



AAP News

The Newsletter of the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis

May

Spring

2006

Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis and Kentucky Center of Psychosynthesis present

Unity in Diversity, Diversity in Unity

June 16-18, 2006
University of Kentucky
Lexington, Kentucky



A Virtual Tour: Conference 2006

By Walter Polt

Preconference

Join with other trainers and advanced students and help shape Psychosynthesis professional development, 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., *Thursday, June 15.*

Conference Day 1: Community Day

After registration, enjoy a group welcome and “*Going Beyond Bias: An Experiential Workshop*” by Chuck Whetsell, PhD, and Mary Whetsell, PhD, Friday, June 16, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (with a break for lunch). Together with persons from local Kentucky groups interested in holistic human service, uncover biases that prevent service to humanity—and the rewards in working through them.

Witness the *Keynote Address*, as Huston Smith, PhD, (right) author of *The World's Religions* (which sold more than 2 ½ million copies), discusses “*Human Growth, Religion, and Psychology*,” 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., *Friday, June 16.* Realize anew the importance attached to the spiritual dimension in psychology and successful psychotherapy.

Conference Day 2

On Saturday, June 17, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., register, benefit from a



Huston Smith
will keynote Kentucky conference

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Interview with John Parks Friendship, Professional Respect Bring Huston Smith to Conference Also Jeremy Taylor

Background from John Parks of the Kentucky center on world-renowned author and teacher Huston Smith being conference keynoter—and on noted dream-work specialist and author Jeremy Taylor being a workshop presenter

AAP News: What led to Huston Smith's keynoting our 2006 Conference?

John Parks: Well, I attended the humanistic psychology conferences in the '60s, and he was at several of those. I was very impressed. I didn't know him personally at that time, but then I read a lot of his stuff. When my son [AAP Administrator David Parks-Ramage] was a minister in Berkeley, [Calif.], I encouraged him to

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AAP News

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Yes, Send Ideas, Art, Photos, and Letters:

Send ideas helpful in your life and work, your poems, book reviews, art work, articles—especially about your use of psychosynthesis.

Views expressed are not necessarily those of the editors or the AAP. We may edit submissions for grammar, syntax, and size.

Help Your Editors Edit

We're volunteers, so if possible please make submissions "camera-ready," **Goings On** notes 75 words or less, and **articles** 500 words or less.

Submission Deadlines

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

Send to:

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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 advancing and advocating on behalf of synthesis and conducting psychosynthesis educational programs. Donations are welcome.

Goings On

Val-Essen To Teach Parenting in Sweden

Ilene Val-Essen, Ph.D., will be teaching her Quality Parenting program (material from the basic and advanced classes) to therapists in Sweden in early May 2006.

HumaNova Education in Stockholm is sponsoring the three-day professional training and a one-day seminar for the general public.

www.QualityParenting.com
866-LUV-KIDS (866-588-5437)
Ilene@QualityParenting.com

The Psychosynthesis Trust, NZ, Activities Include "Play"

The Trust is a small psychosynthesis centre in Nelson, New Zealand. They put out a psychosynthesis distance-education program and organize psychosynthesis workshops throughout the year for the local community. This year they will do "Play"—about subpersonalities—facilitated by Amanda Fong Jack in April; and "Creative Meditation" facilitated by Anne Verity and Julie Ewer in September.

www.psychosynthesis.net.nz
P.O. Box 301, Motueka, Nelson, New Zealand. Tel. 0064-3-5467552.

The Synthesis Center Presents Level I Summer Intensive

A training program will be held for those who could not attend the normal Level I program that started last fall. It includes all the material covered in the nine-weekend program of Level I in three intensive four-day sessions.

Dates for this year's program will be July 28 to 31, August 25 to 28, and September 29 to October 2.

274 North Pleasant Street, Amherst
MA 01002 Tel. (413) 256-0772
www.synthesiscenter.org
admin@synthesiscenter.org

Palo Alto Starts Teacher Training

In response to an upwelling of interest among their students, John Firman and Ann Gila held their first teacher training in February. They were joined by Philip Brooks, longtime psychosynthesis practitioner and trainer from San Francisco.

