes the importance of the unseen dimensions including the spiritual within human nature and the realm of the Spirit, outside it.

Assagioli pointed out that psychosynthesis is similar to existential psychology and indicated what it owes to Janet's research, to Freud and the psychoanalytic movement, as well as to those who studied with Freud yet went on to establish independent and even antagonistic positions, conceptions

and methods such as Alder, Jung, Rank, Horney and Fromm. He recognized the work of the French psychoanalysts and the Existential Analysis of Binswanger and Frankl as well as the social psychology of Sullivan and Lewin. He acknowledged many other investigators in the various areas of psychology, some of whom have been mentioned previously in this thesis. His vision of psychosynthesis was that it offered a viewpoint which was new and unique in psychology but which emerged from what had gone before. His only qualification was that he did not want psychosynthesis to

> be looked upon as particular psychological doctrine, nor as a single technical procedure. It is first and foremost a dynamic even dramatic conception of our psychological life... which utilizes many techniques of psychological action. [2]

So far from being a rigid system, psychosynthesis is an understanding of human nature in relation to the world that is continually growing and evolving.

Most traditional psychological approaches, however, tend to limit the scope of their study to what can be empirically verified. They accept that observable phenomenon verify the reality of the psyche, but have trouble with experiences and behaviours which suggest the presence of Spirit or of Ultimate Reality in dialogue with human nature. When psychology was applied to such experiences it was segregated from the mainstream of psychological investigation and became the psychology of religious experience, or simply, the psychology of religion.

Traditional theology, on the other hand, makes its own distinctive affirmations It affirms a supreme transcendent reality which provides.

for the living of human life, a frame of orientation and an object of devotion.

It speaks of disclosures and gifts from the divine side to the human whereby

the alienation of human nature from itself, from others and from God is

overcome. It declares a self-giving of God to humans that they may become

fully human. It posits a religious community within which these activities

are focused and where they are maintained and enhanced. It suggests a

view of the world and an understanding of the historical process such that

the temporal scene becomes the stage for an unfolding purpose. It speaks

of a realm of values in terms of which that purpose can have meaning.

Some ways of living 'ought' to be; others 'ought' not. And finally, its

perspective is not limited to existence in time. It affirms a Eternal and

a Beyond.

These features of a theological approach to human nature were il-

lustrated in our study of Pauline thought. While the Divine was Paul's ulti-

mate concern and goal, he addressed himself specifically to that process

whereby persons may come into dialogue, and finally communion with God.

Paul's specific contribution, according to Alexander Bruce, was to affirm:

> The divine Spirit must cease to be above and out-
> side, and take up His abode in our hearts, and His
> influence from being purely mysterious and magical
> must be exerted through the powers, and in accor-
> dance with the nature, of the human soul[3]

It was his emphasis on the experiences of human life and the call to

growth and salvation that was our special concern.

It has been the purpose of this study to show that while psychosynthesis

is firmly rooted in psychology, it nevertheless anticipates and almost

presupposes many aspects/of the theology from which Assagioli wished to separate it. The following summary will show this to be the case.

Assagioli held a comprehensive view of the human being. He claimed that each individual has higher as well as lower needs, impulses, motives ideas, energies and experiences, and that the natural human tendency is to move towards the higher dimensions of being. The lower aspects of the personality are said to be able to be transformed so that a synthesis of all elements can be achieved at higher levels of integration. The person is said to be able to choose the better self, and while acknowledging and accepting the instincts, choose not to be dominated by them.

This goal is possible because there is said to be a source within the individual of higher intuitions, inspiration, ethical imperatives, urges to humanitarian and heroic action, illumination, religious and spiritual experiences which can have a transforming and regenerating influence on the personality. This inner resource is what Assagioli called the higher or spiritual unconscious Transformation is also possible because of the existence of a living, spiritual entity, the Self, which exists partly within human nature. This Self is depicted as both immanent and transcendent and is said to make possible the experience of individuality and universality within personal consciousness. It is said to be the source within the person whereby transcendence is mediated and one experiences the Divine. Assagioli compared the Self to the Inner Christ of Christian experience.

