

AAP
Association for the Advancement
of Psychosynthesis



Psychosynthesis Quarterly

March 2023

The digital magazine of the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis



This issue's theme: Psychosynthesis and Work

Painting by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner

AAP provides resources for people to cultivate peace and purpose.

Our mission is to advance the theory and practice of psychosynthesis to benefit individuals and society.

The Psychosynthesis Quarterly is published by The Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis (AAP) four times a year in March, June, September and December. The AAP provides resources for people to cultivate peace and purpose. Our mission is to advance the theory and practice of psychosynthesis to benefit individuals and society.

The AAP was founded in 1995 and is a Massachusetts nonprofit corporation with tax exemption in the United States. AAP membership supports this publication and the other educational activities of AAP, including scholarships. Membership and donations are tax deductible in the United States.

The Psychosynthesis Quarterly accepts announcements, ideas, reviews of books and events, articles, poetry, art, exercises, photos, and letters. Tell us what has helped your life and work, what can help others, and examples of psychosynthesis theory in action.

We hope our suggestion of from 250 to 1500 words may serve as a guideline that helps your writing. We prefer that you use the APA style guide when possible, for things like punctuation and references.

Announcements, book reviews, and upcoming events are also welcome, with a request that nonmembers who wish to submit **advertising** make a donation to AAP. To donate, [click here](#).

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*Note: We receive submissions from all over the world. You will see the authors “native” spelling in their articles.

With thanks to Peter Stewart for copy editing

Letter from the Guest Editor: Peter Stewart

Work, Purpose, Destiny

Many thanks to the AAP for the opportunity to guest edit the Spring quarterly. Although there were fewer contributions than usual, I was delighted by their inspirational quality, not only the textual contributions but also some beautiful visual imagery inspired by the theme of Psychosynthesis and Work. “Through all your mortal work your soul should sing to God,” said Roberto Assagioli, the founder of Psychosynthesis. Several of the contributors clearly share this calling.

In this issue, Cliff Ishigaki talks about the value of work in terms of developing a personal Self and our connection to the Transpersonal Self. Susan Jewkes Allen writes about career transitions, the time between an ending and new beginnings, which can be fraught with confusion and stress but also rich with possibility and anticipation. Marjorie Hope Gross describes her journey from working in fashion design in Hong Kong to becoming a Buddhist and finally a psychosynthesis therapist (and AAP Steering Committee member) in New York state.

I was thrilled to read Ewa Bialek’s piece which includes the joyful words: “My soul is still singing, bursting with delight.” She describes how her personal psychosynthesis became a way of life and eventually, a powerful tool for her work with clients. Shamai Currim explores how we create and uncreate our Self as we get older and develop wisdom. She sees in Psychosynthesis a way to create inner silence so that the voice of the Spirit can be heard. Cristina Pelizzatti describes her 14 years work in the service of psychosynthesis, first as a counsellor in a children’s hospital and then as a coach. She has written a book about her journey.

In conclusion, Catherine Ann Lombard provides a new translation of an extract from Assagioli’s work *Creating Harmony in Life*, and she has also written a brief review of the book.

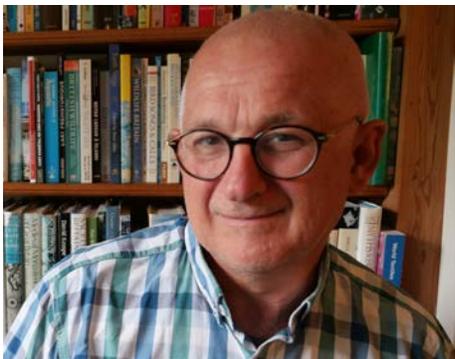
Many thanks to all those who sent in textual articles, as well as photos and drawings to illustrate the issue.

On a personal basis, the last couple of years have been a period of transition for me, and partly for health reasons, blissfully light on the work front. But as we come into spring, I have been noticing the garden birds busy making their nests, flitting from branch to branch looking for twigs, digging for worms in the softening soil. I have felt all this activity like a tug in my soul.

True, I have no desire to return to my former existence as a journalist and analyst with all its lifestyle clichés for which, I admit, I feel a certain nostalgia (workaholic, alcohol-fuelled, non-stop travel). But as my piece describes, I am attracted to the idea of helping people, especially younger people, make better career choices and Psychosynthesis seems like a rich vehicle for this.

The AAP’s invitation to contributors for this issue quoted Assagioli as saying: “Even when engaged on some unpleasant, painful task we can find reason for spiritual joy, based on our ability to overcome circumstances.”

I wish all of you who read this spiritual joy.



Peter is a creative coach who has recently focussed his work on career transitions and issues around employment. He is accredited at Foundation Level by the European Mentoring and Coaching Council. He trained as a psychosynthesis coach on the PGCPCL program run by Middlesex University and the Institute of Psychosynthesis in London. Before that, he worked for more than 30 years as a journalist, consultant and analyst, mainly in the fields of energy and travel. He runs several websites dedicated to his creative interests including pottery, poetry, painting, travel and wine. You can connect with Peter through his website <https://coachcreates.com> which has links to his various social media or by email to peter@coachcreates.com

Choosing the Cover: Tightrope Walkers

By Peter Stewart



When I was editing the various contributions to the latest Quarterly, the image of a tightrope walker came into my mind. I didn't immediately understand why, but reading and editing the articles more closely, I came to realize that something had been left unsaid in my own piece.

Throughout my career as a journalist, I felt like I was walking a tightrope between the lofty ideals that had brought me to the profession, and the daily realities of meeting deadlines and cutting any corners that needed to be cut to do that.

The work of a journalist involves building close relationships with contacts in order to be able to access information and context for a story. It's a privileged role, and there are strong ethical boundaries to avoid conflicts of interest. But I was reminded continually through my career that "contacts" were merely a means to an end. It was always the story that mattered.

No matter how good the source, our managers and the training courses reminded us, they were not your friends. They may have given you information on trust, but ultimately, the journalist's prime responsibility was always to getting out the news to the general public. We even had a phrase for it: "No source was too good to burn."

Although I was never as cut-throat as some colleagues, I experienced this as a moral dilemma and there was a transactional quality to these relationships that I feel ambivalent about. I imagine that many of our clients face similar dilemmas in their daily work lives. We live in a world that is Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous, or VUCA for short.

Hopefully, as a psychosynthesis coach or therapist, or a creative artist involved in psychosynthesis, these dilemmas do not loom too large for many readers. But the truth is, work often does involve difficult decisions and uncomfortable choices.

The nearby images of tightrope walkers reminded me of the highs and lows of work; on the one hand, how we often feel close to the heavens, guided by purpose and full of good intent. But also how precarious that feeling is: one misstep and you can come crashing down to earth, and in the real world there is usually no safety net!

In Kirchner's painting on the cover, the two women are poised in a subtle dance on the single string that holds them both above the ground. It's an amazing image of mutuality and team work. Imagine the tension as they walk along the tightrope, with each step and wobble needing to be met with a reciprocal balancing action!

Kirchner himself shared the preoccupation of the German expressionist group Die Brücke, of which he was part, about humankind's lost spiritual purpose. He was traumatized by conflict in the first world war, fell foul of the Nazi persecution of "Degenerate" Art and eventually committed suicide in 1938, aged 58 years old. (<https://www.theartstory.org/artist/kirchner-ernst-ludwig/>)



Italian Field Workers

Photographs by Catherine Anne Lombard



Catherine Ann Lombard, M.A. is a Psychosynthesis Psychologist, Counselor and Researcher. She has an M.A. in Psychosynthesis Psychology from Middlesex University, London and a Diploma in Psychosynthesis Counseling from the Institute of Psychosynthesis, London. She is from California and has lived in Japan, Egypt, Ireland, Germany and now lives in Umbria, Italy. She has had numerous scientific and popular articles published on psychosynthesis and is currently writing a book on Rabindranath Tagore, the Indian Nobel Prize winner of Literature in 1913, from a psychosynthesis perspective. She also offers workshops and Webinars. You can follow Catherine's bi-monthly blog at LoveAndWill.com.

‘And What Do You Do For a Living?’

By Cliff Ishigaki

How many times have we heard this or a similar expression used in the course of new social situations? It has become a helpful landmark for others to determine how to approach, evaluate or dismiss another.

When we look at the history of work it is often equated with ‘labor.’ In our early history our ancestors had one primary mission: to survive at all costs. There was little to reflect on when it came to work, because life expectancy was so low. As we moved from the specialized work of hunter gathers where men and women were often compartmentalized in their labors, we did not see a big change when our ancestors shifted to an agrarian lifestyle for their survival.

In the industrial world that followed, work continued as ‘labor’ for our ancestors and this paradigm still exists even as we enter the age of information. These days, in ensuring our survival as a people, our focus has switched from our own clan or tribe to that of our company or enterprise or organization.

As Psychosynthesis practitioners how do we view this dominant reality of work in our life?

I believe it is helpful to use the basic approaches to viewing a human in Psychosynthesis. We view the work of developing a personal self as necessary. We view the work of developing connection to a Higher Self or Transpersonal Self as necessary.

In the areas of developing a personal self we work with basic needs. The most fundamental of our personal needs are safety and belonging. When we review the world of work and labor, our history indicates that safety and belonging are the primary needs met in working. This has not changed in the millions of years of our ancestral history and still is the basis of what so many of us do for a living. We certainly cannot object to work while attempting to meet these two most fundamental needs for our survival.

The personal self also has needs such as self-esteem and identity formation. This set of needs was postulated many years ago by Abraham Maslow and Erik Erikson as part of the process of human development.

In the early 1970’s Jack Canfield had a great impact on education by asking schools to consider that self-esteem was composed of both capability

and lovability. A person’s identity was comprised of both functions and schools were encouraged to develop both the intellect and the emotional intelligence of students.

In Psychosynthesis the experience of being capable and emotionally intelligent are seen as a normal part of becoming a personal self.

Does having a job or working lend itself to developing the personal self? This is an obvious question for us as we look at work as a context for both survival (safety and belonging needs) and the personal self (self-esteem needs). The use of the ‘Will’ is a common function in both sets of needs.

The necessity of using the ‘strong’ and ‘skillful’ will are paramount for survival. For some of us it may only be learned through work. We shouldn’t be surprised that ‘good’ will is also essential to developing our self-esteem in work.

Turning our attention to the other domain of Psychosynthesis, the Higher Self, may add another dimension to the world of work.

If work was limited to survival needs and the hope that it would bring self-esteem as well, it may be a gamble in our world. What are the odds that such a huge portion of our population works to survive and that they would also obtain high self-esteem for their personal self?

