



AAP News

The Newsletter of the Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis

November

2009

2010 CONFERENCE: CREATIVE THEME

By Sharon Mandt and Audrey McMorrow

The 2010 Conference theme “*Gathering the Community to Celebrate 100 Years of Psychosynthesis*” has been changed to “*Creating the World We Want.*” We will gather the community to celebrate 100 years since Assagioli began developing the theory of psychosynthesis. The celebration will include the presentation of lifetime achievement awards on Friday evening.

The Program Team consists of Jean Guenther, Molly Brown, Peter Stonefield, Judith Broadus, and Sharon Mandt. They are encouraging presenters to include effective models of psychosynthesis, as well as shifts of consciousness in their field of expertise. All participants will have the opportunity to develop communities of practice and, in an endeavor to create a psychosynthesis “tool kit,” to sign up to present an effective technique. Send your comments and ideas about the conference to aap.input@gmail.com.

Deborah Onken and Judith Broadus of the Continuing Education Committee have developed a call for proposals form that meets certification standards, and Jan Kuniholm volunteered to announce and collect the data from those submitting proposals. The proposal form is on the AAP Web site at: www.aap-psychoanalysis.org,

or directly from Jan via email at jkuniholm@roadrunner.com.

The main conference in Chicago June 25 to 27, 2010 will be preceded by preconference activities on Thursday, June 24 and Friday, June 25, and post-conference activities on Sunday, June 27. The Professional Development Committee is planning a pre-conference session on Training Development. Registration for the main conference begins at 1:00 on Friday with introductory workshops that afternoon prior to dinner at 5:00.

We are pleased with the facilities of Techny Towers Conference Retreat Center. All conference rooms and overnight accommodations are located in one building for your convenience. To view the facility and campus, please visit www.technytowers.org.

New Book by the Late John Firman and Ann Gila

by Ann Gila

A Psychotherapy of Love: Psychosynthesis in Practice, written by John Firman and by Ann Gila, will be published by State University of New York (SUNY) Press in May 2010. We began thinking about this book many years ago and had many discussions about how to describe what we believed to be the essence of psychosynthesis psychotherapy. And then in 2003 during our stay in Cortona, Italy, we visited the nearby town of Capolona, where John had studied with Roberto Assagioli in 1973. This visit, along with an extraordinary conversation that evening with my cousins, reconnected John to his experience of working with Roberto. When we awoke the following morning, the book began to take shape. John remembered the love and empathy that were at the heart of his work with Roberto, and we realized this needed to be the heart of our book as well.

A Psychotherapy of Love presents the practice of psychotherapy as an act of love, expressed in the therapeutic relationship through spiritual empathy. This love is “a love that can see a baby beyond our hopes and fears for him, see a child beyond



The late John Firman with Ann Gila

See New Book on page 6

AAP News

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Send Ideas, Art, Photos, and letters; tell what has helped your life and work; send poems, book reviews, articles. Show psychosynthesis theory in action.

We request **Goings On** notes be
75 words or less and **articles**
500 words or less. Send to
newsletter@aap-psychosynthesis.org

AAP

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Submission Deadlines:

Mar. 15, June 15, Sept. 15, Dec. 15

The Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis

Founded in 1995, AAP is a
nonprofit association with tax
exemption in the United States. It
is dedicated to advocating on
behalf of psychosynthesis and
conducting psychosynthesis
educational programs. Donations
are tax deductible.

AAP membership is

\$75 (US) per year, with a sliding-
scale fee of \$45 to \$75 for those
who need it. Go to

<http://www.aap-psychosynthesis.org/renew.htm> or contact us at
(646) 320-3914 or send to
info@aap-psychosynthesis.org

Views expressed in

AAP News are not necessarily
those of the editors or of AAP.
We may edit submissions for
grammar, syntax, and length.

Goings On

Research Help Is Here

By *Walter Polt*

I wanted to start conducting a
survey about reactions to my anger
and conflict materials. Synthesis of
opposites, a basic psychosynthesis
insight, is to me a crucial model for
grassroots change in our world, and
I wanted real-world information
about reactions to it.