Personality changes are said to occur when conflicting elements are absorbed into a higher unity and a higher life begins. This is called the

process of synthesis which Assagioli compared to Teilhard de Chardih's

understanding of complexification and convergence to the Omega point.

He acknowledged that there is a Spirit working upon and within all creation

and that spiritual experience of the Ultimate Reality is a natural aspect of

human growth.  Such experience is said to break into human consciousness

through sudden illumination, or as the result of painful depressions and

crises which lead to spiritual awakening.  Such experience is also said

to be available to the person through dedicated endeavor to respond to the

inner pull acknowledged to come from a higher Being   Assagioli claimed

that there is a natural human need for transcendence which can be the

catalyst for drastic transformation without repression.

The individual is said to be responsible for consciously responding

to this higher call and for cooperating in the building of a new personality

around a higher center.  The individual participates in this growth process

by actively aspiring toward Self realization, by evoking the energies of the

Self or the higher unconscious and by working to eliminate obstacles within

the personality so that the creative power of the Spirit can act.  Mystical

experience itself is not the goal.  The intention rather, is to activate the

will to transcend the present level of experience, a step which provides

energy for the individual to take a new perspective from which to assess

motivation, make conscious choices to replace negative thoughts with

positive ones, decide on aims which are consistent with the welfare of others,

and use energy in service activities or as a means to bring about social

change.  Personal transformation is seen as a step towards the expression

of good will and love in right relationships with others and the choice of right goals in relation to society.

The possibility of transcendence is seen as natural, not super-natural. While spiritual psychosynthesis includes and builds upon personal psychosynthesis, transcendence is just as necessary for a personality to become well-integrated and grounded as it is for it to become holy. Assagioli suggested a variety of active means to facilitate spiritual psychosynthesis through transcendence including: visualizing symbols of the Inner Christ; dialogue with the Self as the Inner Christ; using music to restore communion with God; developing the intuition which can directly apprehend higher levels of consciousness.

He viewed the process both as on-going and as having a specific goal. He called both the process and the goal, synthesis. Synthesis is said to occur between all aspects of the personality, inner and outer, higher and lower, in personal psychosynthesis; and between the personality as a whole and the Higher Self in spiritual psychosynthesis. The next stage or aspect of synthesis, Supreme Synthesis, he proposed was the realization of our highest destiny in the world. This spiritual communion involves human oneness with all beings through compassion, fellowship and solidarity and union with the ultimate Universal Reality and Will itself. In this Supreme Synthesis, the individual is said to be included in and to become a part of the spiritual super individual Being. In other words, all aspects of the person, psychological and spiritual, are ultimately synthesized at a point beyond the psyche. That beyond is not unlike the vision of St. Paul.

Assagioli proposed that the individual is able to accept responsibility for growth toward this goal by consciously participating in the process of self-actualization through personal psychosynthesis and Self-realization through spiritual psychosynthesis. He did not claim that all human beings should do this, but only that this is the human possibility. While grounding his system in psychology, he posited that there are specific principles of growth and particular methods which may be applied to spiritual as well as psychological growth

Assagioli's proposed view of human nature in relation to a source beyond and the process of change he suggested have much in common with Paul's notions The person is seen in relation to a higher source and goal The transformation process is effected by the Self or the renewed spirit acting within the personality breaking the old patterns and habits and moving the person towards this goal. Spirit in Paul, like the Self in psychosynthesis, represents the higher aspects of the person which are involved in the dynamic relationship between the human and transcendent realms It is the person's new freedom, the possibility of a new perspective. which allows the individual, despite the struggle between the lower nature and the Higher Self, to choose a new way of being. This process implies both Divine action and human response.