For many, work is only associated with safety and a feeling of belonging or affiliation. What must we consider in allowing self-esteem needs to become part of our work? We recognize that some work allows us to use our capabilities of heart and mind. Other work does not. On the level of the personal self, it is deeply important to look for work that allows us to use or develop our heart and mind capabilities. When our skill capabilities are not being used, we can activate the ‘good will’ to exercise part of a healthy personal self at work. It would be ideal if work allowed for the matching of our inherent abilities of body and mind to the task, as well as allowing the ‘good will’ to be active in creating healthy bonds that add to our self-esteem.

We view a few contemporary companies attempting to ‘personalize’ work so that it allows an employee to be treated as a human, rather than just demanding their ‘performance’. Our work world is becoming aware that work needs to go beyond the survival needs for their workers.

In bringing back the connection to the Higher Self, we understand the Higher Self is aware that each of us is an interdependent part of a greater whole, whether it be family or work. The Higher Self sees our part in the group, whether in a survival situation or in an ideal work situation that raises the mind, body and spirit to its true level of potential.

At the esoteric level of Psychosynthesis, the Higher Self is seen as the synthesis of **transpersonal love, transpersonal intelligence and transpersonal power**. In art the three primary colors become the creation points for every possible color visible to the eye.

To the Higher Self the synthesis of love, intelligence and power can create the colors of serenity, calmness, vibrancy, humor, wisdom, discernment, enthusiasm, discipline, and so on. To invoke the Higher Self into the work of surviving or self-esteem creates a different context to the content of our needs.

For each of us we must consider the context of work as a place where sometimes the most fundamental characteristics of being human are meant to be developed. Developing consistency by showing up on time, by learning to complete a job, by being evaluated for our work are fundamental building blocks for using the will in life. A job may be menial or repetitive but there are those who can benefit from learning the basics that evolve towards the attainment of healthy self-esteem of the personal self.

Developing a healthy personal self allows for the Higher Self to enact what Roberto Assagioli referred to as the 'soul infused personality.' This work that we are engaged in allows our time at work to be lived in the context of the Higher Self rather than the inner child or the personal longing for self-esteem.

For each of us in the helping professions we are asked why we chose this work. Long ago my Sufi teacher said: 'you will teach best what you need to learn the most.' This is a healthy guide for each of us since the Higher Self may use our work as a means to develop both a healthier inner child, personal self and a view on how interdependent life is meant to be. The 'wounded healer' has long been a term used to define many practitioners in the field of Psychosynthesis. Our work is our healing.

Each aspect of human development is important. Each of us deserves to experience safety and belonging. Each of us deserves to develop a healthy personal self. Each of us deserves to connect to our Higher Self and become infused with soul.

Sometimes our work in the world plays a part in this, sometimes our families play a part in this, sometimes our intimate relationships play a part in this, sometimes our spiritual practices play a part in this.

The Higher Self is interdependent in all aspects of its being so, even in the most limited of lives, it leaves nothing out for us to use. We can take inspiration and hope in that. May each of us embody the understanding and actions that lead to the respect and care of the soul in our lives and development.

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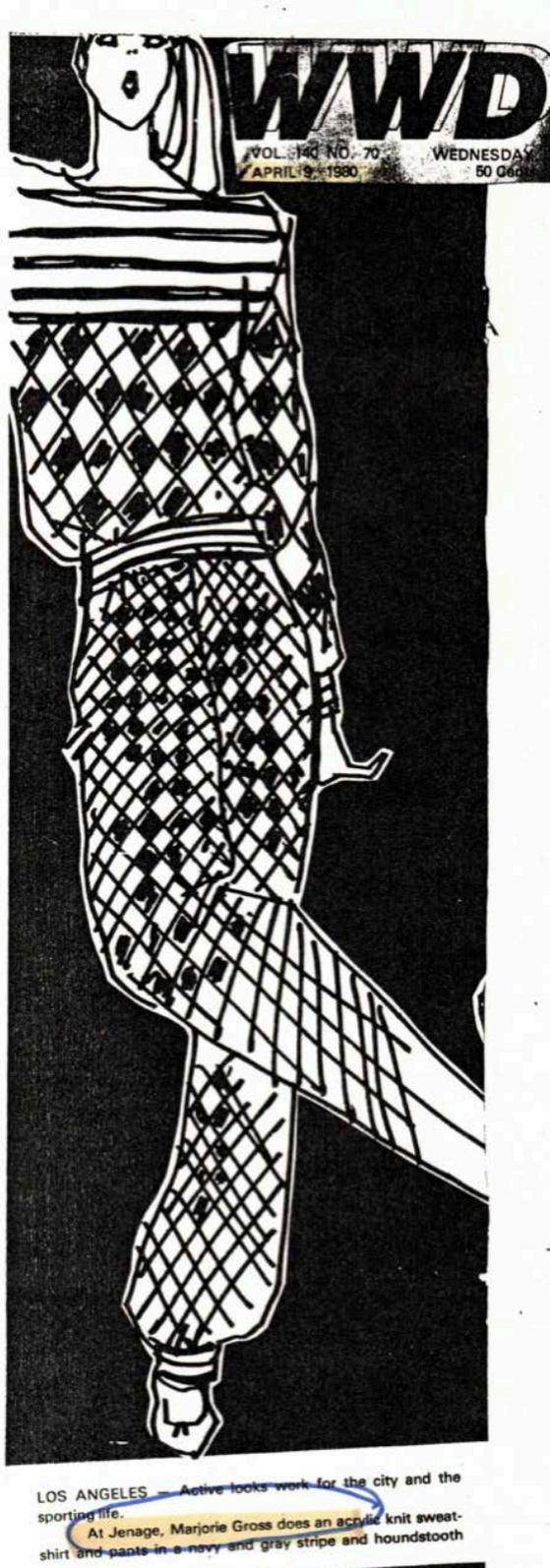
About the Author

Cliff Ishigaki is a trauma and addictions recovery specialist in Orange County, California. After Co-Directing the Psychosynthesis Center in Pasadena, California he directed the Orange County Center for several years. Cliff served as a Captain in the United States Marine Corps during the Vietnam war in 1969. He was ordained as an Interfaith Minister in 1996 and has also served as a senior instructor in the martial art of Aikido for 44 years. He serves as a consultant to government and non-profit agencies in trauma and addictions treatment. He continues to maintain a private practice.



My Call of Self

By Marjorie Hope Gross



Becoming a therapist seemed like a way for me to unlock the “why” behind my depression while also helping others. When I graduated High School in 1967, however, I was unaware of any paths that would allow me to become a therapist, other than psychiatry which would require a medical degree. My severe depression and poor grades made that out of the question.

Having no guidance from parents or school, my mother suggested that, as I had done some modeling and had an interest in fashion, I should consider pursuing it as a career. I applied to and was accepted by the Parsons School of Design and graduated in 1970 with a degree in Fashion Design.

My first interview on a Monday morning was with a tee shirt company that manufactured overseas. A week later I was on a plane to Hong Kong to supervise the production of the current collection. I ended up staying and living in Kowloon for four years, working with their newly developing manufacturing business which required a lot of hand holding from design to final production.

From the outside it looked fun and glamorous, but it was not enough to lift the overwhelming depression that plagued me continually. The suicidal thoughts, for which indulging in sex, drugs and rock and roll offered no cure.

Around that time, I became friendly with one of the factory owners with whom I frequently socialized. As we shared stories about our lives, I said that I was a Buddhist (I wasn't but I didn't think being Jewish was very cool) so on another occasion he told me that his client, a designer from New York who was also a Buddhist, was in town. He suggested we meet.

Awaiting me in the lobby was a very ordinary looking young man who I would never have given a second look. His presence, however, attracted me beyond his looks. He had a glow I wanted. I listened while he told me about Nichiren Buddhism and taught me the chant Nam Myoho Renge Kyo. I felt a giant fist open and let go, and I took the first deep breath I remember ever taking.

When I went to work the next day I was surprised at how many people were greeting me, whom I had previously not even acknowledged as being there. At that moment my life started moving in a totally different direction.

Fast forward.....my career and life continued to advance. I took on designing positions with other manufacturing firms and enjoyed the many perks of traveling on the company's dollar and circling the globe as part of my job. I stayed in the industry for 25 years reaping the benefit of the travel and the income.

Despite the perceived glamour of the work, however, it is a soul-sucking industry (watch "The Devil Wears Prada") and I began to question the value of another piece of clothing in the grand scheme of things. All the while, I never gave up on my dream of becoming a therapist and doing something that I felt could make a difference.

At that point I had been practicing SGI Buddhism with Soka Gakkai International for many years. The basic tenets encouraged us to make the impossible possible, so with determination and a plan, I believed I could make it happen.

Around that time, my marriage was falling apart and getting divorced seemed like a good time to change the trajectory of my life and to pursue my dream more seriously. In 2000 I moved from my home town of New York City to Albany, the state capital. I took an office job while figuring out next steps.

A friend suggested I look into the Synthesis Center and that I could receive credentials as a Psychosynthesis counselor through their program. Everything I heard at the very first introductory meeting in Amherst resonated through me to my bones. Psychosynthesis dovetailed perfectly with my Buddhist beliefs. I felt like I was home. I signed right up and completed the three-year training course.



Nichiren Buddhism on Determination: In Buddhism, making a determination is different than wishing or hoping. When we simply wish for something to happen, it implies that achieving our goals is beyond our control. Setting a determination, however, means that we will achieve our goal regardless of the obstacles that come our way.

So now that we've developed a vision, what is our plan of action? Some say that it takes, on average, 250 job applications to receive one solid offer. If we want to entertain at least four offers, that means we should send out 1,000 applications. (This amounts to applying to three jobs a day on average for nearly a year.) So let's firmly decide that we *will* achieve our goals and use a clear action plan to create a path to victory.

Assagioli states that any act of will has six sequential stages: purpose, deliberation, choice, affirmation, planning, and execution.

Stages of the Act of Will

The act of will consists of six sequential phases or stages, which are like links in a chain. The strength of the act of willing is only as strong as its weakest link.

- The Purpose, Aim, or Goal, based on Evaluation, Motivation, and Intention
- Deliberation
- Choice and Decision
- Affirmation: the Command, or "Fiat," of the Will
- Planning and Working Out a Program
- Direction of the Execution

In order to act effectively, one must be proficient in all the stages, although not every stage may be important in any one willed act. The main cause of failure in completing an act of will is that people often have difficulty carrying out a specific stage and get stuck at a particular point in the sequence. Therefore, understanding the various stages and their functions is important in uncovering the specific weak point and realizing the far-reaching benefits that can be derived from such work.