"Seventeen people gathered for two wonderful, energizing days," said Firman. "They continue to maintain contact with each other." They covered formats such as 10-week courses, weekend workshops, and shorter presentations. "Some are already planning psychosynthesis presentations, workshops, and groups," he said.

461 Hawthorne Ave, Palo Alto CA
94301 (650) 321-6562

GilaFirman@aol.com
www.psychosynthesispaloalto.com

Spiritual Psychology Summer Institute: Deepening Our Conversation

August 4 to 8 Tom Yeomans and guest facilitators present the second Summer Institute, "Presence & Response in Our Time," examining engagement in the broader world from a soulful ground and how we are to

- Be present to what is happening in our world without becoming overwhelmed.
- Respond in the face of such large-scale, complex challenges while remaining grounded in the realities of our own lives and location.
- Help create a new future while being embedded in an industrial paradigm that threatens all of life.

Preregistration: limited to approximately 40; 20 already plan to attend.

Easton Mountain Retreat

Greenwich, New York

www.eastonmountain.com

howie@eastonmountain.com
800-553-8235

Virtual Tour *Cont'd from Page 1*

plenary gathering, participate in Workshops—sample the richness of Psychosynthesis. Take pleasure in connections at lunch, dinner, and optional evening activities. Learn from workshops led by “friends of psychosynthesis.” Be glad you registered early for your choices from the forty-one 90-minute and 3-hour workshops. They range from diversity, men, women, culture, and religion to health, medicine, teaching nursing, shadow, breath, and the body. They touch on imagery, symbolism, AA, meditation, sex offenders and victims, love, forgiveness, textural collage, the spiritual journey, and much more.

Conference Day 3

Share in the AAP annual business meeting, more Workshops, the closing ceremony, and lunch, Sunday, June 18, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Post Conference

Plunge into one of two workshops, plus enjoy dinner Sunday, June 18, 2:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Either attend “*Color Fear: A Psychosynthesis Approach to Racism*,” including the spectacular, recent two-hour Chinese movie *The Color of Fear*, showing spontaneous interactions between individuals from

five cultural groups. With Al Lingo, Steven S. Smith, Masami Matsuyuki, and Irene Villarreal, EdD, join with other participants to reduce fear in our time.

Or attend “*Varieties of Dream Experience: Group Projective Dream Work*”. See the layers and meanings available in remembered dreams as Jeremy Taylor, DMin, prolific author and the co-founder of the International Association for the Study of Dreams, uses his “. . . if this were my dream . . .” technique with participants. Begin anticipating more dream work professionally with your clients, colleagues, students, and (yes) personally with family and friends.

Here your virtual tour ends. Take action now: enjoy the events (many with CEUs and teachers’ PDCs pending) live in Kentucky. Reserve your space by registering through your brochure, or online at

<http://www.aap-psychoanalysis.org/conference/index.htm>

or contact:

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*See related articles: **Interview with John Parks, Page 1, and Focus on the Centers, Page 6.***

Grief . . . and Grace By Veronica Fisher

I woke to a soft, furry paw lying in my hand and a little head snuggled up against mine—Malika, beautiful in her youth with a long-haired, furry black coat, now colored a rustic brown with the age of more than 18 years. A feisty, independent, loving, hissy missy she had always been, and now the hand of time and age was upon her. Diagnosed with hyperthyroid and kidney problems, she had gallantly and characteristically carried on.

I held her gently to me . . . feeling, knowing in my heart today was the day.

I had held out and held on, hoping she would die peacefully on her own. A part of me struggled with letting go; another part knew, but resisted. From a place deep within I suddenly remembered that I might be holding her back.

“I love you . . . and you are free to go.”

I wondered again about the challenge of loving . . . freely.