This thesis affirms that psychosynthesis represents a set of concepts and lays down procedures which constitute a unique approach in bridging the disciplines of psychology and theology. Assagioli observed human nature from the standpoint of psychology, beginning with the human psyche and

behavior, but moved towards the domain of theology by discovering and

attesting to the reality of spirit within human nature, in the form of the

higher unconscious and the living spiritual entity he called the Self. He

acknowledged that this term, the Self, was in fact a psychologically neutral

term for what, in philosophy and theology, had been called the Soul. [4]

Soul and spirit have traditionally been the territory of theological not

psychological exploration. Assagioli's experience and observations of

the human growth process led him to conceptualize human nature in a

way that claimed a natural connection between psyche and spirit within the

person. To this connection psychologists are obliged to pay heed.

It is my understanding that Assagioli did not appropriate the concept

of spirit from theology; he discovered it within the psyche. He was not

guilty of psychologism, of reducing spirit merely to a psychological reality,

as is the case in some psychological approaches, because he clearly recog-

nized Spirit beyond the psyche as well as within it   He also acknowledged

that there is a source beyond which is mysterious and therefore not within

the scope of psychological study. Psychosynthesis does not contrive to enter

the field of theology; it does not propose any explanation for the Spirit beyond

human nature. By accepting the presence of spirit within human nature,

however, it does point to new ground for both psychology and theology.

What distinguishes Assagioli's view from that of other psychologists  is that

he proposed that the bridge between psychology and theology does not have

to be built, but that it, in fact, already exists within the human person and

the human growth process.

It is significant that as early as 1857, The Most Reverend Frederick Temple, ArchBishop of Cantebury claimed "our theology has been cast in the scholastic mode, that is based on logic. We are in need of and we are gradually being forced into, a theology based on psychology".[5] Contemporary theologians have expressed similar ideas   Rudolf Bultman, for example, contends that theology needs to be based on an understanding of the nature of the human self.[6]

Gabriel Moran in Present Revelation speaks of the "pythagorean synthesis of science and mysticism"[7] and suggests that if theology is to explore today's religious questions and find the meaning of revelation, it must look to psychology and other disciplines. He calls for a revised view of nature, one that is always expanding, growing and becoming, one that exhibits the immanence of Spirit and is not closed and finished as has been implied in the traditional theological categories of natural and supernatural. Jesuit Pierre Fransen in "Toward a Psychology of Divine Grace"[8] argues that psychology is necessary for theological reflection and can play a role in facilitating our understanding of such matters as Karl Rahner's theology of Grace. He proposes that psychological understanding can shed new light on the theological notion of the divine operating in human nature and urging it from within, from the center of the personality. Theologian and sociologist Gregory Baum also contends that Rahner's position on the universality of divine grace pushes us towards further dialogue between theology and psychology.[9]

Andrew Greeley, also a theologian and sociologist, expresses his

criticism of psychologies that remove the transcendent content from religious symbols in order to understand them psychologically. In his article "Pop Psychology and the Gospel"[10], he contends that "religion deals with the ultimate in the human condition; psychology cannot and normally does not pretend to".[11] While he emphasizes the distinction between psychology and religion he also reaffirms the natural affinity between religious and psychological categories and that "in psychological wholeness there is a strain toward holiness".[12]

The relationship between psychological wholeness and holiness is a central theme in John Dunne's writing A Search for God in Time and Memory[13] and The Reasons of the Heart.[14] His own search to uncover "connections between the existing approaches to knowledge"[15] led him to conclude:

> Although ideas of following Christ imitating him,
> participating in his divine sonship are all quite
> traditional, the long centuries of worshipping him
> have never permitted the thought that man is capable
> of being what he was . ... Only when one gets beyond
> the profanation of Jesus, by realizing the relationship
> of his self to his God, does the thought become significant.
> Then it seems to reveal the deepest and greatest possi-
> bilities latent in man. It seems to be the clue to the
> future of man's spiritual evolution.[16]

Charles Davis, a theologian, struggles with both theological and psychological concepts in his book Body as Spirit. He believes that religion today is articulated in other than theological writing. He explores the "I", the interior self and the isolated ego. He deplores the loss of immanence of the Divine in theology which he claims led to the destruction of the possibility of transcendence. He concludes that "man has the capacity for the infinite and the actualization of that capacity in a response to the trans-

cendent constitutes the deepest level of his self-being." He poses the question, "...is not the interior self beyond any individual self and simply one with transcendent reality?"[17]

