



The Body in the Process of Psychosynthesis

Massimo Rosselli, MD

Massimo Rosselli, MD, psychiatrist and psychotherapist, trained in psychosynthesis with Roberto Assagioli in Florence, where he lives and works at the University, in the Faculties of Medicine and Psychology, both teaching and as a consultant in psychiatry, clinical psychology and psychosomatics. He is the Director of and a trainer in the School for Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy, president of the Società Italiana di Psicointesi Terapeutica (SIPT), and a member of the teaching staff at the Istituto di Psicointesi in Florence, the Psychosynthesis and Education Trust in London, and the Psykosyntes Akademin in Stockholm. Dr. Rosselli can be contacted at massimo_rosselli@libero.it.

In 1966 Roberto Assagioli, the founder of psychosynthesis, addressing a meeting of therapists in London, gave a clear, if short, message on how important the body is in psychosynthesis:

“Psychosynthesis ought really to be called “biopsychosynthesis,” thereby including the body in a complete synthesis of the human personality. The continuous reciprocal interrelation between the body and the psyche is already generally accepted. The whole of psychosomatic medicine is based on this fact. There are certain psychotherapists who do not sufficiently consider the physical aspects of the personality and the reciprocal influences existing between these aspects and the other psychological functions. A healthy human body is an admirable example of biopsychosynthesis: a harmonious synthesis of many different and opposing functions. Thus the way a body is functioning can reciprocally illustrate how the mind is functioning. The dual influence of the body on the mind obviously indicates that the human being operates from both these spheres and that we ought to work on both sides” (Assagioli, 1966). Today, 40 years later, it is interesting to reflect on how much space is given to the body in the psychosynthesis process. Following Assagioli, we might easily affirm that the body is

present in all the stages of the psychosynthetic journey. However, it is often not clear how much it is used and how it is addressed and appreciably present throughout the process.

In this paper, I will outline three fundamental stages of the biopsychosynthetic process: *know yourself, own yourself, and transform yourself* (Rosselli, 2000). On the bodily level, these three stages basically correspond to working *on, with, and through* the body. *Know yourself* is a stage of *awareness and analysis*, where the body is rather an instrument on which we work. *Own yourself* is a stage of the reconstruction of the personality, where we work more *with* the body through a centering and mastering *I*, which through dis-identification and self-identification relates to the body in a co-subjective way, integrating it into existence. In the final stage of *transform yourself*, we pass more often through the body, as during transformation and transpersonal development, our body houses our essence and can be experienced as transparent, revealing our truth. The body can be used as a form of meditation, and in order to go beyond it, we must be aligned and fully embodied, which in fact means *passing through*. These three stages accompany and are indeed inextricable from Self-realization, as we shall see. I will also outline advantages as well as risks in the explicit inclusion of the body in the therapeutic process, and address certain body techniques particularly. To begin, let us first consider a few general relations of body, mind, and consciousness.

The presence of the body particularly represents the human being as a living subject. It is not, therefore, an object separate from the psyche, but can be considered a facet of the same reality, co-existent with the psyche, but with its own laws and languages. We cannot find a solution on a rational level to the old *mind-body problem*. As Wilber (2000) rightly emphasizes, it is only in a non-dual state of consciousness that we find the unity, the synthesis, indeed, of the two. The body could be called the *vehicle of vehicles*, the ground of grounds, because it houses the very same vehicles of the personality: the mental, emotional, and transpersonal contents expressing through the various psychic functions (images, intuition, sensation, etc.). The constructive and containing function of the body locates it as the seat of past memory, the affirmation of full presence and of future potential in the embodiment of the journey of the Self. By contacting the body deeply and fully we can comprehend the saying “the body never lies,” where the body experience verifies, in its inclusion, the congruence of our deeper truth in a true alignment of the various levels in the journey of consciousness. In the

perspective of psychosynthesis, the body also expresses the potential of partial mind-body spiritual synthesis, steps of wider and wider realization that in turn become strong synthetic points for the parts which need more work.