I was struggling to develop a
questionnaire that would answer
questions such as who could under-
stand the use of synthesis strategies
in day-to-day conflicts (in place of
winning or avoiding them) and
what sorts of people—if any—are
using such strategies already. I
wanted to administer it to people in
as many different situations and
cultures as possible. I saw an up-
coming (August 2009) Tanzania,
East Africa, trip as a prime oppor-
tunity for cross-cultural exploration
and by July knew I needed to move
quickly. But I was discovering how
difficult creating a questionnaire
can be and how much like a murky,
uncharted swamp any new research
project can feel initially.

When the members of the AAP
Research Committee reached out in
the AAP newsletter to encourage
research and to offer help (even a
possible monetary award!), their
invitation brought me a glow of
hope. Could it be I had found a
trustworthy consultation service to
help me determine a study design
appropriate for *my* purpose,
whether I was seeking a doctorate
or not? Could I still write a ques-
tionnaire in time for my trip, maybe
even get it online and available for
people to fill out and return?

Well, I find out I could. I con-
tacted Vincent Dummer, a member
of the Research Committee.

It was a very smart thing to do.
He immediately invited me to call
him—on his lunch hour, in fact. In

half an hour of work (with his
Szechuan shrimp getting cold!), we
arrived at a game-changing assign-
ment: I would list the *predicted*
benefits from each of the six peace-
ful-conflict strategies I had de-
scribed to him.

This simple assignment drained
the swamp surrounding me, gave
shape to my questionnaire in time
for my trip—and even helped me
open doors in Tanzania. Within
weeks I had new information from
eight willing subjects there, seven
of them native Tanzanians.
Thanks to the AAP Research
Committee, I have had very pleas-
ing initial results.

My experience convinced me I
can have additional excellent re-
sults—and others can too. ■

You can read more about
this research on page 5. To
see and/or fill out Walter's
questionnaire:
angertopower@aol.com

The Deep River at Kripalu

Abby Seixas will offer a 3-day
Deep River retreat for women at
Kripalu Center for Yoga and
Health, in western Mass. Feb. 21
to 24, 2010. For more information,
see www.kripalu.org, or contact
Abby@deepriverwithin.com,
and/or on the Deep River
Facebook page: [Face-
book:http://tinyurl.com/n3ku](http://book:http://tinyurl.com/n3ku).

Our Sympathies . . .

By *Sharon Mandt*

Poldi Orlando of the Synthesis
Institute of Miami passed away on
July 9, 2009. Her husband Dan's
address is 6851 SW 128th Street,
Miami, FL 33156, 305-446-4949.

He told us that Grace Barr of 1245
W. Lake Blvd., Naples, FL 34103, is
coming to Miami to conduct classes
once a month and continue the work
of Poldi's Synthesis Institute
of Miami.

From Our Cochairs

KUDOS FOR SERVICE

We would like to close 2009 by thanking Hedwig (Hedi) Weiler for serving six years on the Steering Committee, the last two as Cochair. The SC appreciated her wisdom and leadership. Many of the improvements in our infrastructure are due to Hedi's tireless effort. Hedi is continuing her service as a member of the Nominating Committee.

Carla Peterson also completed a term on the Steering Committee this year. She served as Cochair with a voice of reason and a background of working with nonprofit organizations. Carla was a key person in strengthening the infrastructure, upgrading the Web site, and publishing the last issue of *Conversations*. Edwin Miller completed six years on the Steering Committee during which he often offered clarification to discussions. He remains steadfast in the publication of *Conversations* and continues to serve as publishing editor.

Each June, members who have served one or two terms on the Steering Committee rotate off and newly elected members begin their three-year term. This spring we welcomed Dori Smith, Audrey McMorrow, and Nancy Rowe as elected members. They have already begun to contribute to new projects with enthusiasm. We were sad to receive the resignation of Cynthia Bost from the Steering Committee. Cynthia worked to develop goals for the Finance Committee and served on the Research Committee to organize a large collection of research proposals related to psychosynthesis.