This is similar to the question that concerns Donald Gelpi in his "theology of human emergence"[18]: "What is the locus of present experiential access to God?"[19] In his inquiry he includes an in-depth study of psychology through which he concludes that the liberation of the ego from dark powers and the opening to the Spirit are alternating aspects of the process of transformation He calls the personal growth experience of assuming conscious autonomy for oneself "natural conversion"[20], and goes on to define Christian conversion as "nothing else than the conscious pneumatic transformation of the processes of natural conversion".[21] Spiritual transformation is intimately connected with the natural process of personal growth.

Bernard Tyrrell builds his own theological and psychotherapeutic approach upon a similar viewpoint. He envisages a gradual "ascension of the spiral of transcendence in which the human person is called to intensify at ever higher levels all the basic modes of self transcendence".[22] In his approach, Christo therapy there occur the themes of liberation from psychological obstacles and the opening to the Spirit as part of the human growth process. His view that the human being is a unity of matter and spirit was inspired by the theology of Bernard Lonergan, by his own dialogue with psychiatrist Thomas Hora and his acquaintance with the therapies of William Glasser, Viktor Frankl, and Kazimierz Dabrowski. What he names as the

four forms of Christian enlightenment, diagnosis, discernment, conversion,
and mysticism seem very reminiscent of Assagioli's stages of growth,
awareness, control through choice, rebuilding the personality around a
new center and realization of the Higher Self. It is Tyrell's conclusion that

> contemporary psychotherapeutic insights help us to
> unveil or make explicit those dynamic psychological
> healing meanings, values and techniques which were
> at least implicity present in revelation from the
> beginning. [23]

The reflections of these theologians suggest a new sense of partnership
between psychology and theology. Many others in the fields of pastoral
counselling and pastoral psychology have recognized the same thing. Per-
haps the work of Thomas Oden can best illustrate this. In Kerygma and
Counselling: Toward a Covenant Ontology for Secular Psychotherapy he
makes a case for a "Covenant Ontology"[24] based on the assumption that
"in truth there can be no 'secular psychotherapy' when we understand that all
beings and effort exists in covenant and thus in relationship with God."[25]
Oden puts it this way:

> If the self is understood by definition as unavoidably
> standing in relation to the One who gives it life, then
> understanding of oneself must in some sense be an
> understanding of that ultimate reality which is the
> ground and source of selfhood. This does not mean
> that self-understanding is synonymous with the divine
> self-disclosure, since revelation differs from insight
> in that the initiative for it comes from another...
> Revelation is related to insight as speaking is to hearing
> however inadequately the hearer may know of the nature
> of the reality speaking to him in his insight into himself. [26]

Oden's concern for human growth and healing obliged him to move from a
faith in God as the source of all healing to the recognition that psychology

is a necessary handmaiden in this process.

On the other hand, psychologists themselves have raised the issue of the relationship betwen psychology and religion. Just as theology is changing from a systematic explanation of experience to a theology of "human emergence"[27] or "spiritual adventure"[28], so too psychology is moving in new directions. Psychology has come a long way since Freud's negative analysis of religion in The Future of an Illusion (1928).[29] Fromm in Psychoanalysis and Religion (1952),[30] Allport in The Individual and His Religion[31] (1952) and of course Jung in Psychology and Religion (1933)[32] and throughout The Collected Works,[33] all broach the concerns and issues that are common to both disciplines. Psychiatric physician, Paul Tournier proposed that "the conflict between psychology and religion in people's minds is more apparent than real".[34] Andras Angyal in his article "The Convergence of Psychology and Religion"[35] finds them in agreement in regard to the essential central issues. Hannah Arendt proposed that the problem in psychology has been "not that human nature is made the measure of all things, but that human experience is imagined as to be so limited"[36] and psychiatrist Thomas Hora accuses religion of failing in its own task as the source of healing for the person on all levels of being, "the psychic and somatic as well as the moral and spiritual"[37]