If the body can be considered a “common ground of all the other aspects of the psyche” (Baldini and Rosselli, 1992, 2000) and the container of all that, at the same time, it is contained and included in the consciousness of the Self, owned by our deeper subjectivity. In a parallel way, the body accompanies the journey of life in all the stages of development through changes and transformations. As Assagioli (1943) emphasizes when he talks of psychosynthesis of the ages, all the previous ages (childhood, adolescence, etc.) are included, not forgotten, in the further stages of life. The body is particularly expressive in a full sense of the other psychic contents in an unmatched unity of body-mind-spirit in early childhood. As the individual “grows up,” the body recedes to a more unconscious dimension, paying a price to the development of the mind. Culturally, the body often becomes identified with a more regressive, archaic part; but in a biopsychosynthetic process of self realization, the re-owning of the body is necessary in order to reach the unity of childhood again, but in consciousness, where the body is not only an archaic regressive language, but the wisdom of the “spiritual child,” when past, present and future meet in new unity. This is mirrored by what spiritual schools say when they talk of “becoming again like children.”

Body Awareness

Given this introduction to the general presence of the body in the psychosynthetic process, I am now going to consider its place in the assessment of the person. Awareness and reading, or observation, are part of a diagnostic approach with its own tools and methods. The first aspect of this point is the body as a means of *non-verbal communication*, considered present alongside the other languages (speaking, writing, artistic expression, etc.) in the awareness of congruence or distance and contrast between the various expressions. Like any language, the body has its laws. Through sharpening our senses, we can become aware of ourselves and others, perceiving movement, sound, posture, etc., that follow the particular “density” of the body, revealing defenses, or free flowing energy or compromise through somatic symptoms, signs etc. The awareness of such language opens one to psychological contents revealed through physicality (e.g., emotions, attitudes, and various inner experiences) but is also part of subtler perceptions and expressions of

the vast dimension of energies (energetic body.) Indeed the body is the main container that experiences the various energies that belong to the field that Assagioli called *psychoenergetics*. Through the body, through subjective feeling in the body, we have access to a new alphabet in which the different contents of life (physical, rational, spiritual, ecological, many environmental forms) are translated and perceived. Physically, the assumption that “everything is energy” risks being theoretical if we do not contact energy bodily through the function of sensation, learning and lending sensitivity to oneself and to others. It is interesting to recall that shamanistic and ancient spiritual traditions always include the body in their healing and spiritual paths. This is also a manifestation of the energy body and psychoenergetics.

This deep energetic contact potentially leads to the body as an *historical context*, in which it reveals contained and hidden memories. Our history is written in our body. Just as our past returns to us through free association and mental elaboration, dream work or imagery, so the body has a means of memorizing. When we work using body techniques (various postures, movement, direct touch, etc.) the body often surprises us with its truth and emotional intensity, also bringing contents that belong to early, even pre-verbal, periods (so-called unconscious or implicit memory.) This type of memorizing of events that have not been experienced consciously also applies to the transpersonal unconscious, or to the potentials within us. The body reminds us of what we have always been in the full presence of here and now, even if this has not been consciously experienced before. Soul and Body meet in this similarity and the Self can be transparent through the density of the body.

A further aspect in the process of awareness and observation is represented by the body as *symbol or metaphor*. This is an area with many meanings, of interplay between the psyche and the body. The inner organs (heart, lungs, etc.) as well as the various parts of the body and the whole shape of the body are charged by a person's fantasies. This relationship between psychological contents and the body is generally unconscious (personal, archetypal and transpersonal contents are processed through the senses and perception, creating not an anatomical, but a fantasy-like mapping of the body) This playing of the psyche over the body can be creative of the overall subjective body image and multiple images of body parts, and can also “return” to the body through the language of physical symptoms (the body as the “theater” of the psyche, as in the so-called somatoform disorders.) The link of the body to the psychological process can also be expressed through movement, sound, dance, gestures and postures which “incarnate” images, archetypes, and symbols as a further embodiment, a physical expression, opening to consciousness and transformation. There is also the relational body, expressing how we are aware of, and observe, the styles of *relationship* through

the body in life. For example, we have different ways, according to our typology, our character and patterns of communication, to bodily express our needs for contact or distance in relations. Our relational body styles say a lot about who we are, with our defenses and potentials. Separation and unity, presence or lack of boundaries, ability to express or withdraw from contact, etc., find an important ground in the relational body style, a good “thermometer” of our relational self/personality. This applies also to various forms of *socialization*, as in groups, where there is a group-body which holds and influences the single body and individuals in a larger form and context. Such group-body represents one basic dimension of the group, which can be seen as a body-feeling-mind-transpersonal entity.