Other Steering Committee members we wish to acknowledge include John Parks, Chair of the Archive Committee and Editor of the *Special Edition on the History of Psychosynthesis in North America*; Gwin Stewart, Chair of the Membership Committee; Eileen Stephens, Secretary and former Group Life Chair; and Richard Martin, new Group Life Chair.

This seems a good time to acknowledge and celebrate the fact that over forty members serve in an active role on an AAP committee! We welcome more members who would like to become involved. In particular, we need members to serve on the Steering Committee and encourage you to contact Shamai Currim to discuss this possibility.

Service brings a renewed sense of community and an enlightened perspective on our mission.

Respectfully,

Sharon Mandt and Janet Messer, Cochairs

Want to serve? Currently we need the following interests and skills: bookkeeping, finances, Internet, writing, editing, graphics, computer savvy, and research. We also need proofreaders and webmasters.

DECEMBER 6 CONFERENCE CALL

AAP Annual Membership Meeting

Sunday, December 6, 2009
4:00 EST, 3:00 CST, 2:00 MT, 1:00 PT
Conference Call: 1-216-936-7988
Code: 578 13 578#

The meeting agenda will be sent by electronic newsletter a few days prior to the call.

Our Annual Meeting is usually held during the Annual Conference;

however, since there was no conference this year, we opted for a conference call.

Send suggestions to aap.input@gmail.com.
Please join us for this meeting.

Renewal Notice

AAP members can expect the renewal letters for 2010 to arrive in late October, with renewals due in mid-November. This earlier date will be helpful to the Steering Committee in planning for the coming year and will avoid an additional expense for our members during the holiday season.

Thank you so much for your co-operation in our change to annual renewal last year. We hope this current minor shift in renewal dates will be beneficial to all.

With Appreciation,
The Membership Committee
Gwin Stewart, Chair,

Books

Beauty and the Soul

By Dori Smith

The latest book by Piero Ferrucci, subtitled *The Extraordinary Power of Ordinary Beauty to Heal Your Life*, is now available from Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin books. Ferrucci was a student of Roberto Assagioli in Florence, Italy. My first encounter with him was in the late 1970's at a life-altering weekend workshop on Beauty. For the International Conference in Italy in 1988, Ferrucci had arranged our first plenum to be held in a spectacular palace in Venice, where we meditated in the glow of a gallery of Renaissance paintings.

I will be reading and reflecting on this lovely volume this season, and will write a review for the next issue of the AAP Newsletter. Meanwhile, you may wish to put *Beauty and the Soul* on your holiday gift list. ■

*New Psychosynthesis
Book Available!*

Psychosynthesis: New Perspectives and Creative Research

Edited by Will Parfitt

*"Wit and wisdom to guide the
unfoldment of your potential."*
API- UK

Fifteen authors explore a variety of perspectives on psychosynthesis in the modern world – including the transforming effect of love in the therapeutic process, the need for authentic relationship for ther-

apy to be effective, the impact of astrology on therapeutic work, the hidden mythic depths in the Harry Potter stories, ways to go beyond protest and blame towards international cooperation, aspects of training, biblical literature, alchemy and gnosticism. Case studies and a sprinkling of first class poetry—all steeped in the visions and values of Psychosynthesis—make this collection a must for all practitioners and everyone who wants to further his or her own personal and spiritual development.

—Will Parfitt

Special intro offer price on Web site £10.40 GBP; Purchase it online via www.willparfitt.com or via Amazon and other online booksellers (NOTE: If you live in the US or Canada please purchase from Amazon or other online bookstore as mailing costs for individual copies from the UK are exorbitant) ■

GENTLE LESSONS

By Alice McDowell

Reviewed by Dave Nelson

I just finished reading *Gentle Lessons From a Recovering People Pleaser* by Alice McDowell in two sittings. . . . I couldn't put the book down. Alice is a two-time cancer survivor and the book is the result of her own healing process.

Moving from family expectations to being a conformist and on to being a rebel and seeker, she takes a leap into awareness as an observer and on into spirituality and mysticism. Using psychosynthesis as a tool in her model to heal, she brings

40 years of teaching and counseling into her writings.

Pictures and personal stories supplement her model, as well as exercises to help us heal ourselves in order to be of service to others.