The American psychologist who has undoubtedly given more impetus to expanding the scope of psychology and its view of human nature is Abraham Maslow. Maslow's role in coining the term "transpersonal" to describe the psychological approach to growth which acknowledges the

farther reaches of human nature[38] was mentioned briefly in chapter 1 of this thesis. Maslow was dissatisfied with traditional psychology which he felt remained essentially a system and cure of psychopathology. He rejected "as theories of human nature positivism, behaviorism and objectivism"[39], those viewpoints upon which most psychologies based their systems. He proposed that psychology must recognize "the higher life or the 'spiritual life', of what the human being should grow toward, of what he can become."[40] To this end he suggested that psychology must be broadened and redefined.

> It is because both science and religion have been too
> narrowly conceived, and have been too exclusively di-
> chotomized and separated from each other, that they have
> been seen to be two mutually exclusive worlds. To put
> it briefly, this separation permitted nineteenth century
> science to become too exclusively mechanistic, too
> positivistic, too reductionistic, too desparately attempt-
> ing to be value free. It mistakenly conceived of itself
> as having nothing to say about ends or ultimate values
> or spiritual values. . .Sooner or later, we shall have to
> redefine both religion and science.[41]

He conceived this view over ten years ago and his death in 1970 left only his words as a witness of the changes to come.

In the fall of 1978, I attended a conference on religion and psychology sponsored by the University of Maryland in Washington D.C. . Its theme was, "Psychology and Religion: Building a Partnership to meet Human Needs". All of the views mentioned above and more were represented there. However, no consensus was forthcoming. Rather, the tone was one of fear and struggle over boundaries, ' what is my territory and what is yours?'. The prevalent view among practioners in both fields seems to be that the

domains of both psychology and religion must remain separate. At the same time, the underlying need for dialogue, some kind of bridge, and even redefinition of territory as well as boundaries, is felt more and more strongly. Such dialogue, for instance, began among twelve psychologists and theologians at the American Psychological Association Conference in 1959 and continued for years. The focal point of their on-going discussion was the investigation of the mutual interrelations of the two disciplines. In 1968, Josephen Havens, one of the participants edited <u>Psychology and Religion:</u> <u>a Contemporary Dialogue</u> [42] made up of exerpts, summaries and a critique of their dialogue. It is my impression that this issue can only be resolved from a new perspective which can shed light on the dynamic relationship between these disciplines and transcend the need for protecting sovereign territories.

In order to clarify the unique answer which I suggest psychosynthesis offers to this problem, it will be helpful to look briefly at the view of another doctor, psychiatrist and religious thinker Viktor Frankl. Frankl has written more and has had more written about his approach and how it bridges these two disciplines that any other contemporary psychologist except perhaps Carl Jung. I choose Frankl over Jung, because Jung dodges the question of transcendence and has been accused of "psychologism", or of reducing God to a psychological reality. I shall not comment here on the validity of this critique but want to note that Frankl on the other hand very clearly acknowledged an ultimate Reality beyond man which he called God and which he saw as a legitimate concern of all those in the helping professions

from physicians to priests.

Frankl's approach, logotherapy, is based on the belief that man is not the terminal point in the evolution of the cosmos. Frankl intended logotherapy to be used to supplement, not as a substitute for, psychotherapy. Logotherapy directs attention to the spiritual aspects of the person, which Frankl called the noological dimension, and concerns itself with providing an education in responsibility. It is an approach which is intended to be used by therapists to give clients spiritual support and provide some spiritual anchorage for them.