Assagioli (1983), in his formulation of biopsychosynthesis, points out the importance of “bio” meaning the *biological aspects*, the gross matter of physicality with also its chemical, physical levels (Parks, 1973). If we consider the enormous development neuroscience has made, and its relation to human behaviour, we can understand the biological body more clearly as a basic phenomenon, parallel to and coexistent with the psychological processes. This does not mean reducing the whole human being to a biological element as the only causative factor, as a *physicalist* theoretician might propose, in a form of scientific materialism, but honoring the corresponding and reciprocal interaction of body and mind as two faces of the same reality. All these bodies—communicative through non verbal expression (emotional, rational, spiritual), historical (conscious and unconscious), energetic, symbolic, biological, relational—are part of the assessment and diagnostic process, but may accompany the whole psychosynthetic journey, entering at any self-developmental or psychotherapeutic stage.

Just as psychosynthesis does not identify with its techniques, in the same way the body can be present in the process in different moments and at various levels, not identifying with a specific body technique (even if some techniques could be used), but introducing a sense of the body, a co-presence, activating the consciousness of it, beyond technique itself. It is like holding in awareness the questions: “What is happening in my body while I am experiencing something?” and “What do I feel, and where in the body do I feel it?” These questions are also articulated in the interesting concept and experience of “*felt sense*” according to Gendlin’s (1996) “focusing.”

We can see from this discussion how the body can be a vehicle for insight, and moreover, how awareness through the body signifies extremely deep, special access to feelings. Such emotional involvement forms the true basis for becoming aware, for awareness is not only rational, but needs to include emotions. Another important contribution

of the body to the analytical phase of the process is the access to deep levels of the unconscious, and to memories that would not be reachable otherwise through mental and verbal means. Concerning the need for *verbalization* after a bodily experience, sometimes it is meaningful, even necessary, to use words in order to elaborate the experience, further integrating it into consciousness; at other times the body speaks on its own and words are not necessary to bring the experience to consciousness, or perhaps not immediately. However, space for the body to express itself and to speak verbally needs to exist. This is similar to working with dreams, images and symbols, which are not always necessary to interpret, because they are so strong energetically that they bring about awareness and transformation on their own.

Body and Process

What are the advantages and risks involved in using *body techniques*? Sometimes words or images do not reach the deeper emotional levels of history. The body can meet such deeper layers because it is an excellent measure for asking "Where am I really?" It is just in this that the risks and advantages lie, and one must be careful when addressing the body directly. Even if it has its own defenses, certain types of work can overcome these strongly and quickly, because the contact can be deep. This is also connected to the often special, direct form of relational work in which going beyond the *boundaries* can easily occur (e.g., by the *techniques of touch*). The blurring or overcoming of boundaries is definitely contraindicated in the presence of structural problems with lack of borders, while in different cases, intimate closeness of boundaries may even facilitate the work, allowing deep emotional contact resulting in healing experiences. Such contact may also be expressive of *regression*. Even when "soft" techniques are used, and body-work is not de-structuring, but creates safety, there may be a certain degree of regression as the person uses primal language. Regression can be utilized to contact and heal early wounds, but also to contact wisdom and resources in the body. This allows not only the "*wounded child*" but also the embodied "*spirit child*" to be contacted.

However, there is a risk of *excessive regression* when including the body in the process, which is neither creative nor constructive. On the contrary, it can be an imprisoning impediment to further maturity. During the use of body-techniques, it is in fact not uncommon for regression to occur and certain stronger defenses to be broken down. As the energy, which can be very intense, moves through the body after the

subsidence of defenses, the experience may be overwhelming and evoke new, controlling defenses. In such instances, particularly within the psychotherapeutic setting, but not only, *containment* of the process and *holding* through the relationship by the therapist or guide are vitally essential to allow the energy to *flow* fully. If containment is not available and the person is incapable of holding himself, very often isolation will set in and he will adopt the "do-it-yourself" attitude. When this occurs, the therapist's or guide's body is needed to give sufficient and appropriate holding. The therapist needs to approach, unmasking certain contents and exposing them to the person's awareness, but at the same time containing what ensues, thus facilitating and integrating the process of transformation. This process work is directed at regaining the *flow of energy*, which is parallel to holding.