At 50 years old, armed with confidence, support from my Buddhist practice, and my practical knowledge and training in Psychosynthesis, I began offering my counseling services. It seemed that in the early 2000s therapists and counselors weren't promoting themselves online, but with my marketing and business background I thought, **Why not?**

I put up a website offering free consultations and a very low starting fee for the sessions. Within a year I had enough clients to fill the half-day that I wasn't at my office job with clients, and it was only another year until I was able to give up the office job entirely.

Psychosynthesis provided an opportunity for me to find a way to unlock the "why" behind my depression while also helping others. It felt natural and comfortable to use Psychosynthesis concepts to support my clients, as they were practical and accessible, and resonated so deeply with my Buddhist practice. Psychosynthesis provided both a framework and tools for me to guide.

As I continued to see my clients thrive, I wondered how I could contribute to bringing psychosynthesis to the wider world. Teaching wasn't my thing, so I joined the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis (AAP) hoping to put my business and marketing skills to use. For the past several years I have served on the Steering Committee and endeavored to spread the word about this still relatively unknown modality. In that capacity, it has been my honor and privilege to work with and get to know so many wonderful individuals, from whom I have learned so much.

I am tremendously appreciative to have found work that fills my soul and that I look forward to every day. In my questionnaire to clients, I ask what they want to be remembered for after their death. I'd like to think that if one person can say I helped them live a better life after I'm gone, I will have fulfilled my "call of self".



Candie's



February 21, 1992

CANDIE'S ENTERS ACCESSORIES WITH LINES FOR FALL RETAILING

NEW YORK — Candie's, a company that started with underwear and moved into shoes, is now venturing into accessories with a total branded concept.

The company unveiled its new accessories program at its showroom here last week. The

for fashion jewelry; Crown Pacific Accessories U.S.A. Inc. for belts, hats and ear muffs; Monique Handbags for handbags and tote bags; Roger Gimbel Accessories for small leather goods; Americal Corp. for sheer hosiery and tights, and Neuville Industries for socks.

Wholesale prices for the accessories items will range from \$2 for the least expensive hair accessories to \$20 for the most expensive handbags.

"We see this as an opportunity to strengthen our brand name," said Marjorie Steinman, Candie's fashion director. "It's a challenge to maintain the cohesiveness of the accessories under one label, but the licensees have been cooperative and enthusiastic."

"It's been a true joint effort," said Barry Lipstein, a principal of Monique Accessories. "Everything was well-planned and there wasn't the friction that sometimes results with a big group of licensees."

While Candie's will sell the accessories units aggressively, Cole said, each classification will also be offered for sale separately. He projected first-year accessories sales at \$10 million.

Candie's will also provide service representatives to stores that buy the accessories program, Cole noted.

"We will have reps servicing the units probably once a week," he said. "We'll also have new product every two months, which the reps will be responsible for."



Candie's new accessories spinner, foreground, and wall unit

*Note: where mentioned in press articles as Marjorie Steinman, it was my married name.

About the Author Marjorie Hope Gross left a 25-year long (soul sucking) career as a Fashion Designer to pursue her life long dream of being a mental health counselor/therapist. However, at the ripe old age of 50, going back to get another degree seemed daunting, so instead she became a certified Psychosynthesis Practitioner in 2004 through the Synthesis Center in Amherst, MA going on to become certified as a Psychosynthesis Life Coach in 2008 as well. As a practicing Buddhist with the SGI (<https://www.sgi-usa.org/about-our-community/>) since 1974, I have found the tenets of both systems mesh very well together and have allowed me to guide my clients to a more self-empowered way of healing. I have a full time counseling practice and serve on the AAP Steering Committee as Co-Chair.

She lives in rural upstate New York with her architect husband and 4 cats.

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Our True Work By Shamai Currim

One of the joys of getting older is letting go of previous commitments, no matter how much they may have formed and enriched our lives. Our children grow older, our spouses change, the world begins to look different and we wonder how to fit in. Our employment gave us meaning, our hobbies gave us creative outlets, and then...the time came to 'retire'. When we are still full of life, the thought of pulling back, of becoming less, of knowing ourselves in a different light, may be daunting. How do we uncreate and then recreate the self?

According to the Harappa School of Leadership:

The formation of self-concept begins during early childhood. It continues to develop and evolve throughout our life. Our self-concept can affect various aspects of our lives, including our careers. Most theories suggest that there's a strong relationship between self-concept and our motivation levels at work.¹

Yet Roberto Assagioli defines self-realization as:

...disidentifying from mental, emotional and physical energies and identifying instead with consciousness itself. We do this by becoming the observer (the conscious "I") and uniting with the source of consciousness, which is the Transpersonal Self.²

Donald Winnicott talks about the true and false self as a psychological dualism. He states that our sense of self is based on spontaneous authentic experiences and a feeling of being alive. The true self of the infant, in Winnicott's formulation, is by nature a-social and a-moral. It isn't interested in the feelings of others, it isn't socialized. It wants to express itself where and how it wants. This immense emotional privilege of being able to be true to self allows a child to develop a false self, a capacity to behave according to the demands of external reality.

When we have been given the chance to be our true selves we do not, at every occasion, need to rebel and insist on our needs. We can follow the rules because we have, for a time, been able to ignore them entirely. In other words, Winnicott was not a thorough enemy of a False Self; he understood its role well enough, he simply insisted that it belonged to health only when it had been preceded by a thorough earlier experience of an untrammelled True Self.³

According to Assagioli:

A clear and full experience of the self gives, at first, such a strong sense of self-identity that it is felt as something sure, permanent, unchangeable, and indestructible. It is realized as such an essential reality that all other experiences and so-called realities appear, when compared to it, as changing, impermanent and of less value and significance. Such a realization is accompanied by a sense of inner independent, self-relying security, which is deeply satisfying and gives rise to a feeling of peace, serenity and quiet joy.⁴

So my next question would look at what we consider to be work. By definition, work has to do with involvement, results, effort, and purpose, with leisure and rest becoming the opposite side of the spectrum. But what if we enjoy our work and it no longer feels like toil? What if our rest and serenity actually involve action in order to achieve that state?

All of our life experiences require a decision-making *process*. Decisions are acts of will, because deciding is one of the stages of *the* volitional act. Therefore, existential situations are common in human life. These lived experiences take us from the mundane to the esoteric. We learn through tragedy and distortion. We learn through the experience of 'walking through fire'. The more we allow, the deeper our

¹ <https://harappa.education/harappa-diaries/self-concept-components-formation-and-examples/#:~:text=The%20formation%20of%20self%2Dconcept,our%20motivation%20levels%20at%20work>

² <https://kennethsorensen.dk/en/how-to-develop-the-i-self-connection/>

³ <https://www.theschooloflife.com/article/the-true-and-the-false-self/>

⁴ Assagioli, *Mystery of The Self*, Assagioli Archive, Florence

lived experience. We reach the edges of the futility of ordinary life which leads to feelings of joy and love, and a desire for union and communication with universal Life. It is to this work that we should strive to achieve.

So what, really, is our purpose in life? Is it to be born, to study, to work, to raise a family, and to die? Having completed all these tasks what happens when what we thought was our life purpose changes? How do we cope if all we ever knew was our physical, exoteric work?

Work is a lifelong process of formation. We experience, we process, we understand, we integrate and assimilate, each person at his or her own rate and according to their ability to ingest the process. This forms our 'outer' self, our world self that takes us through the stages of our life. At points along the way we observe, reassess, and integrate a new understanding of our lived experiences. Along the way we discard and exchange pieces that attract our purpose and enrich our experiences.

As we reach our wisdom age we begin to reflect and are given the time and ability to do a life review. Many feel regret, some feel wishful, and some feel satisfaction for a job well done. What is it that we are assessing?

We come into life with a purpose, a goal to achieve, a lesson to be learnt. Our soul is on a trajectory, reaching out and experiencing all that life has to offer. What some people call 'work' is just a tool to achieve our goal of finding out who we are and what we are. That life-long search takes us from experience to experience, some of which we integrate, some of which we share, and some of which we discard. All are fertilizer for our soul, a way to fully understand the meaning of life, to live our purpose. That life work takes place from the moment we are conceived, and beyond the moment that we leave our physical body. That work continues when we are awake, and when we are asleep. Our goal guides us through the hardships and joys of life. Our wisdom comes from the lived experience. The more we choose to 'live' the richer our ability to conquer and come out the hero. The more we take in, the more we become. Work is but an endless experience for the soul to become human.

Assagioli tells us that the two big tasks that each of us must accomplish in life are:

1. To fulfill our vocation.
2. To develop our deficient parts and correct our defects, to succeed in forming the beautiful statue of the soul, in its harmonious perfection.¹

As we disidentify from all that is around us, Assagioli tells us that:

our "I" experiences our thoughts, our imaginations and reveries; the situation must be radically reversed: our "I" must prevail and finally become the master and not remain the slave.

To achieve this, it is a question of clearing the way, of sweeping away all obstacles, of creating inner silence, so that the voice of the Spirit can be heard.²

It is to this purpose that we should dedicate our lives.



Shamai Currim, PhD, lives in Karmiel, Israel. She is a graduate of Psychosynthesis Pathways of Montreal and has served for many years, in many varied positions, on the Steering Committee of the Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis. She is a retired psychotherapist, educator, and educational

consultant and has done volunteer work in hospice and home care services, prisons, and senior's residences.

Now in her senior years, Shamai has immersed herself in the arts and has had her work displayed in many local shows.

Shamai has presented at numerous conferences, has been published in many peer review journals, and is the author of Meaghan's Story.

¹ <https://kennethsorensen.dk/en/to-know-the-human-soul/>

² <https://kennethsorensen.dk/en/to-know-the-human-soul/>

Psychosynthesis in Action

Making Synthetic Art

By Paola Zanella



FEELINGS - Hemp-lime, limeplaster, earth pigments, ears of barley.

Psychosynthesis has changed my vision of life, leading me to shift the relational and communicative aspects of my work from the commercial sphere towards the helping relationship. This reflects a move from a more superficial level to one that is deeper and more useful to my own evolutionary journey and that of the people I meet.

In the artistic field, the need to give visible form to my inner world has expanded towards a more extended and collective vision of existential experience, a “(...) vision from above: of things, of other individuals and even of oneself, as a whole (unitive feelings, of wholeness, totality).”

If I can guide the person through counselling to clarify a personal problem, I hope with my works to encourage the observer to reflect on his or her own way of being part of the world and his or her life, through a journey of mirroring between him or herself and the work.