This book is an intimate, real, gift to the world which she has given all of us. ■

Molly Brown's New Book

Molly Brown proudly announces the publication of *Held in Love: Life Stories to Inspire Us Through Times of Change*, edited by Molly and Carolyn Treadway, published through Psychosynthesis Press. This is a rich collection of stories and poems and artwork by 67 contributors who share their experiences of connection with a loving Source within or beyond themselves, often in circumstances of distress and crisis, sometimes in a relationship or within a community and sometimes while in nature.

Joanna Macy (author of *World As Lover, World As Self*) says of the book: "Here in many voices, forms, and stories we encounter afresh the mystery at the core of our existence--the mystery we belong to and essentially are. This beautiful, humble, and amazing book sings my heart and mind awake."

Tom Yeomans writes: "This is a most wonderful book and so needed at this time! The selections generate such a strong 'field' of faith that we are, indeed, held in a loving Universe, no matter the circumstances, and that we can awaken to this fact and live it. I am very grateful to be part of this com-

Cont'd next page

A Research Decision Brings Surprises

By Walter Polt

This summer, when my wife and I got our tickets to Tanzania, East Africa, I made a decision.

Besides seeing lions and zebras in the wild and snorkeling among corals, I would explore how people in a non-Western country viewed my strategies for making normal conflicts pain-free and productive.

My choice would test Emerson's claim that "once you make a decision, the universe conspires to make it happen." First, I didn't have a survey questionnaire ready to go (they're not easy!); second, I didn't know how I would get Tanzanian participants.

Emerson came through. First, out of nowhere, the AAP advertised help with research studies. I called and talked with Vincent Dummer. His suggestion? "Start by writing down your six strategies. Then list your predictions of the benefits from each."

That process quickly shaped my thinking—and helped me finish the questionnaire. (Read more in Research Help story, p. 2.)

Next: how to find Tanzanian survey participants? I asked a contact in Tanzania, and her response showed complete confidence. "When you're here, John Kambona will help you with that."

Molly Brown's New Book from page 4

munity of writers who testify with their experience and creativity to the omnipresence of love within, between, and around us and the process of awakening to it."

The book can be ordered through bookstores everywhere, through various online bookstores, or in quantity through Psychosynthesis Press. For more information about the book and where to buy it, check the Web site: www.PsychosynthesisPress.com.

When I experienced Kambona's warm handshake, intelligent eyes, and smiling, round face, I too felt confident. We met at his home in Mtwara, a small, booming, natural-gas-rich port city in southern Tanzania, where Kambona is a leader in a wide variety of organizations. A retired marine bi-



Tanzanian John Kambona, shown here at his farm, gathered a group of participants for an ongoing cross-cultural research study.

ologist educated in London, Moscow, and Copenhagen, he had headed Tanzania's fisheries agency for the country's fabled first president, Julius Nyerere, then spent 16 years at the United Nations office in Rome in charge of fisheries agreements worldwide.

Kambona and his wife drove me to the highly productive farm they had developed after retiring, along roads streaming with people. Women in multicolored wrap-around skirts and shawls carried bundles or buckets on their heads. Some wore head scarves (South-east Tanzania is predominantly Muslim). Men walked or rode bicycles loaded with bulky, rolled-up woven mats or other goods. Exquisite dugout boats floated in inlets of the bay, tied to coconut palms on the shore. An ancient slave market still stood, a memorial to sorrowful historical events.

After we viewed strains of korosho (cashew) trees that Kambona is experimenting with along with everything from bananas to beans, we chatted in the cool, airy interior of his new house. He asked, "What would you like to do?" I showed him materials and discussed my ideas. His nods and questions energized me. This man seemed at ease with my "peaceful conflict" notions. Showing him my questionnaire, I said, "I need Tanzanians willing to fill this out."

He thought for a moment. "I will gather a group for you," he said. "Would you like ten people? Twenty?"

I said, "Five or six would be perfect."

Two evenings later, we sat comfortably in Kambona's living room with a group of six men and women that included teachers and a retired regional school inspector general. They

showed an intuitive grasp of my basic strategies. One woman added fresh insight to the strategy of holding back your responses to surface arguments until you pinpoint the positive values underlying them. "Oh, yes," she said, "there is always something you need to learn from the other person."