Frankl limited psychotherapy to the categories of health and sickness and developed his supplemental logotherapy to deal with the very real philosophical questions of values and meaning. He viewed the psychic and spiritual aspects of the person as representing essentially different realms and maintained they must be viewed apart. He, too, was aware of the error of psychologism and was wary of projecting the spiritual realm on to the psychological plane. Although he called his approach "medical ministry"[43], he emphasized that it was not meant to be a substitute for religion. He saw "a great divide"[44] between psyche and spirit, the boundaries of which logotherapy traverses but is careful not to overstep. He maintained that psychology could only help unblock the door to transcendence but could do no more; that it was concerned with the health of the soul and not its salvation. He believed that while "the popular depth psychology must give way to a height psychology"[45], it must not become a handmaiden to theology. The boundaries between psychology and religion must be strictly observed.

The difference in these two approaches is that Frankl found the bridge outside the person, whereas Assagioli claimed that it lies within. To Frankl "meaning does not emerge from existence itself; it is, rather, something that confronts existence".[46] Logotherapy is not built on the assumption that once the obstacles to growth are removed, the individual can consciously and actively move along a path of transcendence already known from within.

In my opinion Assagioli viewed the path of transcendence as making it possible for the individual to transform and transmute pain, guilt, and death, and furthermore that this path emerges from her own being. Psychosynthesis is the experience of the psyche naturally moving to higher levels of spirit. This does not deny the struggle involved, but rather emphasizes the role and the responsibility the individual has been given in the plan of creation.

Assagioli's special contribution then was not so much to build a bridge, but to point to a bridge that already exists within the human person. Based on the assumption that human nature is already free, he proposed that educators, therapists, parents, counsellors, friends, husbands and wives, all can learn to travel this path and also help others along the way. The path moves between the psychological and spiritual dimensions of the person without reducing or enlarging either out of its place. From this writer's point of view, Assagioli was able to make this claim for the human possibility because like the apostle, Paul, he believed that Spirit is ultimately the guide.

What is lacking in the research and literature available on psychosynthesis is a forthright discussion of the pre-suppositions upon which this

system is based. Assagioli wished to claim it as psychological and yet his world view appears theological. The very goal of the system itself is communion with that which is beyond the psyche as well as a recognition of an expanded view of the psyche itself. Psychological integration is in fact seen as a means to an end in spiritual psychosynthesis and not an end in itself. The ontological dimension is furthermore claimed as the source of energy which impels the person towards this goal.

It is this writer's opinion that Assagioli was making a number of theological presuppositions. His assumption that there is a beyond, a goal of the human potential beyond the person is evident in his maps and concepts. In his attempt to establish psychosynthesis in the field of psychology, he was not always willing to draw attention to the philosophical implications of his position. This has created an unnecessary difficulty for those seeking a psychology which is congruent with theology. It seems time for those who maintain a theological world view to declare it, confident that synthesis is working to bring about a new perspective. Those working with Assagioli's model should present clearly and defend systematically as well as experientially the assumptions upon which it is built.

The proponents of psychosynthesis see it as a unique system defying categorization, growing and changing as it is lived and applied to various areas of knowledge and activity. Perhaps two examples may serve to illustrate the point. Dan O'Connor, a Catholic diocesan priest, completed training in psychosynthesis at the Psychosynthesis Institute in San

Francisco. He is involved in presenting its principles to Doctor of

Ministry candidates in the Berkeley School of Theology. He also offers

workshops to the public on the gospel, using psychosynthesis as an approach

to metaphor. In the workbook he designed with Jacques Jimenez, The

Images of Jesus: Exploring the Metaphors in Matthews Gospel he observed:

> He, Jesus was, so to speak, doing Psychosynthesis when
> he undertook to identify the center of his life as something
> other than the superficial workaday roles in which so
> many of us express and dissipate our existence. He tried
> to organize his life around a deeper center, around the
> kind of synthesizing principle that cannot be spoken of
> except through the metaphors of the great religious myths.
> We share with Psychosynthesis, and with Jesus, the con-
> viction that mythic metaphor is preeminently the language
> of the deepest soul of the human person. [47]