Flowing and holding are the basic aspects of life in its fullness, interrupted by wounds and defenses. Indeed, *handling* is a caricature of *holding* and takes the place of the latter as a defensive expression of the egoic sub-personality. The former is a quality of the Self, and as such, in this context, is not only expressed in situations of regression, but is an expression of *Being* on a bodily level, indicating a particular means of contact and staying with, which gives safety and freedom (some *techniques of touch* express holding). Another risk along this process may occur when certain body techniques or languages are maintained, even when the person has reached the moment for other instruments to be included that could be more appropriate than the former in introducing change and being absorbed into his awareness. The problem here is that the person may remain fixed in a position, which can lead to non-constructive regression instead of progressive transformation.

An advantage in working with the body is that there is an *activation of the seven psychological functions*. These are all present and the body is their ground: from it any of these functions might emerge, particularly the less rational ones such as sensation, feeling, imagination, impulse-desire, and intuition. Thoughts can be stimulated through being aware of the body, and the will can be expressed through physical action and bodily attitudes. On the other hand, bodywork can be particularly spurred by the imagination, sensation or contact with feelings, but all seven functions potentially lead to the body. The body can sometimes be a point of entrance through which to contact a person, leading then to the mental functions; or it can be an intermediate *point of passage* after the mental functions, as well as an *exit* for final grounding and expression in the process. This interplay is expressed by the psychodynamic

laws that Assagioli (1999) connected to what he called the *skillful will*.

There is a further manifestation of the body in the psychosynthetic process which can occur in a more or less constructive way: catharsis is a technique used in psychosynthesis (Assagioli, 1980) and its value lies in releasing energy and implementing expression. However *catharsis* alone is not sufficient for the process of transformation. Some people continue bodily expression for years through screaming or releasing anger against pillows, and yet nothing changes: the dramatic cathartic element takes the form of a bodily defense, an acting out. In other ways, catharsis is an important expression of release, a significant step towards further elaborating consciousness and transformation.

Stages of the Process

Looking now at the process as a whole, we can see the three main stages that characterize it:

- *awareness and analysis;*
- *reconstruction of the personality around a new center (or I); and*
- *transformation and development, which can include particularly the transpersonal dimension.*

These, as mentioned above, represent “*knowing, owning, and transforming oneself*” which on a bodily level correspond to working “*on, with, and through*” the body. Along the process, there can be changes in strategy, according to the different situations, typologies and psychopathologies addressed. This applies particularly in psychotherapy. In treating neurotic or character defenses, or so-called psychosomatic languages, as previously mentioned, the body is useful for deeply contacting needs or primal wounds that would otherwise not be reached. It must be stressed here that *contact* does not necessarily imply physical touch. Contact also can be created and take place through voice, sound, words that are *energetically embodied* and that touch. This is what is meant by *the sense of the body* rather than just literal *body technique*.

On the other hand, with regard to the treatment of *psychopathologies* such as borderline personalities or psychoses, the body needs to be part of a *process of restructuring*. This calls for awareness of boundaries, structure and grounding, more than content. In these cases the work can proceed mainly through the function of sensation or sensory awareness, which builds structure, boundaries and presence. The interplay of the

will with the body also expresses structuring through movement and posture. The symbolic body, too, expresses symbols, images that bodily amplify and empower mental content. The grounding of image in the body can also hold restructuring significance (Baldini, 1991). Each symbol with a multiple meaning can represent different functions for different people (Caldironi, 2004). The same applies for techniques such as that of relaxation, which does not necessarily calm and harmonize the various parts, but according to the subjective experience, itself can create anxiety and instability.

Yet a further aspect to be taken into account is that of the possible effect of suppressing dialogue with the unconscious, or opening to deeper levels of the personal and transpersonal aspects, due to an excessive use of structuring and mastering body techniques. It can happen that someone may fall into obsessive volition, which may block further development. The entire phase of the process with a transforming-synthesizing character reaffirms the body as the privileged ground of transformation. The body can be part of an *active technique*, assuming a certain posture, breathing in a particular way, integrating and grounding through the spoken word. There are many different forms expressed through the body that sustain changes without first passing through the mind, or that symmetrically accompany the contents of the mind, amplifying and grounding the phase of transformation. For some typologically oriented towards the body, this is more meaningful and is an instrument to utilize for further integration.