A strong connection with nature leads me to use its creations to make my own. This connects me to beauty, to the primordial breath of creation and, at the same time, to the eternal where there is no boundary between a before and an after but only continuity. Each element, already the result of previous syntheses, contains a fragment of the history of mother earth to which is added the time of the “here and now” in my studio.

Nature's behavior reveals the universal principles that maintain order and harmony in the universe. I recognize the path of Psychosynthesis by translating its rules to the plane of the human being. Antoni Gaudi states: “I believe, like Da Vinci, that decadence begins as soon as man forgets to observe nature.”

My works aim to reflect the macrocosm in a microcosm, emphasizing that the universe is an organic whole.

Multiplicity as the origin, integration as the means and unity as the goal are the stages of creation and development at all levels of existence, including my creative process. Nature constantly places before our eyes the integrative process that leads to synthesis.

The synthesis

Walking in the woods, we see trees changing their shape to make room for a rock and rocks being embraced by the roots of a tree. Minerals and plants work together until they find a balance, creating harmonious forms that produce beauty.

Similarly, in my studio, lime (mineral) mixed with hemp (vegetable), the basic mixture of my creations, are synthesized into a higher unity that is more than the simple sum of the individuals of which it is composed because it encompasses them but together transcends them, creating something new.

Is this not the same goal to which psychosynthesis tends? "Psychosynthesis (...) may be referred to above all as an attitude and a slow achievement toward integration and synthesis in every field (...). It could be called a 'movement,' a 'tendency,' a 'goal'"



WIND

Hemp-lime, limeplaster, earth oxide, bees wax.

It's like when the wind blows and changes the shape of the trees. And like when the inner wind blows and changes "our shape."

Polarity

Polarity is a universal principle found at every level of manifestation. We also find it in our parts, in our qualities, in our feelings, in our relationships.

I tend to create surfaces with strong contrasts, both visual and tactile: areas that are shiny and dull or smooth and rough. It is an aesthetic choice that, at the same time, draws attention to the question of duality: do we focus our attention on one area to the exclusion of the other (*stagnation*)? Do we alternately focus on one and then the other (*oscillation*)? Do we attend to both areas (*balance*) or do we move away from the work and no longer see individual surfaces but the work as a whole (*synthesis*)?

In making a work, I experience all the phases of its creation. When I take a step back, in order to have an overall view, I actually disidentify from the particular, because only from an external point of view can I see the work in its unity.

Good will

Working with the materials of mother earth is a "making" that involves waiting, respecting the characteristics and times of the individual, of each other and of their mutual influence. Times that differ depending on the season and the situation of the moment.

It is a process that requires cooperation and not prevarication, training me in the use of will, love, cooperation and empathy. Dealing practically with the aspect of goodwill means asking: how do I harmonize my will with that of others and with nature?

Goodness is the aspect of will that specifically concerns inter-individual psychosynthesis. While dealing with materials and not individuals, this action creates a harmonious relationship between me and the elements. The quality of this energy accumulates in the work, as does that relating to my intent and the harmlessness of the materials.



“From a qualitative point of view, symbols can be considered as images, representations, "signs" of psychic realities. (...) The relationship between the symbol and the reality it represents is based primarily on analogy [which] (...) can be used in an attempt to find new and unusual relationships and hypotheses or ways of looking at things (...). Analogy gives an indirect picture of reality.”

Symbols do not have an unambiguous meaning. Through analogy, the symbol acts as a bridge between the conscious and unconscious parts of the psyche, allowing the individual to hold a dialogue with his or her less accessible contents and activating creative processes of integration and transformation. The end result of a work made of natural materials is never totally predictable. The margin of randomness also depends on my gesture, which as a human being is never identical. This makes each creation unrepeatable.

We easily recognize the value of the uniqueness of a work of art. However, in an age that tends to standardize even people, we do not always welcome and value the uniqueness of each individual.

Beauty

Beauty is one “of the spiritual elements (...) that form the link between our ordinary human personality and the spiritual Self (...).” Wonder, awe and joy, that state of peace of the ego that is Love, are the reactions provoked by the experience of Beauty.

Among the various sources of beauty, Assagioli cites nature and art, stating that “the true function and mission of art [is] to reveal the hidden beauty, the divine imprint in all things. The artist almost

accentuates, draws out, reveals this beauty, so that those who alone in nature do not discern it, are helped by art.”

My way of experiencing art, psychosynthesis, my need for nature and being of service to others are distinct but not separate paths; they nourish, enrich and complement each other. This gives a sense of purpose to my work as an artist and counselor through which I feel I can express my spiritual goals.

My creatures represent a means of bringing into matter principles and ideals that belong to the transpersonal world.

“As long as our ideal impulses originate in this region [transpersonal dimension] (and many of them do because we find that they possess us in a way that cannot be understood in words) we belong to it in a more intimate sense than we belong to the visible world because we belong more intimately wherever our ideals belong.

Yet the invisible region in question is not merely ideal because it produces effects in this world.” These words give me the strength and confidence to assume an attitude of curiosity and openness when unexpected events occur that I impulsively wish to counter.

While working on a work, it has happened that, thanks to an unexpected event, I have achieved unexpected forms and surface effects that I probably would never have achieved if everything had gone according to my plans. However, I had to destroy several works before I learned to welcome the unexpected, giving myself time to understand its gift!

As a counselor, I try to keep my clients from breaking too many vessels by accompanying their journey with that bifocal vision that is characteristic of psychosynthesis counseling.

“Be open and plastic to new possibilities. It is not a "theory," but a fact ascertained many and many times that the solution to a difficulty, the help in a given situation does not come by the known ways or in the ways that would seem natural and easier to us, but in unforeseen manners and by unforeseen means, as a result of a concatenation of unthought of circumstances, and often in an ingenious and surprising way.”

Both client work and artistic work are a source of joy, my "song to God" because they allow me to contribute to the creation of beauty, whether that of an individual or a work, while simultaneously enhancing my own.

Thus in a work in which I arranged the ears of corn in different positions, it can mirror the emotional dance that accompanies our day: in which ear of corn do I now recognize myself? The hemp strands moving gently around a bowl can refer us to the experience that kindness arouses and its value in life. Finally, the irregular shape of a vase, may remind us that just as when the wind blows in nature and changes the shape of trees, when the inner wind blows, it is only natural that it changes "our shape." In this second phase of my being an artist, I started from Psychosynthesis and brought it into art. But through an opposite process, art can be a means to disclose Psychosynthesis, to help individuals become a little more self-aware.

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APPROACHABLE SPINOSITY

Hemp-lime, limeplaster, earth pigments, needles and pine branch.



KINDNESS

Hemp-lime, hemp fiber, limeplaster. Kindness is a light breath, a breeze that gently touches your soul.

Paola Zanella qualified as a Psychosynthesis counsellor at the Istituto Internazionale di Psicointegrazione Educativa, in Torino, Italy. Her thesis was entitled Il labirinto nel processo della Bio-psicointegrazione (The labyrinth in the process of Biopsychosynthesis). She has studied labyrinths for many years, and as an artist she makes labyrinths from clay and other natural materials, as well as constructing temporary labyrinths in nature. Working with groups, she makes use of labyrinth walking to approach Psychosynthesis themes and offers a range of experiences that encourage personal growth.

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Natal Charts

By Owyn Ruck



ABOUT THE SUBMITTED PIECES

Title: *Natal Charts, 2016-2022*

Size/Media: 12x12" woven linen, foil, paint

I have studied astrology, in some format, since I was about 13. After I began practicing in a therapeutic setting in my late 20's, I found the process of drawing the energetic structures in the natal chart to be extremely useful in allowing the most potent inquiry for the client to arise. From what I understand thus far in my Psychosynthesis studies, Assagioli utilized natal charts in his work with others, even if not necessarily explicitly.

To read a natal chart is an unfolding process, a conversation with the symbol, the guide, the mandala, that carries the information held in potential of healing, of synthesizing. Each woven piece honors the energetic qualities underlying the natal chart of the individual, an object imbued with the archetypal dynamics within a whole. As the recipient lives with the object, I wish for it to act as a companion, a reminder of the presence of Self.

As I do the repetitive work of weaving - passing the shuttle back and forth - the piece emerges, just as the warp and weft of the unfolding life. The images shown are a selection from dozens of woven natal charts created between 2016-2022.

My therapeutic and teaching practices are inextricable from creative practice - each feed the other, in an unfolding journey to express and bring into form what is unseen, folding this back into the unknown of creation itself.





BIO: OWYN RUCK

My fascination with 'what is a human?' began as a child, learning to sew, embroider, draw, paint, and play with my family. As early as I could, I studied psychology, and then art.

I grew up in Brooklyn NY, and currently live in the Western Catskills with my partner Damian, our three dogs, and many other animal kin. Together we facilitate Succurro, a place devoted to learning, sharing, and creating within a context of non-dogmatic practices that support health within the network of being. After 30+ years in an urban environment, I now enjoy learning from the Earth what feels both new and familiar to my head, heart and gut.

As an artist, I utilize weaving and other hand-based processes to acknowledge my humanity and consistently return to a natural state of curiosity. In my therapeutic practice, I call on SourcePoint Therapy®, BreakThrough, astrology — and most recently have begun studies as a Psychosynthesis coach with Keith

Hackwood and Mark Jones. I am also an instructor in weaving, SourcePoint, and BreakThrough, and develop creative programs that explore art-making as inquiry and understanding who we are not.

My therapeutic and teaching practices are inextricable from creative practice - each feed the other, in an unfolding journey to express and bring into form what is unseen, folding this back into the unknown of creation itself.

Psychosynthesis and Careers Guidance

By Peter Stewart

I've just finished the massive unit on careers counselling theories for my professional exams in UK careers guidance. I am hoping this will be an exciting phase in my own work journey, but my studies led me to reflect on the potential value of Psychosynthesis in careers counselling.

In this article, I look at the evolving nature of careers guidance in response to workplace change and economic disruption. The widening ambit of careers guidance also led me to ponder which aspects of Psychosynthesis could be incorporated in careers work ("Potential") and where it might present difficulties ("Caveats").

The first thing to note is that careers guidance work has moved on enormously from when some of the readers of this article (including myself!) were at school. Nowadays, the focus is very much on person-centred careers guidance and the use of coaching skills such as active listening in the career interview process. The approach of psychometric testing and skills matching that dominated in the 1970s has fallen out of fashion. Nowadays, the work of Abraham Maslow and existential therapy, and Carl Rogers and person-centred therapy, are on the essential reading list for career guidance practitioners. Seeking purpose and meaning in life are central to the counsellor's discussions with their clients.