Afterwards, each person took home a copy of the questionnaire to complete. Kambona gathered the six completed questionnaires—and delivered them a few days later. I had my cross-cultural Tanzanian survey sampling—insights from people half a world away from mine.

Emerson was right. Decisions can lead through challenges to surprising solutions. ■

Add your responses to this research: angertopower@aol.com

New Book (from page 1)

our delight or disappointment with her. A love that can see a friend distinct from our needs and expectations of him, see a partner and not simply our ardor or anger toward her. And a love that can see a psychotherapy client beyond our wish to cure or control, teach or advise him.”

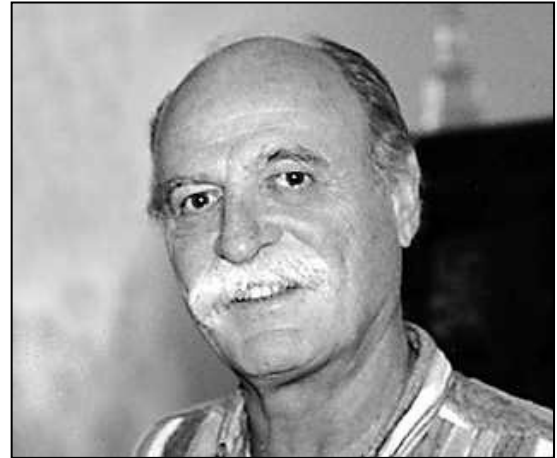
The early chapters of the book include discussions of spiritual empathy, empathic resonance, and the need for the therapist to die to his or her world in order to join clients in their world. There is a chapter on power and ethics in therapy, with the crucial recognition of the need for altruistic power in a therapy grounded in spiritual empathy. The final chapters present the stages of psychosynthesis that can occur within a field of altruistic, empathic love. These stages are based on those outlined by Assagioli but are extended to the clinical situation, drawing on case vignettes. ■

JOHN CONRAD WEISER

October 4, 1929 – August 24, 2009

John was born in Springfield, Missouri, and died August 24 in Toronto at home in the presence of Ann, his wife of 58 years. His loving daughter Sara and his son-in-law Micheal Kostenuk of Digby, Nova Scotia, also survive him. His body was cremated.

John was a passionate educator, dedicated to his profession and students since 1951. He joined the faculty of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education as professor of Applied Psychology in 1967. His colleagues honored him twice by appointing him chairperson of the department. He also served a term as President of the Faculty Association. He retired from O.I.S.E. in 1991. In 1982 he and Ann founded The Toronto Centre for Psychosynthesis and directed it for twelve years.



Authenticity stood out as John’s most defining quality. Among many other qualities were his caring nature, integrity, honesty, humor, and sense of justice and fairness. For most of his life, John had been strong and vigorous. He loved honing his tennis and golfing skills. While heart surgery and cancer depleted his strength, he gained a deeper identification with and compassion for the suffering of others. That compassion turned inward seemed to allow him to accept his illness with courage and grace. ■

Just Say "Yes"

By Didi Firman

We’ve all heard the oft-repeated phrase, “Just say no.” It’s been used to respond to drugs, food, or even other people—a way of making boundaries. But there’s a real invitation in the opposite phrase: “Just say yes.” We have all at important moments said “yes” to something new, something hopeful, and something larger: a possibility.

And together those decisions mobilize us toward the possibility of being a better people. Saying “yes” to possibility is a gift we need to accept. Held back by fear or comfort, we say “no.” Unsure of ourselves, we turn away. Lacking confidence, we stay put. But just saying “yes” to some of the many invita-

tions that we are presented with every day allows the unfolding of possibility: the possibility of being better, more of who we truly are.

Saying “yes” to the call of Self is our single most important piece of work. In the busy pace of life, it is hard to even hear the invitation, let alone take time to respond. And the invitation comes frequently. Not in a stamped envelope, but in the passing awareness of a Call, the still small voice, the synchronicity, the sudden open door. It may be the tweak of conscience or the sudden sight of a bird. The invitation may come in Technicolor: **Do this now!** More likely it comes quietly, without demand, without consequences, without a promise of reward or a threat of punishment.