Dreading, resisting yet another loss, I looked into a mirror of memories. The truck-stop kitty—named Malika (dark, mysterious, exotic) by dear Arthur, now dead himself—was as friendly as she was feisty, official greeter of dogs, cats, and humans alike. Held and petted on her own terms, she was loving, lovable, willful . . .

I gently held her to me as I waited for the veterinarian to arrive, supported by the Presence of a dear, loving Friend. I sobbed uncontrollably—for Malika, but more for myself, remembering her through all those years of change, deeply loving, unquestioning, unwavering in her antics, loyalties, and companionship. I breathed in sharply, struggling, trying to find that Center of my Being, wanting to make her transition peaceful. With a Will deeper than my tearful self, I was able to find my breath and Center.

Malika nestled up against my heart as the vet prepared the injections. I stroked her softly, gently, affirming, “I love you, I bless you . . . I release you. Stay with the Light.” Malika gave a big sigh . . . and was gone. I cried and slowly rocked her . . . and myself . . .

In the spot where she most loved to sun herself, I placed her tenderly in the space my daughter had dug, and set water, food and toys in with her for her journey . . .

I love you, I bless you, I release you . . . I thank you.

Fare thee well, Dear One . . . you are on a new adventure now.

I breathed in sharply,
struggling—
trying to find that
Center of my Being

MEMBERS SHARING CIRCLE

A WORK IN PROGRESS

A current third-year psychosynthesis student relates how he left Psychosynthesis . . . and returned
By Kevin Smith

In the fall of 1991, I enrolled in a Psychosynthesis training program recommended by a friend. She knew others who had attended and suggested I would make a good therapist. Even if I didn't pursue therapy professionally, she said, it would be a useful growth experience. I completed two years, devouring books and articles from various disciplines. My crowning achievement was, in my opinion, a satire of Psychosynthesis, and of the mental health industry in general. I became, if anything, more skeptical of therapy than ever, nonetheless fulfilling the growth experience my friend had suggested.

The 12-year hiatus that followed included an extremely catastrophic marital breakup. This necessitated taking the proverbial "leap off the cliff" or else, like the dumb frog in a pot of gradually scalding water, doing the slow boil. Through this process, I organically enhanced my own qualities of disidentification and empathy. I think of this experience now as the field work needed to experientially magnify all I had learned in the Psychosynthesis program.

During this period, I was incrementally collapsing while seeing a Psychosynthesis counselor regularly. In retrospect, those sessions were an exercise in creative stupidity on my behalf, eclipsed by what I now know to be a crisis of genuine spirituality vs. genuine anti-spirituality, or "god vs. the devil," if you will, embracing the

"No form of therapy ever brought me to the levels of sustained personal cohesion and integrity which were the natural result of my catastrophe"

full cosmological arena and not the narrow confines of pseudo-religious dogma. No form of therapy ever brought me to the levels of sustained personal cohesion and integrity that were the natural result of my catastrophe, nor is there any indication that the therapy assisted the process in any way.

In 2005, funding to complete my Psychosynthesis training fell into my lap, and, as serendipity would have it, the circle is now complete. I still have no idea how I want to apply my pending certification, and I'm as skeptical of therapy as ever. Now, however, my skepticism feels more mature, less rash and brash, and is tempered by a

healthy and necessary dose of humility, which has unveiled dramatically broader possibilities as a person and as a therapist. It has been said that, especially as it relates to the universal phenomenon of transference, therapy has come full circle with religious thinking. Otto Rank described therapy as "disintegrative religion," wherein the transference object has been fetishized from the absolute beyond to a predominantly person-to-person interaction enveloped within the specialized nomenclature of the therapeutic exchange.

Understanding the inherent limits of therapy in this regard enables me to consider its potentials better. If I can be a gateway to the cosmos for someone else, contingent, of course, upon the degrees of willingness of the other, then I feel good about myself as an aspiring therapist and definitely as a human being.

There is no doubt that healthy-mindedness is inadequate as a philosophical doctrine, because the evil facts which it positively refuses to account for are a genuine portion of reality; and they may after all be the best key to life's significance, and possibly the only openers of our eyes to the deepest levels of truth.