Frank Haronian is a clinical psychologist in private practice. His

article on "The Repression of the Sublime" appeared in the first issue of

the journal Synthesis, published in 1974. He was the Vice-President of the

Psychosynthesis Research Foundation in New York. In 1978, in Pastoral

Psychology he wrote about his search for a point of view that could bridge

"the artificial but heuristic gap"[48] between psychology and religion. In

"Psychosynthesis: A Psychotherapists Personal Overview" he explains

how his own experience as a psychologist had led him to believe that "the

positing of separate and distinct fields of study is a temporary strategy

designed to facilitate our understanding but fated eventually to give way

to a resynthesis of knowledge so that the interrelationships between all

disciplines will become apparent". [49] He goes on to explain:

> I had been surprised by the readiness with which my
> clerical colleagues accepted the restricted Freudian
> image of human nature, and I was confused when they

showed little or no interest in psychosynthesis, es-
pecially because the latter sought to enlarge the former
not to displace it ... I began to surmise that the average
minister tries to keep his religious views and his psycho-
logical conceptions in separate mental compartments.
Sixty-five years have passed since Assagioli first proffered
his psychosynthetic view of human nature...which offered
the kind of broad perspective that could provide a continuum
from the concepts of and methods of psychotherapy to the
concerns of theology.... I wonder whether the clergy is
now ready to give serious consideration to a psychology
that unequivocally proclaims mankind's spiritual needs and
propensities while accepting the carnal and egocentric
aspects as well.[50]

That psychologists theologians and pastoral counsellors are looking

for new modes of understanding the healing process is evident. How and

whether they will find answers to their questions in psychosynthesis may

depend on whether or not they are participating in their own psychosynthesis.

What should be clear from this study is that psychosynthesis has a unique

contribution to offer both as a viewpoint and as a process which bridges

psychology and theology.

In 1933, the Reverend J. Maillard, reflecting on the kind of person who

would make the ideal candidate for theological training, saw "someone who

could combine sound medical and psychological knowledge with the reality

of the life of the Spirit in himself."[51] Perhaps Assagioli was just such

a person, and as a Jew, found his own road to Damascus in psychosynthesis.

NOTES

## CHAPTER IV

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# APPENDIX

This appendix includes an alphabetical listing of those centers, institutes and groups offering workshops and training in psychosynthesis. It is not to be considered an official listing, but rather a compilation of information available to this author.

Asociacion Argentina de Psicosintesis
c/o Instituto de Biopsicosintesis
Universidad John F. Kennedy
Calle Bartolomé Mitre 1407
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Berkshire Center for Psychosynthesis
P. O. Box 254
Monterey, Ma 01245

Boston Center for Psychosynthesis
93-Union street
Newton, Ma 02159

Centre de Psychosynthese Educatif
Blue-Leman
CH 1844 Villeneuve
Switzerland

Centre de Psychosynthèse
5840 McShane Ave.
Montreal, Que. H3S 2G3

Center for Synthesis in Group Life
418 Paseo del Descanso
Santa Barbara, Ca. 93105

Centre Français psychosynthèse
61 Rue de la Verrierie
75004 Paris, France

Dutch Psychosynthesis Foundation
Willem Van Noort Blein 15
3514 G K Utrecht
Netherlands

Jean Geunther
67 North Union
Burlington, Vermont

Greek Centre of Psychosynthesis
Evrou 4
Athens 611

Highpoint Foundation
647 North Madison Ave.
Pasedena, Ca. 91101

Highpoint Foundation NorthWest
23700 Edmonds Way
Edmonds, Wa. 98020

Hill Center for Psychosynthesis in Education
Walpole,
New Hampshire, 03608

Institute of Psychosynthesis
Highwood Park
Nan Clarks Lane
Mill Hill, London
England

Istituto di Psychosynthese
16 San Dominico
Florence, Italy

Kentucky Center for Psychosynthesis
1226 Lakewood Drive
Lexington, Kentucky
40502

Psychosynthesis Associates
5630 Léopold Pouliot
Montreal Nord, Quebec H1G 1G7

Psychosynthesis Institute of Synthesis
Graduate School
3352 Sacremento St.
San Fransisco, Ca. 94118

Psychosynthesis Training Center
647 No. Madison Ave.
Pasedena, Ca. 91101

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