The spiritual quest for meaning was, of course, central to Roberto Assagioli's vision of work. Many of those who have submitted to this Quarterly share this vision. Assagioli said: "Through all your mortal work your soul should sing to God". In *Transpersonal Psychology*, a collection of his spiritual essays and lectures, he is quoted as saying:

"Yet another source of joy, if we are able to achieve it, is work or activity. Since in one way or another this occupies us for many hours of the day, we will appreciate how important it is to work serenely and joyfully."

But does this have any relevance to a banker on a six (or seven) figure salary? Or to an asylum seeker who needs work now in order to be able to feed their family? Or to the disaffected teenager whose career interview is an interruption to time with his or her mates, rather than an opportunity to learn and grow? Or to the school leaver who mostly wants to travel to Ibiza and get stoned? Or to the Ph D student who is bored with their research topic and wants a break from a career they haven't yet had?

These questions partly reflect tensions within myself. I feel committed to Psychosynthesis but part of me has always held back from notions of "calling" and being summoned by the Transpersonal will. Assagioli himself warned against the dangers of inflation and spiritual delusions of grandeur. I have my own difficult memories of my family and mental illness that lead me to exercise caution on the spiritual path.

In psychosynthesis terms, I have a strong "practical" sub-personality whom I call The Mechanic, who just gets the job done no matter what it is. The pure joy of unblocking a sink, for example. Of course, that's just one part of me: the poet-painter-potter-nature mystic are also part of me. In moving towards careers guidance, I have had to find a new balance between what I feel is my own creative and artistic calling, and my practical sub-personality that doesn't want to spend all its time writing poems and reading about Kandinsky.

When I first stumbled on Assagioli's *The Act of Will*, in a second-hand bookshop in Lewes, as I often mention, it was primarily the practical aspects that captivated my interest. Assagioli was a scientist and physician, and there is common sense and grounded wisdom both in his treatment of patients and the exercises he recommends in his books and essays to build Will and strengthen and unite the Self. Many of these techniques could be used in careers guidance, coaching and counselling, even with clients with limited interest in the spiritual. I feel this down-to-earth aspect of Psychosynthesis often gets forgotten in all the discussion about the Transpersonal dimension of Assagioli's work.

Potential

At the core of the Psychosynthesis approach, as I understand it, is the notion that our personality includes multiple subpersonalities that hold sway at different points of our life cycle, sometimes to good effect, but

at other times they can lead to undesirable outcomes. The Egg Diagram reflects how these parts relate to the whole person. This includes the physical, emotional and mental dimension, acknowledged in the disidentification exercise which many practitioners use with clients; also, sub-conscious, middle conscious and transpersonal consciousness. The Psychosynthesis “model” also relates the individual Self to the wider system in which the individual finds meaning, and makes a link between Individual Will and Transpersonal Will.

With this as a framework, there are clear overlaps between Psychosynthesis and aspects of careers guidance theory.

The notion of sub-personalities overlaps with the careers theory of developmentalism but adds the unique aspect that people’s choices at different stages of their career do not always reflect the voice of a person, but the needs of multiple sub-personalities. This seems to me to be a very valuable way forward for working with millennials, especially with the gig economy forcing many of them to work in multiple roles.

The Egg Diagram is so multi-faceted it could be applied to many aspects of careers guidance. What I like here is that Assagioli’s diagram does not assume that we are all spiritually guided. His model is flexible, and allows us to see the client as they are, and without making assumptions about what they should or will become. This is reflected in the title of one of Paulo Ferrucci’s books, *What We May Be* (my italics).

The focus of Psychosynthesis on our social and systemic relationships overlaps with several careers theories from the field of sociology including structuralism, opportunity structure, social learning and community interaction theory. These acknowledge the role of community and interdependence in shaping the individual’s sense of purpose. This focus seems highly relevant after decades of neo-Darwinian clap-trap that depicts humans as driven only by individual self-interest.

More recently, in the 21st century, careers theories based on non-predictability such as planned happenstance and chaos theory have become prominent. Mindfulness, purpose and a VUCA worldview have become acceptable parts of the vocabulary of the careers professional. This is partly because the future of careers is changing. More jobs are exposed to automation processes, the workplace is changing as hybrid working becomes more common, more people in the UK are running their own companies and contractual terms have become less fixed with more people on zero hours contracts and portfolio jobs.

In this changing environment, and particularly given the uncertain geopolitical and economic climate after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, working with clients to build their resilience, to help them be open to more opportunities, and to be flexible and adaptable to change seems a highly relevant approach. I suspect that Assagioli, who was a scientist but deeply influenced by eastern spiritual philosophies, would have had much to discuss with modern-day career theorists.

One of the strong points of Psychosynthesis, as Assagioli noted in his much quoted interview with Sam Keen, is its adaptability and flexibility. It has a protean character. Sometimes I think of this an amoebic quality: it can change shape, extend new parts of its body, absorb new sources of energy, reform and reproduce.

My own training in Psychosynthesis Leadership Coaching with the Institute of Psychosynthesis covered the individual, systemic and transpersonal dimensions of coaching, including workplace coaching (but not specifically careers coaching).

Aubyn Howard says that Psychosynthesis Coaching has been developed as an explicit and consistent model of coaching skills and competencies. He contrasts the Psychosynthesis Leadership coaching model offered by PCL to that of the International Coaching Federation, the model most commonly used by companies. He believes that the ICF model lacks coherence, and consistency; “it seems an ad-hoc mix of generic human and communication skills, along with practical or process-related coaching skills, without any guiding logic”.

To some extent this is also true of the coaching models used in career guidance, which have typically been drawn from a mixed bag of other disciplines such as psychology, psychotherapy and sociology and then applied to the specific context of careers. But importantly, the adaptability, flexibility and the protean character of Psychosynthesis (and careers theories) are a real strength in a world that is rapidly changing.

Maslow and Rogers both featured on the agenda for the PCL training, among many others, and there was a lot of focus on motivation and change management models. This saved me a lot of work when I did the unit on careers theories for my professional qualification.

So what's next for Psychosynthesis, and how can it be made more relevant to the careers field in the 21st century?

Caveats

My caveats relate mainly to the viability of using Psychosynthesis techniques in careers guidance in practical terms, given the limited resources that are often available in the careers guidance field.

After much chopping, changing and rethinking, nowadays my goal at Coachcreates is to provide work- and careers- related coaching and counselling for those at all stages of their careers. This includes careers selection and entry, ongoing careers development challenges, making the best of your current job, career transitions, adapting to new responsibilities such as leadership, temporary leaving and re-joining of the workforce, and staying engaged with work after retirement.

The biggest constraint for most of those whom I've met who have been involved in careers guidance for young people is time availability.

Many early career interventions such as those at school or college last as little as ten minutes, and using models such as the six-session model favoured in coaching would be impossible given the number of interviews that need to be conducted. Psychosynthesis might be valuable for mid- and late-career coaching and career transition coaching, but it seems less likely to be useful for younger people unless more resources are thrown at it.

The added value to the Careers guidance provided by schools and colleges would also need to be assessed. Rather like coaching, careers guidance is increasingly moving towards quantitative and qualitative measurement of results. "Impact" is difficult to measure, and the idea of measuring the impact of Psychosynthesis seems a little bizarre. But the reality is that using Psychosynthesis as a tool for careers guidance work would require resource (training, research, review of results) and therefore the need to measure impact would likely be a requirement in the current climate.

I also have a question-mark over the applicability of Psychosynthesis in a multi-cultural context. The Psychosynthesis community is continually widening, and I know people from many different ethnic and cultural backgrounds who have found it valuable. But it has its roots in western psychotherapy, heavily guided by the concept of individuation (although Assagioli was clearly influenced by eastern wisdom, as mentioned earlier).

Much has been said about the relevance of Psychosynthesis for a world that is Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous, but I feel there has not been nearly enough research, or even questioning, on how Psychosynthesis should evolve to serve the needs of our complex, multipolar, multicultural society.

The careers theories used in careers counselling have evolved tremendously over the last century, mirroring wider scientific developments. The field moved from the positivist theory of differentialism in the early 1900s to more relativist theories such as developmentalism in the 1960s, structuralism in the 1970s, social learning theory in the 1980s, and constructivism in the 1990s, and at each stage the shifts have been accompanied by research and validation. Community and social network theories, for example, have been found to be particularly valuable in the 21st century in a society as diverse as the UK.

I feel that similar scrutiny and research would benefit Psychosynthesis. I am not against panoramic visions of societal change and spiritual transformation, but I do feel that these can obscure the many tangible benefits of using Psychosynthesis in practical fields such as careers guidance.

[Click here for Peters bio](#)

Finding Meaning in the Paperwork

By Karen Rawden

“I do not want to go to school! “ This was my battle cry most mornings between the ages of 10-18.

Why?

Because school was extremely difficult for me. Traumatized by my family’s break down when I was eight and now living in a new country, with an undiagnosed neurological condition and a slow growing malignant tumour that would not be found until I was 30. Yes, school was beyond difficult. It needed so much from me, and more than I was often able to give.

School demanded me to be consistent, thorough and, often to sit in the space of the unknown. I had the feeling of suffocating, fearing the ‘known’ would somehow always stay out of my grasp. School, to me, symbolised suffering. And the child I was silently prayed for a reprieve.

Ironically, the etymology of the word ‘work’, when brought down to its essence, is ‘to suffer’.¹

My younger self would have agreed to this with a wry smile. However, what many philosophies and faiths convey is that it is essential to allow ourselves to *bear to suffer* in order to open and to grow, to become. This is also true of psychosynthesis teaching – we progress from the acknowledgement and tending of ‘traumatic suffering’ to the ‘meaning of suffering’ to finally come to a place of ‘suffering meaning’.

I could have written this article about my clinical practice, but have chosen instead to turn my gaze towards the much uglier aspects of my reality; namely, the mess in my office. This might seem somewhat shallow and irreverent; however, this for me is the ‘grounding place’ of the work. Like my spiritual practice, the reality is that my office is the place to not only find meaning but to suffer it too. The paperwork, tax returns, notes, invoices and all the other things in between are essential to my being in the world from a place of personal responsibility. This space has the potential to feel

calm, clear and organised. Instead, I find it a tumble of pain and loss. Figuratively and sadly, literally.

Jack Kornfield’s book ‘After the Ecstasy, the Laundry’² reminds me that “You can’t fall off the path, it’s all the path”. This is one of my favourite quotes. It invites me towards the art of surrender and to be where one is. Although not a psychosynthesis text, a betting part of me would hazard a wager that Roberto Assagioli would agree with the quote.

Assagioli wrote³:

“Frequently the individual has not the resources to cope with the hard necessities, to resist the enticements or to avoid the many pitfalls of such a life. Nervous equilibrium is destroyed, the person is overwhelmed by despondency and a sense of frustration and even despair, and he allows himself to be mastered by his lower drives.