—William James



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Ode to the Knees

Oh, knees, I **recognize** how patiently you support my travels!
By flexing, you **accept** the bumps on my path,
And through extending, you propel me along.

You are, mostly, an abstraction, an area for physical **dialogue**
Between femur, tibia, and fibula... but you are real to me.

When I stand, with each of you sharing my weight equally,
Softly flexing, you allow me to ground my energies, **integrating** my
Awareness and physical presence, a supreme **synthesis**.

—Brad Roth

Co-chair Report

Calling Attention to Conference, Improvements

Betty Bosdell and David Shirley fill us in on Steering Committee activities

Welcome to Spring! By now you should have received the stunning brochure for the Annual AAP Conference. The exciting program and a beautiful venue offer an excellent opportunity for us to meet and exchange ideas on many topics. To advance psychosynthesis, your Steering Committee's focus during the winter has been on behind-the-scene processes that we believe will help our organization blossom in the spring and summer. By building on the efforts of previous Steering Committees, significant organizational changes have been undertaken. See the box for details.

This year the steering committee:

- Improved the look and production processes of the AAP News
- Planned ways to make psychosynthesis educational opportunities—and psychosynthesis practitioners—more visible
- Updated the Steering Committee procedures manual
- Was able to create and agree on new ways for the AAP to work with the hosts of future annual conferences
- Planned for the 2007 and 2008 conferences
- Improved the membership renewal process

Your organization closed 2005 in better fiscal shape, a stronger membership list, and a steering committee which integrates the practice of group psychosynthesis while improving the services the organization delivers to you. We have also purchased a new printer to support the newsletter and other print material.

We are particularly heartened by members who are volunteering to help with various aspects: publications (*AAP News* and *Conversations*), membership, and conferences. We trust that all our efforts will continue to increase awareness and use of psychosynthesis as a process from which we all benefit.

Review: Edward Tick's War And The Soul—Healing Our Nation's Veterans from Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

By Dave Nelson

This book just fell into my lap; I was not looking for it. The woman who assists my mother thought I might be interested in it—and how right she was. I scanned it for an hour and had to purchase it after that.

I was a conscientious objector and have been somewhat active in the peace movement, so it has been easy for me to discount people who have chosen to join the military or be drafted.

This book is not political; it transcends that. It is a book about healing for veterans—and it brings the rest of us into the inner world of GI's. The writer convincingly talks about what happens when one is exposed to the horrors of war. Many of us have formed protective subpersonalities, but the

trauma experienced in war goes much deeper, often shattering the identity and causing a separation from the Self.

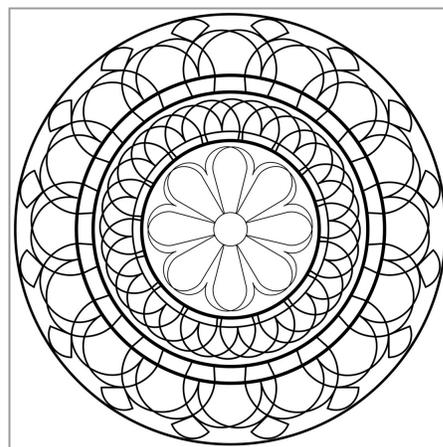
This is a psychospiritual book. It moves from the initiation rites of the warrior in the olden days to the person of today, usually of lower economic status, who is trying to better him/herself. Not only is the veteran's identity shattered, he or she may also be severely challenged to be accepted back into society. Often the therapies used suppress the symptoms rather than work to transform the experiences and bring them into the light.

I recommend this book to veterans, spouses, friends, therapists, antiwar people and anyone who wants to enter the inner world of GI's. We are all affected by the world we live in. We are a part of the collective consciousness

of war in our culture.

Edward Tick is a writer who has been there and is filled with compassion for all of us whose lives have been shaped by war.