The *expressive body* is also to be considered. Techniques of dramatization, sound and voice, assuming postures, creating movement and dance, cover a wide spectrum that also includes symbolic meanings that unfold to further awareness and grounding. Not all expressions and actions are grounding, however. For example, theatrical hysteria is defensive and does not lead to an increase in awareness. The bodily expressive moment is strikingly significant in the psychosynthesis exercise of the *ideal model* in the bodily form: it does not stop at the imaginative level, but is developed embodying the image, and this empowers and grounds the image itself. In creative meditation (of which the ideal model technique is an expression), the body has many modes for portraying transpersonal qualities. This (expressive) way is based on the will and on focused, well-contained expression. In different situations, especially in a psychotherapeutic setting, someone with a fragile personality structure could encounter problems in containing overwhelming emotional contents, impulses and intense energies passing through the

body, if these are not grounded, and amplify those states, leading to de-structuring of the personality (e.g., borderline aspects.) Therefore, as Assagioli (1973) wisely points out, about every technique, one must consider who is expressing, where, for what purpose and with whom.

Another important area regarding the sense of the body in the psychotherapeutic process is that of *relationship* (guide-client relationship.) The body is an essential part of transference/counter-transference just as the other aspects of relationship—the specific and the human relationship, as defined by Assagioli (1967). The fully present guide/therapist is involved with his body—senses, unconscious “passages” of contents which are not only projected by the client on a psychic level, but also energetically communicated and transmitted to the extent that the therapist can perceive these bodily. The therapist’s body resonates just as fantasies or other mental elaboration are used as a response to the client, in order to understand what is going on in the other, as well as being part of the process of empathy. In psychoanalysis, this bodily resonance is considered part of a projective identification defense, which can be experienced also in the body. The term “*resonance*” is wider, and holds the body-mind aspects in a unitary way. Besides, the guide who uses his own body, for example in direct physical contact through touching the client’s body, amplifies the relational variables, rendering the relationship more complex and delicate. Particular care is called for to avoid sexualized, invasive or abusive relations, based on body-to-body contact.

Body Techniques

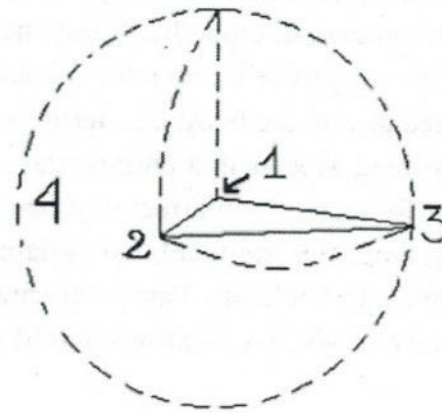
From what has been said so far, it is clear that *training and teaching* psychosynthesis therapists and guides needs to include learning and integration, not so much or only of specific body techniques (however useful some of these might be), but of the “sense of the body,” its presence and potentials all through the psychosynthesis process in the stages of awareness, structuring and mastering, transformation, grounding and expression, in many different ways according to individual needs and situations. The body calls for a special knowledge of sensitivity, encompassing it and the mind in a larger biopsychospiritual unity.

I would like to make some remarks about *techniques* in the process with the body. Just as psychosynthesis is not identified through a series of techniques and exercises, neither is biopsychosynthesis. However biopsychosynthesis is a process leading to an explicit and methodologically conceivable synthesis of body, mind and the transpersonal dimension.

The same set of categories of techniques (analysis, mastery and co-ordination, meditation, expression, relationship) are revisited with an explicit inclusion of the body in each, and there is a tangible “sense” along the process with differing emphasis modulated by the various human *typologies* (Assagioli, 1983). Moving through the techniques is a journey of consciousness accompanied by the reawakening of body awareness. Recalling a quotation of Schilder’s (1935) work on *body image* (an interesting construct defining the multi-layered psychic experience of the body) it is evident how the emergence of the *observer*—the personal Self or I—goes beyond the psychic experience of body image. It moves toward the first true experience of body-mind integration—see Figure I below (Baldini and Rosselli, 1992)—by contact with the center of consciousness and will, a basic step in the process of reorganization of the personality.