In order to remedy these evils, to eliminate this lack of balance between the outer and the inner powers of man, two generally applicable methods can be used. One is *simplification of the external life*; the other is *the development of the inner powers*.”

When I had coaching a couple of years ago, my hope was to find a back-office structure that felt like a spiritual practice. How amazing that would be! After all, what good is it to show up and be present in the clinical space, if I was not as attuned and consistent in my office? The coach was not psychosynthesis trained and my request for this consistency took us both into new territory.

New neuropathways are formed by repeatedly doing something outside our everyday comfortable experience. We can support neuroplasticity by evoking Will and choice. The same goes for choosing to be in the depths, without becoming identified with our subpersonalities.

But I have found that if any of these are attempted in too grand a form, or too large a step, subpersonalities are activated. I imagine them

leaping up in defence. Therefore going back to the simplification element, simultaneously helps not only to soothe my parts and strengthen my inner powers.

The ‘work’ of psychosynthesis is one of unfoldment; to develop the Will aligned to a greater connection to Self, to transcend history and survival drives to move into personal, spiritual and social synthesis. This is heady stuff, and although the transcendent element is alluring, for me, the louder call is to come to the ground.

Developing the Will and harnessing and directing energies is not impossible but it can be hard graft. It takes diligence, commitment and conviction. If I am not careful, this can be extremely activating for the younger me. If I am not careful, I can easily lose my soul and in a moment’s notice, I am back in school!

There is no end goal – we are always in a phase of becoming. To make this process simpler for myself and to keep up the momentum, I use Assagioli’s theory of cultivating the Will as a gentle game.

Assagioli’s writings on the Balancing and Synthesising of Opposites¹ – as well as his Ten Psychological Laws are resources for guidance on how to proceed in these times, and how to free blocked will when necessary. These are just two of many options offered by Assagioli in cultivating the will and I invite you to check them out in the context of something that you are struggling with that feels like ‘work’.

Using the Ten Psychological Laws for example, I might begin to formulate a path into the darkness which is then permitted by my protective parts. These Laws can assist in helping to define where my Will can be cultivated with ease – we need only a morsel to begin. So it can be helpful to picture how I want something to be, then to give myself the gift of “titration” (I am borrowing this word from somatic experiencing) to build tolerance and the Will to stay with the discomfort. Sometimes staying can appear as ‘stalling’ but this too can be part of the process.

Assagioli was no stranger to the lower unconscious having founded psychosynthesis after training in psychoanalysis. This is an important fact. In his journey as a therapist, and as

a student of psychology he moved through the work of the lower unconscious, up through the higher unconscious, before coming to a place where he experienced an epiphany that instead of excluding or practising either polarity, he came to rest in an inclusive model with a centre. It is this understanding that helps me to turn *towards* rather than away from the heavier parts of therapy and also the less alluring parts of the business aspects of a therapeutic practice. Being in the darkness, for me is about going willingly into the shadow and to ‘will’ myself to stay for a while. This willing includes soothing the parts that may be evoked or disturbed.

For me this is what is meant by ‘work’. The surrender in the suffering, from a place of self.

This approach can be applied also to our client work. Remember, that which we cannot bear in ourselves, we will not be able to bear in another. Therefore, as psychosynthesis friends and practitioners, I believe that we are each called to search our souls in the darkness for the spark of self that sits within the chaos and mess. And then to be guided...even if it is into the inferno. Because this too shall pass, and if we can bear to be with the thing we want to flee, there will be an opportunity for growth. I hope then for us both, that we will eventually emerge to see the stars. My clinical practice continually teaches me how essential it is to go into the darkness and how it is not possible to avoid this if one is to heal.

The work, like self, isn’t simply in the beautiful moments. The work and self are in the darkness, the filing, taxes, resistance, the discord, the suffering. On my own, trying to maintain a business with filing, invoicing etc. First I need to have a seat with my resistance and turn my attention to which parts I can identify that I can call forth to help me or need to be soothed so their need to protect doesn’t block my will.

Since those early days in school, I have learned that I am comfortable in certain kinds of chaos. I have a ground in my spiritual practice, and psychosynthesis training that helps me see beyond. Not just bifocally, but trifocally – the regressive, emergent *and* the place I find myself today. What I need to do is to surrender to the kind I am not comfortable in and to wait for the moment where I sense the connection with my Will and the path becomes clear. However small that connection is, is where I need to begin.

I remain on this journey and in some ways, I sense this will never stop, because it means that I will be consistently humbled by my humanity. And I also have a chance to transcend where I find myself today.

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Psychosynthesis and Career Transition

by Susan Jewkes Allen

When work isn't working, whether due to external forces, inevitable developmental life changes, or an internal call of self, an individual may enter into the experience of being in the in-between of career transition.

This time between endings and new beginnings can be rich with possibility and anticipation. It can also bring confusion and stress as a person navigates between what has or is about to end, and the something new that has yet to begin. William Bridges described transition as a process comprised of an ending, a neutral zone, and a new beginning. In career coaching the neutral zone is a place of opportunity and challenge as a client is guided through what Bridges referenced as "*the natural process of disorientation and re-orientation marking the turning points in the path of growth*".

Within the space of the energetic tension between holding on to what is ending, and embracing what is beginning, psychosynthesis offers an expanded experience of self with a map for the journey along the act of will: the exploration and discovery, planning, and manifestation of a purposeful new beginning in life and in work.

Being in career transition can feel chaotic and overwhelming. It can be like "moving through an asteroid belt": unpredictable, risky, dangerous and difficult to navigate. Roberto Assagioli, the founder of psychosynthesis, made reference to the "dynamic conception of life" and understood that growth and evolution occur through problems and crises.

The maps and methodology of psychosynthesis can offer a sense of order and direction for a person in career transition. The joy and the pain of transition are normal and it is a process that will help maximize the rich potential and value of endings and new beginnings.

While a career change may be the presenting issue, the larger and more fundamental questions of purpose will often emerge. Psychosynthesis can guide us in this time of exploration and discovery toward deeper self-awareness and growth. Transition is a journey to get to what really matters through the alignment of purpose, meaning and values, with work that supports a vision for a fulfilled and authentic life.

Work can be a medium for a calling, an outlet for expression and accomplishment, for creativity and contribution. Work can also be transactional, just a job, demanding performance within a specific and sometimes narrow set of competencies to produce a paycheck. And in some circumstances, work can be soul-draining and toxic.

Over time, work can become a career, whether by intention or by default; a specialized and focused path, or a patchwork of diverse skills and experience.

Work, whether a job, career, or calling, is a financial necessity for most and demands a significant amount of time, energy and commitment in adult life. It offers the form and material requirements for psychological integration, a vehicle for ambition and a medium for the human drive to perform and produce.

Work can also support the expression of spiritual needs; to live and work in calling, is to engage in a livelihood that is infused with values and purpose. During career transition we must honor both the personal and psychological dimensions of work and the spiritual/transpersonal needs of the unfolding self. Career transition for someone who has focused most of their attention and priorities on achieving personal and material rewards from work, may involve the experience of an existential crisis, what Assagioli termed, "the crisis preceding the spiritual awakening". Others, who may have engaged on a spiritually focused life path, rejecting materialism and the more practical aspects of sustaining a life may find themselves entering career transition in a "crisis of duality". James Whitmore describes this as the "split between their idealistic vision and the harsh realities of mundane life. They are brought down to earth with a bump, and may find themselves compromising their values to get a proper job."

For the person in career transition there is often a skew or distortion towards one of these dimensions over the other, what Assagioli described as the "two dimensions of growth". The life task in transition is to more fully integrate or synthesize the two dimensions, in order to proceed with greater alignment and clarity on the path of Self-realization.

In career transition there will be an experience of this tension, or pull, to develop a more harmonious balance of the personal and transpersonal aspects of being. This is a movement toward wholeness, an

organic process of synthesis. This offers a time to vision the life one is called to live, and the ways that work can enhance, rather than diminish, life's unfolding purpose.

Carving out a path or way in life is done through the exquisite balance of awareness and will, the work of Self-identification, the willingness to know oneself, in darkness and light, and the continual orientation towards the unique purpose, meaning and values that define an individual more deeply and fully than history and circumstances.

Experiencing the expansion of self-awareness and engagement with the will, becomes a time to honor both the presenting, and sometimes immediate issue around work and career: "*What is the career for me?*" alongside the larger question of "*What is the life I am called to create?*" This is what Assagioli called "bi-focal vision," the holding of both "immediate need and far-reaching vision".

Setting the intention to utilize this time of transition, to silence the noise of the choir and hear one's own true voice, the call of the self can ignite the experience of being a 'willer'. At the chosen point of transition, stages in "the act of will" (purpose, deliberation, choice, affirmation, plan and action) are activated. Internal and external steps can be taken toward experiencing work as livelihood; identifying the ways for work to contribute to, rather than detract from, a fulfilled and authentic life.

While the act of will is presented as a sequence of staged steps, it is lived as a cyclical process of beginning, sometimes doubling back, deepening and expanding; always returning back to the 'I' of awareness and purpose. Assagioli wrote, "Life is not circular, it proceeds in a spiral way". The stages of the act of will are both a linear sequence and a spiral of non-linear, multi-dimensional progression that is inherently dynamic and complex. And much like the metaphor of the nautilus shell, each stage of growth offers a larger, more spacious 'chamber' for crafting a purposeful life in which work plays a meaningful role.

Purpose is a journey of making meaning. It is often put together one step at a time, and emerges through the work of introspection, living in integrity with personal values and attending to the call of the self. Psychosynthesis offers maps that can guide a person at the crossroads of transition, supporting and focusing on attunement to the call.

By affirming and planning the steps that will lead to manifesting a livelihood that supports a life of fulfillment and joy, we each will build our own bridge to span the space between the ending and the new beginning, with unique discoveries and choices to be made on the journey relating to the perennial questions of "Who am I?" and "What really matters"?

(This is a revised excerpt of Susan's chapter "Guiding Towards Purpose in Career Transition" in The Call of Self: Psychosynthesis Life Coaching, edited by Dorothy Firman, Ed.D.)

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About the Author: Susan Jewkes Allen

Susan is deeply committed to bringing psychosynthesis to a new generation, in her various roles as a teacher, coach and mentor. In her early career, as a clinician and psychotherapist, she formed an understanding about how work is a key determinant of health: physical, emotional, social, economic and spiritual well-being. This led to a new phase as a consultant on work, business, health and entrepreneurship with governments, non-profits, education sectors, and businesses in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Africa and Asia.