*Published by Quest Books
(Theosophical Publishing House)*



See more of Clare Goodwin's work in *Wisdom* magazine and at www.abgoodwin.com



Art by Bonney Kuniholm

Writing something? Please submit articles and “Goings On” by June 15 . . . but . . . we’ll take AAP conference articles until July 1st

This we know.
The earth does not belong
to us,
we belong to the earth.
This we know.
All things are connected
like the blood which unites
one family.
All things are connected.
Whatever befalls the earth
befalls the sons and

daughters of the earth.
We did not weave the web
of life
We are merely a strand in it.
Whatever we do to the web,
We do to ourselves.

Written by Ted Perry
Inspired by a speech by Chief
Sealth (a.k.a. Chief Seattle)
1786-1866

Meditation is . . . nothing more than making contact with the person you were before you did your best to become everything you aren't.

—Tijn Touber in *Ode Magazine*, April 2006

Focus on the Centers

Richard Grossman Joins New York Psychosynthesis Institute

Edited *Psychosynthesis, Act of Will*

Dr. Richard Schaub, co-director of NY Psychosynthesis Institute, announced that Richard Grossman, editor of Assagioli's *Psychosynthesis* and *Act of Will*, has joined the Institute staff. Grossman, former faculty member of the Albert Einstein School of Medicine, specializes in applying psychosynthesis to issues of chronic illness and the challenges of growing older. He has a health-counseling and psychotherapy practice in Salisbury, Conn.

He joins co-director Bonney Gulino, Schaub and staff members Megan McInnis Burt, Michael Follman, and Elizabeth Sudler. In addition to Richard Grossman's practice in Conn., the Institute also has New York offices in Manhattan, Huntington, Glen Head and Sag Harbor.

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Recent Survey a Tool for Trainer Development Program in Kentucky June 15

Many readers will remember the excitement in 2003 when a large group of psychosynthesis trainers met in Kentucky. The June 2006 return to Kentucky promises to be equally important for the future of psychosynthesis training.

Using Survey: Beginning in fall 2005, members of the AAP Professional Development Committee (formerly Training Task Force) conducted another survey of North American psychosynthesis training centers and individual trainers. In order to help plan the June 15 *Trainer Development Program* (to take place shortly before the AAP conference), they discussed with trainers the process utilized at previous Trainer Development Programs. A report will summarize survey ideas and information.

Core Curriculum? The Professional Development Committee expects to propose developing a core curriculum for psychosynthesis in North America—one that would provide broad uniformity with local flexibility. Each center could interpret the curriculum to fit the center's unique creativity, expertise, and needs. At the same time, it would facilitate travel to different centers by trainers and students. Students could experience diverse trainers' ideas and teaching, and trainers with specific expertise could schedule their teaching more effectively.

The **June Trainer Development Program** will also evaluate the mentor-“mentee” process utilized at TDPs. Those attending will make use of survey results describing what trainers currently consider important for psychosynthesis professional development. “This will be an important and significant day in the life of psychosynthesis!” said Mary Kelso, a member of the PDC. ◼

Day-to-Day Psychosynthesis

Balancing “Mother”

As the eldest daughter of six children, my mothering skills developed early. After high school, I left home, relishing my independence. At age 21, I met my future husband who was also the father of two adorable little boys. After our marriage, we became an instant family and I was in motherhood bliss. Eventually, we had a daughter and a son of our own. I enjoyed all the stages of motherhood. As my daughter left for school and later went out on her own, however, things became increasingly tense between us. I thought I was doing well with this stage of letting go, but from her viewpoint I was failing.

My daughter was taking a Psychosynthesis class and told me she thought it would be good for me. Willing to do anything to get this part of mothering right, I signed up for the next class.

I had mixed feelings during the classes. I loved learning about the different parts of myself, but also felt tense. Finally, I got the courage to actively work on the identification I had with “Mother.” As the class observed, I spoke passionately from the Mother subpersonality. She described how hard she was trying to let go, but she didn’t know how, and was afraid she would lose her daughter. When asked who was around before she took over my life, to my surprise, she responded:

“Floater.”