Fig. I

1. The I or Personal Self
2. The Body
3. The Mind (Body Image)
4. The Field of Consciousness



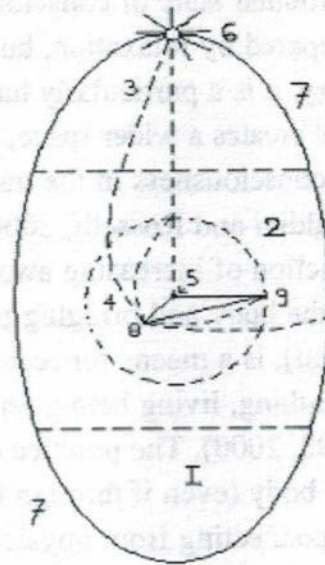
From Baldini A., Rosselli M.,
“The Body and the Boundaries
of Psychosynthesis”

In this figure, the Body (2) and the Mind (3) are not fixed points in the Field of Consciousness (4), but rather triangulate with, and are meant to express interaction with, the I or Personal Self (1). The I is the observer of both Body and Mind, equally.

Potential further steps include movement towards contact and realization of the Transpersonal Self, the ultimate goal of the biopsychosynthetic process, when the body finds more harmony (Baldini and Rosselli, 1992, 2000) at home in forms which become increasingly *transparent* of the Essence. Paradoxically, the whole process involves not only a *growing up* toward the Self, but particularly a *growing down* of the spirit, into ever fuller embodiment—see Figure II (Baldini and Rosselli, 1992).

Fig. II

1. The Lower Unconscious
2. The Middle Unconscious
3. The Higher Unconscious or Superconscious
4. The Field of Consciousness
5. The I or Personal Self
6. The Transpersonal Self
7. The Collective Unconscious
8. The Body
9. The Mind (Body Image)



From Baldini A., Rosselli M.,
“The Body and the Boundaries
of Psychosynthesis”

The tools of the biopsychosynthetic process, the so-called *body techniques*, are physical exercises accompanied by psychological elaboration and verbalization on the one hand; and on the other hand these techniques can involve the body in the whole series of techniques and exercises listed by Assagioli and others, including Ferrucci (1982), Baldini and Rosselli (1992), and Caldironi (2004). The underlying thread in these practices is a person's *contact with his own truth* that gives substantial reference to the function of the body in that truth (Baldini and Rosselli, 1992). *Contact* derives from *cum-tact*; i.e., “with touch”, meaning presence, full participation, being truthfully with oneself and the other. It is a fuller experience than touch, including, but also transcending, mere physicality. It is the opening to particular sensitivity in a progressive integration of the body, the mind and the transpersonal dimension.

In this perspective, body work in biopsychosynthesis is expressed through techniques which, connected to various traditions and/or created by different practitioners, are used in body awareness, sensory and sensitivity training, posture and positions, movement, touch and massage, breath work, dance, music, sound and voice work, passage and integrational work with the seven psychological functions, body meditation, dis-identification and self-identification, relaxation, and distension, etc. (Baldini and Rosselli, 1992). It is important to stress the difference

between *relaxation* and *distension*: in this context the latter relates to a particular state of consciousness which can sometimes be preceded and prepared by relaxation, but unlike relaxation, is not passive. On the contrary, it is a particularly harmonious state among the personality vehicles that creates a wider space, evoking receptive lucidity where higher states of consciousness in the transpersonal dimension can be contacted (Baldini and Rosselli, 2000). Moreover *breath work*, besides having the function of increasing awareness and energy, focusing on different parts of the body and bridging the various dimensions (body-mind-transpersonal), is a means for reconnecting to the natural unique rhythm of a breathing, living being, returning to basic wisdom (Baldini and Rosselli, 1992, 2000). The practice of disidentification is a way for recontacting the body (even if through the discrimination of awareness) and *not* for disconnecting from physicality. If it is carried out in a certain way, i.e., softening the stage of disidentification: “I am not only my body, mind, feelings. . . ,” the stage of self-identification can also be experienced as going beyond the body, but still including it, co-present with the Self.