*Susan is the founder of Synthesis Center San Francisco which offers a variety of professional and self development initiatives, including coach training in collaborative partnership with Didi Firman and The Synthesis Center, Amherst. Their experiential, CCE accredited distance learning program: *Psychosynthesis Coaching: The Psychology of What Matters* launches to a new cohort in Spring/Summer 2023. Susan continues to maintain a small private practice, coaching leaders and emerging leaders in technology, business and the arts, who want to make a positive impact in life, work and the larger world.*



Singing the Song of My Soul

By Ewa Danuta Bialek

Ever since Psychosynthesis came into my life, it has gained new meaning. I began to use it in my life every day, and then in my work with my clients, as a coach, as well as in counselling, education and healing. Over time, it has become the work of my life - a constant reflection of my experiences and what I have learnt from them.

As a child, bounded by the walls of a small apartment, I was forced to keep things tidy all the time. This orderly way of working and living was incorporated in my adult self and became my second nature. At that time, I believed, it was universal law.

Over the years, the process of Psychosynthesis has made me realize that the concept of order that I held to so tightly in the external world, was not just a "modus vivendi" learned in my family home.

When my internal system image and its integrating purpose were revealed to me through the process of Psychosynthesis, I assembled the various pieces of my life into a coherent whole, which embraced from where I came, who I was, and to where I was heading. Despite my tangible sense of childhood trauma, this inner work was transformative and my life took on lightness, meaning and direction. It was a revolutionary experience.

Through Psychosynthesis, I became aware of the 'basement' of my existence, but above all, I concluded, as described by my Psychosynthesis teacher Vivian King¹, unfinished Acts of Will that allowed me to move on to the next chapter of my life synthesis.

I learned not to project my suffering onto others, which made me a victim of fate. Suddenly life gained depth, revealing a spiritual zone that became an integral part of myself. A united body

and soul, where the soul was the guide. I became aware of the coherence of the past, present and emerging future. Since then, life has stopped being a fragmented and random experience, and has become a conscious existence that is organized into a spiritual path.

Psychosynthesis has allowed me to explore the whole world of my possibilities, and to reach the potential within which was longing to be unearthed. Imagination, intuition and creativity have become part of the process of expanding my self- and my world-awareness.

Despite being a PhD immunology scientist, I re-discovered myself as a Scientist of the Soul.

Sharing the experience of my awakening with others gave me enormous pleasure and became the work of my life. My work is to guide and show the way to the client's special space, to preserve and synthesize all experiences.

My soul is still singing, bursting with delight when it is in the service of people. It is a priceless treasure to observe my clients blossoming, ultimately achieving a state of liberating joy when all the puzzle seems to fit together. It is a recollection of what I have experienced myself.

The subtle space of human spiritual existence is already present in science – in Quantum Physics and as described by Danah Zohar² and Ian Marshall³. Both authors highlight suffering of the soul, experienced when one loses the realm of growth – 'the dark night of the soul', as well as the excruciating quest to find the way back to the essence of one's identity. Danah's words about "singing your soul's song" and Roberto's Assagioli⁴ quote: "Through all your mortal work your soul should sing to God" convey the deep meaning of what is truly worth following. I wrote in one of my books⁵:

¹ King Vivian, *Claiming Your Director's Chair: An Inner Theatre Playbook*, Viva Production, Santa Fe 1996

² Zohar D., *The Quantum Self. Human Nature and Consciousness Defined by the New Physics*, Quill/William Morrow, New York, 1990

³ Zohar D., Marshall I., *Spiritual Intelligence. The Ultimate Intelligence*, Bloomsbury, 2000

⁴ Assagioli R., *Psychosynthesis. A Collection of Basic Writings*, Synthesis Center, 2000

⁵ Bialek E.D., *Nareszcie autentyczna Ty – Kobieta po 60-tce (Finally an authentic you – A woman over 60)*, Warsaw, 2017

[...] *"Life is not given to be lived thoughtlessly and soullessly. Life is meaningful and "assigned" so that you can read it and implement the plan you made once you decided to come here to live for others, giving away talents you received.*

Henry Van Dyke's words are extraordinary food for thought: *"Use what talents you possess; the woods would be very silent if no birds sang there except those that sang best"*.

I am also reminded of one of Eileen Caddy's¹ meditations: *"When you are in your rightful place, doing your own specific part, there is no conflict and 'my' plan can unfold in true perfection"*.

These three voices sound in unison, tapping out a direction to follow our own deep, hidden truth which, when disclosed, sets us free².



Ewa Danuta Bialek Ph.D - a scientist in the field of medicine (1969-1995) (doctoral dissertation in immunology, specialization in clinical diagnosis). She completed postgraduate studies in psychology (Summit University, J.W.Cullen) and a number of courses in Psychosynthesis (J. W. Cullen, V. King, J. Truch, M. Petersen, R. Kea), Psychosynthesis Coach Training and Coaching for Personal Well-Being (D. Firman).

Ewa Bialek has practiced psychosynthesis firstly on herself to discover inner possibilities of maintaining wellbeing and health, having suffered from the earliest childhood from various health ailments. Psychosynthesis has become her philosophy of life – pursuing inner harmony and well-being in herself and the world around her.

In 1997 Ewa Bialek founded "Education for the Future" Association and in 2004 – Institute of Psychosynthesis® in Warsaw, Poland. She is the author of 54 books and dozens of scientific articles, concerning application of psychosynthesis, in education, modern science and healing autoimmune diseases.

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¹ Caddy E., *Opening Door Within*, Findhorn Press, 1986

² The Bible. *Scripture of the Old and New Testaments (The Gospel of St. John 8, 31-47)* British and Foreign Bible Society, *Warsaw* 1975

The Work of Art

By Cristina Pelizzatti, PLC, MCC

"Life as a work of art. Emphasizing the artistic element in inner work. Creating ourselves. Sculpting ourselves. Development" (Roberto Assagioli)

For the last 14 years, I have worked with persistence and passion for Psychosynthesis. I say 'for' because through this work I can follow my heart, I can embody actionable purpose in concrete steps, and I can manifest my authenticity. I do this through two subpersonalities I have created through my Will, to be in service to my Self: a Psychosynthesis Coach and Counselor,

I've been working professionally to provide support in helping relationships since 2008, being in service to others through my Self. At the beginning, this was through providing Psychosynthesis counseling, with a specialization in hospital counseling. I did seven years of volunteering in the children's department, applying Psychosynthesis in this context, and for two years after that, working as a trainer for the new ABIO volunteers (Associazione Italiana Bambini Ospedalizzati), again as a volunteer, with the help of Psychosynthesis. Then in 2015, being

My fascination with Psychosynthesis to this day remains a mystery to me, but it was love at first sight. Our relationship is sincere, but not always easy. Sometimes I have tried to take a break from it, but then I found myself again and again in its lap. I have often wondered what it is about the core of Psychosynthesis that exerts such magnetism on me. Why is it so important for me to work for the purpose of Self-realisation? What motivates me, despite the fatigue and isolation that I sometimes feel? If my personal and professional life is defined by something stronger and greater that I cannot clearly define, there must be a reason. And if that Why exists, then it is worth finding.

I do not have an answer, only many, many questions. I have learned to use these for a noble purpose, to help those like me who have at some point in their lives found themselves groping in the dark or making difficult choices in their existence. I use questions as a powerful transformational tool, a stimulus to search beyond the surface to the pulsating core that keeps one alive. A powerful question is vital and wields power.

an active, task-oriented person, with a background in competitive sports in my youthful years, I moved into Coaching. This followed my "Call of Self", as my mentor Dorothy "Didi" Firman named it.

To celebrate my second septenary with these two subpersonalities, I decided to write a book. It is a story of Self-Leadership and Resilience, my story presented in service to other human beings as an Ideal Model for the Self-realization process. The title of the Book is: *Il Coaching Dell'Essere: Attraverso la Forza dell'Amore* (Coaching The Essence Through the Power of Love). It was published in Italian in December 2022, and the English version will be available soon.

I chose the title because it is linked to the theme of my life and more generally to the natural course of life. The Psychosynthesis that I have witnessed is an experience lived deeply in myself and in some ways, it can be considered as Original Research. From a more pragmatic perspective; every single technique that I use with my clients or that I teach my students has been tested on me first, time and time again.

A professional coach knows how to ask the right questions at the right time, stimulate the client to overcome obstacles, tapping into his or her inner resources to see beyond and learn more about himself or herself, thanks to the valuable collaboration between two human beings, working together in a team, travelling along the same metaphorical ropeway.

The examples and tools I describe are the results of years of study and passionate work in the field of professional help. I still do this work, using a transpersonal, Essence-centered approach, based upon Vedic Wisdom, Ecopsychology, Positive Psychology, and finding synthesis in Psychosynthesis, applied to coaching.

Coaching is for me the "Master Way to Self-realization" and Psychosynthesis allows me to put myself at the service of people seeking self-realization. Psychosynthesis allows me to create the ideal inner attitude to make coaching an Art, to manifest intrinsic beauty through questions that provoke a ripple effect in the mental field of the client. By encouraging critical thinking around the

sedimented patterns of one's beliefs and facilitating the emergence from the heart of creative and stimulating reflection, the outcome of this work is to be actualized through an Ideal Model of the Self. This is the Essence of coaching.

Psychosynthesis provides an ideal synthesis of these inner patterns, uniting Being and Doing through the methodology of coaching applied to the goal of Self-realization.

My practice has been guided by Roberto Assagioli's legacy, including his seven cornerstones of Psychosynthesis, which are always present in my life and work, but in a way that is dynamic rather than static. I take strongly into account the "multi-dimensionality" of human personality. My work incorporates an awareness of people's inner conflicts which exist due to the latent energies related to each psychic content and self-image, which for survival demands the satisfaction of specific primary needs.

A path of Active Resilience is built by going toward desired goals, crossing one's limits through the opportunities provided by the obstacles to be faced, deploying and training one's skills and strengths, acquiring others, and then going Beyond.

Step by step, I have been walking my life's path with the peak of the mountain in front of me and a goal in my heart. Always going beyond, crossing my limits, without losing sight of the great lines and fundamental distinctions that Assagioli set out in Psychosynthesis. Starting from the principle that he emphasizes in his writings: that maps are just an approximate representation of a territory that is the inner nature of the human being, plastic, complex, elusive, fed by a complexity that if not modulated, produces confusion and undesirable results.

A climb without flights of fancy to the peaks of one's personality, traversing a territory that must be approached with the right equipment and preparation, with the presence of an experienced guide who knows the maps and tools to deal with obstacles along the way to the desired destination. Together walking through the territory that leads step by step to the coveted summit, which once reached, adds to one's ability to tackle climbs of other kinds, and then descend back into the personality, with a transformed awareness, and new talents to deploy in daily life.