“Floater” then emerged, telling

how much she missed being a part of my life. She took things lightly, had fun, and didn’t worry. It had been so long since she was a part of my life that I had completely forgotten how much fun and relaxing life was when she was around. Having found her again, I focused on making her part of my daily life, and in turn she helped me find the balance I had been lacking. Naturally, “Mother” continues to be a major part of my life, but even she has responded by relaxing a bit.

She described how hard she was trying to let go, but she didn’t know how. She was afraid she would lose her daughter.

After doing this work three years ago, I have forged a new, meaningful relationship with my daughter. I’ve been able to work with her on

her project of planning and opening a self-sustaining dental clinic in a poor area of Honduras. Part of our special time together is our yearly trip to deliver supplies and oversee the progress there.

“Floater” has helped me step back and see my daughter in a new way. “Floater” has also helped to create the fertile ground on which our evolving relationship can bloom.

—Rose
Aurora, IL



Art by Abby Seixas

AAP Needs Volunteers

Want to Help Psychosynthesis in the world? Call or write.

The AAP would like your help. We are a volunteer, non-profit organization; our effectiveness is a direct outgrowth of the work of the people in it.

We need help with:

- Writing and editing articles for *AAP News*
- Making phone calls

(646) 320-3914

info@aap-psychosynthesis.org

Write Us a Letter!

We’d love to hear from you.

Do It Anyway

People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered; Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives; Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies; Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you; Be honest and frank anyway.

What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight. Build anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous; Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow; Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough; Give the best you’ve got anyway.

You see, in the final analysis it is between you and God; it was never between you and them anyway.

—A poem engraved on the wall of Mother Teresa’s home for children in Calcutta
(Quoted in Mount Vistas, March 2006; distributed online by Meditation Mount)

Interview with John Parks *cont'd from Page 1* look Huston up there. He got to know Huston and looks up to him as a mentor. We visited Huston, and because my psychiatry residency was in Cambridge and he had been at MIT there—professor of philosophy—we even found we have mutual friends in Boston. We asked if Huston would speak at a conference; he agreed to come to Kentucky.

AAP News: His keynote will be about religion and psychology?

John Parks: Yes, he definitely feels they're complementary. His wife is a counselor. So he's interested in the interface—the importance of religious beliefs in therapy. He's more known in theological circles—he's a Methodist minister: his main thing is comparative religion. He's a traditionalist: he would go to the Tibetan masters, for example, or the Indian masters, the ones that have practiced in each tradition, to learn [directly] from them. [Joseph] Campbell too was a good friend of Huston's. They both [stated that] mythology has a truth of its own.

AN: And Jeremy Taylor: What brought him to the conference?

JP: He visits here in Kentucky about twice a year. I've been in his dream workshops. Last fall I asked him if he'd want to attend the conference. He said he definitely would.

AN: What special value do you think Taylor's workshops will bring to psychosynthesis folks (and others)?

JP: He knows psychosynthesis fairly well. . . . He's been in a number of panels and things where they've had psychosynthesis trainers. Jeremy knows psychosynthesis people. [Also] I just think dream work has always been part of my idea of psychosynthesis. It helps the therapy. Jeremy's a good therapist. He's a very perceptive guy, very tactful in what he says. He knows quite a bit about Jungian work and personal mythology and Joseph Campbell's stuff. He's a very cooperative and hospitable guy. I'm just impressed with the way he handles groups. He'll do a 90-minute presentation on his method, and he'll lead a post-conference workshop.

—Walter Polt

A Thought *Nothing reaches the heart but what is from the heart.*



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Explore This Issue:

- **The Kentucky AAP Conference**—dates and details in a **virtual tour**—and an **interview** with John Parks
- How one of our students left psychosynthesis . . . and came back
- What the **Professional Development Committee** is planning
- A mother's story
- A book review about healing **Veterans**
- **Goings On** at psychosynthesis centers
. . . And find **much more** . . .