Conclusion

I want now to refer to an exercise created by Anna Baldini (1991), with whom for many years I shared much of the practice of biopsychosynthesis and to whom I am profoundly grateful. To her, also, I owe many of the ideas referred to in this article. This exercise is a very good example of how the use of the psychosynthetic techniques for symbolic visualization can be embodied in a way that is particularly representative of what I mentioned as “symbolic body” and the integration of the body, the mind, and the transpersonal level. This may be similarly expanded to sub-personality and dream work:

“Imagine being a tree, breathing in from the rich earth, upwards through your branches, towards the clear sky; and breathing out again from the sky back to the earth. Each time your breath returns to the earth, tiny roots begin to sprout from under your feet, growing longer and stronger and deeper and deeper, down towards the centre of the earth. Imagine the energy you draw from the earth, from the rocks, from the pure flowing rivers, rising with each breath and permeating your body, and the earth’s warmth spreading through you. The trunk of your tree reaches the level of your diaphragm, from where leafy branches sprout, spreading out and up

towards a clear blue sky. And now imagine that high above, in that blue sky, the sun is shining brightly, sending you its warmth and light, pervading each cell in your body, the whole of your being. Each time your breath returns to the earth, it carries that warmth and light there too. You can feel the energy from the earth and from the sun meeting within your body, in your diaphragm. Continue breathing and allow these energies to meet within you and to permeate you. . .”

To conclude, I want to emphasize again that the three fundamental stages of the psychosynthetic process: *know yourself, own yourself and transform yourself* (Rosselli, 2000) are fulfilled through the body—the essential protagonist of this journey of consciousness—constantly bringing each of us to the here and now of full presence. Just as these three stages do not necessarily follow this order, but may intermingle and change sequence, so the three-fold work *on, with and through* the body finds various combinations and accompanies the process all the way. Ultimately, I see the process of psychosynthesis, in its full meaning of *biopsychosynthesis*, as a progressive process of *embodiment* which accompanies that of *Self-realization*. It takes exactly the time necessary—no more, no less—for each one of us on our personal journey through life, to really manifest the full expression of our *Self*, growing down into the roots of our fullest humanness. The 15th century ecstatic poet Kabir (1971) describes this simply and beautifully:

“Enter into your own body; there you have a solid place for your feet. Do not go elsewhere! Just throw away all thoughts of imaginary things, and stand firm in that which you are.”

REFERENCES

- Assagioli, R. (1980). *Psychosynthesis: a manual of principles and techniques*. London: Turnstone Books,
- Assagioli, R. (1966). Knightsbridge Hotel talk (unpublished manuscript). Firenze: Istituto di Psicointesi.
- Assagioli, R. (1973). The gentle synthesizer. *Voices*, Vol. 9, No. 3, p.33, Orlando, FL.
- Assagioli, R. (1999). *The act of will*. Knaphill, UK: David Platts Publishing Company.
- Assagioli, R. (1973). La terza, la quarta, la quinta forza della psicologia. *Rivista dell'Istituto di Psicointesi*. Firenze: Psicointesi.
- Assagioli, R. (1983). *Psychosynthesis typology*. London: Institute of Psychosynthesis.
- Assagioli, R. (1967). *Psychosomatic medicine, and biopsychosynthesis*. New York: Psychosynthesis Research Foundation.
- Assagioli, R. (1943). *Il conflitto tra le generazioni e la psicointesi delle età*. Firenze: Istituto di Psicointesi.
- Baldini, A. (1991). *Between heaven and earth, through the body, towards the transpersonal self*. Firenze: Istituto di Psicointesi.
- Baldini, A., & Rosselli, M. (1992). The body and the boundaries of psychosynthesis. In B. Maul (Ed.), *Body Psychotherapy or the Art of Contact*. Berlin: Verlag B. Maul.
- Baldini, A., & Rosselli M. (2000). Corpo e biopsicointesi. *Rivista di Psicointesi Terapeutica*. Anno I. Nuova Serie, no. 1. Firenze: Edizioni SIPT.
- Caldironi, B. (2004). *Seminars on psychopathology and psychotherapy, 1992-2004*. Ravenna: Bruno Caldironi.
- Ferrucci, P. (1982). *What we may be*. Wellingborough: Thorsons.
- Gendlin, E. T. (1996). *Focussing-oriented psychotherapy*. New York: The Guildford Press.
- Kabir. (1971). *The Kabir book* (Bly, R., Trans.). Boston: Beacon Press.
- Parks, J. H. (1973). *Biopsychosynthesis*. New York: Psychosynthesis Research Foundation.
- Rosselli, M. (2000). *An introduction to psychosynthesis*. Firenze: Istituto di Psicointesi.
- Schilder, P. (1935). *The image and appearance of the human body*. New York: International Universities Press, Inc.
- Wilber, K. (2000). *Integral psychology*. Boston & London: Shambhala.