The invitation comes because it is from our Self to our self. There is no one to judge us for responding or not. But somewhere in us, we know, when we hear the invitation, that we want to say “yes.” We want to from deep inside us. Did I write that letter that I wanted to, to a friend in need? Have I slowed down to smell the roses? Have I remembered to tell my partner, my kids, my parents that I love them? Did I take time to pat the dog? Have I laughed? Have I cried? When was the last time I read a poem?

The invitations are small ones. We aren’t likely to be asked to save the world. But we are asked, every day, to be true to ourselves. This is the invitation to which we just say “yes.” ■

A Story of Love From Canada

By Shamai Currim

Editor's note: One of the time-honored skills used in psychosynthesis is storytelling. In July a group at a recent regional event in Nova Scotia honored Olga Denisko's long-time work in psychosynthesis, and Shamai Currim wrote an account of it in the form of a fairy tale.



Olga Denisko tells a story

Once upon a time there was a beautiful young maiden who had a gift to share. From far and wide she gathered those who were willing to put in the time and effort to listen and use this gift wisely. Over time the people went to far corners of the realm. Still, they continued to manifest this beautiful gift.

Thus, on July 18, 2009, in the little town of Tatamagouch, Nova Scotia, the wise ones gathered to honor the gift and the beautiful maiden who had handed down the legacy. Susan sang about her journey home, and Kiki talked about reaching out to the heavens and touching the stars. Delores had everyone singing about Olga Divine and Dorine showed up as a cow who is, 'utterly happy for the first time in my life.' Jean spoke of her awakening and connection to divinity as Olga expressed the vision given by Roberto Assagioli over the years. They talked and shared and explored as they reunited in kinship with the gifts of the damsel so fair. . .



. . . They created a book in her honor. . .



. . . and in a great gathering they graciously honored Olga for her dedicated work for psychosynthesis and the world. ■

Call for Workshop Proposals for 2010 Conference

Submittal Deadline is December 15, 2009

(see Page 1 for article about the conference)

We are seeking effective models and demonstrations of psychosynthesis principles and practices from a diverse range of applications. Presenters are encouraged to share the changes and challenges happening in their field of expertise.

Workshop Proposal Form is now available on www.aap-psychosynthesis.org or contact jkuniholm@roadrummner.com



PO Box 414
Somerset KY 42502

Explore This Issue:

- ◆ *New books: Firman & Gila, Brown, others*
- ◆ *2010 AAP Conference news*
- ◆ *Call for Workshop Proposals for Conference*
- ◆ *Psychosynthesis Research works for us*
- ◆ *SC has openings for service . . .*

. . . AND MUCH MORE . . .

If you are not a member of AAP, this is a complimentary copy! Please consider joining and supporting AAP work.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE AAP STEERING COMMITTEE 2010

Deadline: December 1, 2009

Have you ever given any thought to “giving back” to AAP which is always there for you? Are you looking for an active way to use your talents and experiences? The AAP Nominating Committee has a current call out for prospective Steering Committee member nominations and we hope you will consider nominating yourself and/or other worthy AAP members.

Being on the Steering committee would require a minimum of 10 hours per month of active involvement as well as a telephone meeting once a month. Twice a year there are two- or three-day business retreats which you would be expected to attend. One usually coincides with the conference. There are some expenses involved. These include telephone costs, as well as travel to the retreats and on-site expenses. There has been no conference charge to Steering Committee members in the past, and we hope that will continue. While there are some funds available to help out with other SC members’ expenses, they cannot be depended on to cover everything.

Of course, the reward for sitting on the Steering Committee is the camaraderie of being with like-minded individuals and being a part of the ever-growing AAP mission of advancing psychosynthesis in many fields.

Please send names of nominees (yourself or someone else) to
Shamai Currim PhD, 3010 St Joseph Blvd, #201, Lachine, QC, H8S 2P4, Canada,
or e-mail Shamai at shamai@hourglass.net or call Shamai at 514-634-3358.

Thanks!