Beyond the limits of personality exists the dimension of Being, the transpersonal dimension of the Self that underlies and substrates the personality. Achieving awareness of the existential reality within us, of this subtle, a-temporal, a-spatial dimension, is equivalent to being able to tap into the highest potentials, qualities, values, and energies emanating directly from the Source, the Self.

Knowing how to responsibly bring these transpersonal energies into practical action in daily life is the work of my life, and I'm passionate about it.

Assagioli defines this attainment as Self-realization, an arduous, coveted, and strenuous, forever transformative path from which to live one's existence by drawing from the Source in every moment of one's life. Self-realization is the attainment of the heights of our deepest awareness that puts us in touch with the intelligence of the heart, enabling us to manifest ourselves as human beings with the capacity for Self-determination. I describe it as Leadership from the Self.

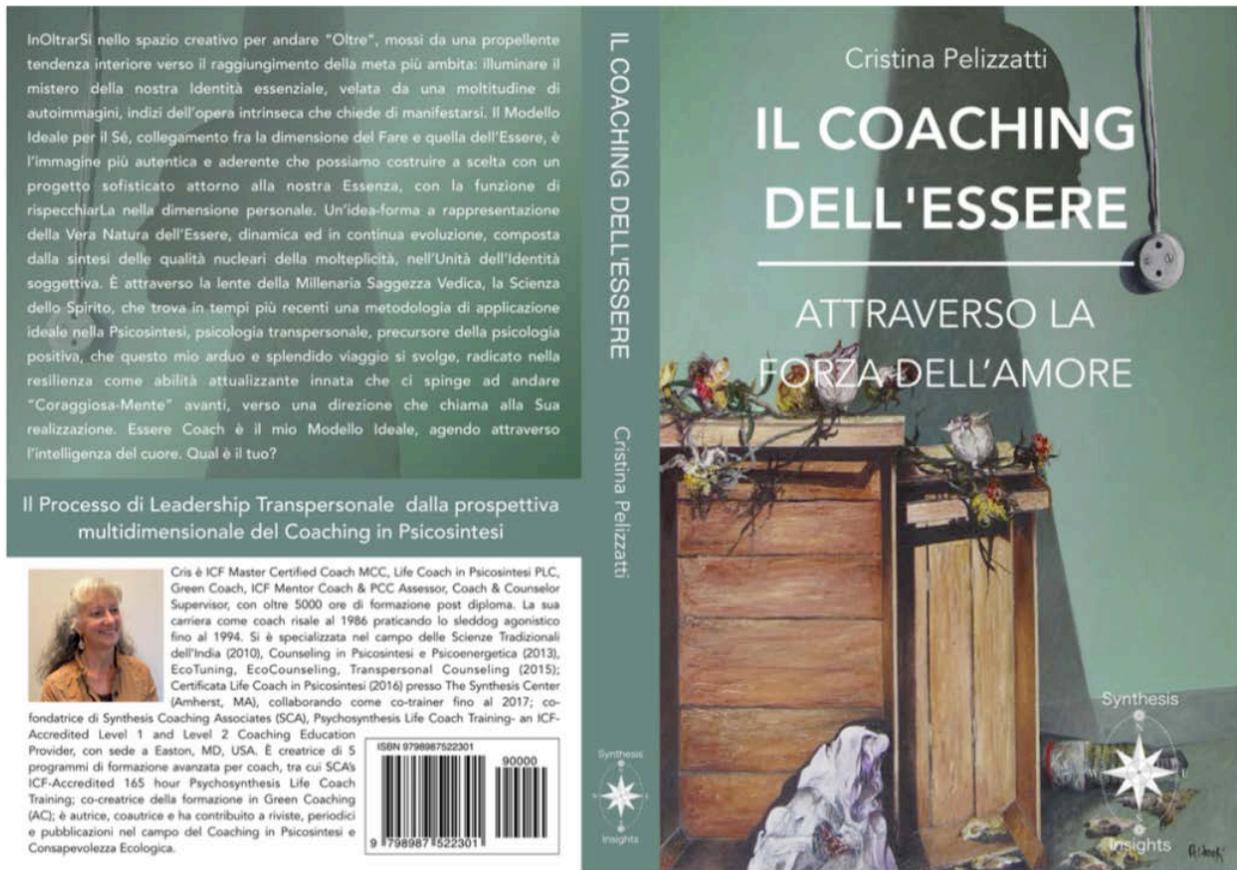
In order to be a Leader of Myself and an Ideal Model for my clients, I have accepted that I cannot change events. That doing "hindsight" in hindsight is a waste of energy and time. So I prefer to devote time and resources to learning how to manage myself, and the dynamics related to my history. I'm free to choose what inner attitude to take given the circumstances. I can tap into my potential, and above all connect with my Self, getting help from direct contact with Nature, of which I am an integral part.

Psychosynthesis Life Coaching is my Ideal Model. It allows me to authentically be myself by acting from my Self. Through it, I experience an intense Joy that I wish to share with élan with the people who cross my path so that by mirroring themselves through me, they access their own ontological feelings of joy.

Finally, if we honestly give an account of a difficult situation that we are experiencing, we realize the greatest obstacle to this Joy (Ananda in the Veda) is lack of awareness of our spiritual essence. Joy bridges the gap between the two dimensions. Light and Joy are intimately interconnected, bestowing the greatest benefit one can desire: Peace untouched by events (Assagioli).

Book: Coaching The Essence Through the Power of Love

The link on Amazon for the Italian book is IL COACHING DELL'ESSERE: Attraverso la Forza dell'Amore <https://amzn.eu/d/fKpNorr>



About the Author: *Cris is a Master Certified Coach (MCC) accredited by the International Coaching Federation (ICF) and a Certified Psychosynthesis Life Coach; Certified Green Coach (AC), ICF Registered Mentor Coach, ICF PCC Assessor, and Accredited Coach Supervisor. She is also a Professional Certified Psychosynthesis Counselor Supervisor AssoCounseling; EcoTuner Accredited International Ecopsychology Society (IES), with over 5000 hours of post-graduate training in many fields.*

She is the creator of five professional Coach Training programs, including SCA's ICF-accredited L1-L2 165-hour Transformational Psychosynthesis Life Coach program; co-founder of the Green Coaching program (AC); has authored, co-authored, and contributed to journals, periodicals, and publications in the field of Psychosynthesis Life Coaching and Ecological awareness. Her approach to Coaching is holistic and transformational at a transpersonal level, combining an acute awareness of the essence of her clients with an immensely practical outlook focused on achieving excellence and Self-Leadership. www.syntegritycoaching.com www.synthesis-coaching.com



Explanation of the Two Collages

By Ann Gila

Some years ago, I was in a Gestalt graduate week-long training program in La Jolla, California, with Erv and Miriam Polster. We were a group of international psychotherapists who had studied with them for the two previous summers. The morning sessions were didactic, and in the afternoon, the group was divided into two Gestalt therapy groups, one led by Miriam and the other by Erv. In the group therapy sessions, members of the group would present themselves with a personal issue that they wished to explore.

On this particular afternoon, as our session convened after lunch, I was in the group with Erv. As we begin, one of the men in the group began by talking about his life—what he was doing, some of his past including his childhood experiences, his feelings about the future, in other words, reporting to Erv and to the rest of us, different aspects of his life. Erv listened and occasionally would ask a clarifying question. At some point, perhaps after ten minutes or so, another member of the group interjected and asked Erv when the “work” was going to begin. I will never forget Erv’s response, because it has guided me, both professionally and personally, for



the rest of my life. He said to this man, as well as to the rest of us, “This *is* the work.” I remember Erv asking how often in our lives do we have the opportunity and the gift of having our life witnessed. And he went on to explain that having our life witnessed is “the” healing. I will never forget that afternoon. It was the most important lesson I learned as a therapist. As John Firman and I developed our psychosynthesis teaching and psychotherapy practices, witnessing another person’s life was central, whether it was a student in a class or a client in the therapy room. Often the students I teach ask the question of what to do when a client goes on and on with their story, and my response always is, “I listen.”

The two collages presented here are a part of a series of collages that I created in the late 1990s after searching for the families that my Italian and Swiss grandparents had left behind when they emigrated to America. I knew almost nothing about their

lives before they arrived in California. I needed to know my grandparents' stories because they are a part of my story. And hearing those stories, as well as later being able to tell them, has been a part of my healing journey.

Today, I tell my students to not make stories the enemy, to not see them as an obstacle, or a deflection. They are a central part of the healing that needs to occur. They can be the "work."

The two chairs present in both of these collages represent the listening that is so crucial to healing. Listening to stories, if they need to be told, assists a person to weave together the threads of their life. Listening gives the gift of cohesion and direction.

*Ann Gila is a licensed psychotherapist in Palo Alto, California. She has taught psychosynthesis for 45 years. She is the co-author with John Firman of *The Primal Wound; Psychosynthesis: A Psychology of the Spirit; and A Psychotherapy of Love: Psychosynthesis in Practice*. She is also the author of the memoir, *Stay Present and Love Him*. To see other collages, go to the website: anngila.com. For more information about Ann's psychosynthesis work: psychosynthesiscircle.com *Exploring the Unconscious* –*



Dangers and Drawbacks to Avoid By Roberto Assagioli

Introduced and translated by Catherine Ann Lombard



Rainstorm beneath the summit by Katsushika Hokusai. Woodblock print on paper. A framed postcard of this Hokusai print is on Assagioli's desk in Florence.

We often don't take into account the amount of work that spiritual growth requires of us – physically, emotionally, mentally, and psychically. In addition to the energy needed for 'mountain climbing' through our psychic past up to our highest potential, there are all types of obstacles to overcome and barriers to cross. Below is a brief excerpt from Roberto Assagioli's new book *Creating Harmony in Life*, in which he describes these spiritual dangers and drawbacks that can impede and even put a stop to our spiritual work. Please keep in mind that these thoughts are based on notes that Assagioli used to lecture students in Rome in 1933. We have the testimony of Luisa Lunelli, who became a close friend of the Assagioli family, of her first encounter with Assagioli around the time he would have been offering these lectures. She wrote that upon entering the lecture room, she experienced:

...a vast space of singular luminosity. A whiter, finer, brighter light than the bright summer sun of Rome. A light that I haven't forgotten and that only a few times in my life I've encountered. In front of the room was a middle-aged man who was just finishing his talk to an attentive audience... When the instructor [Assagioli] left the classroom, everyone surrounded him. Almost everyone wanted to talk with him.

While reading this excerpt, you might like to try to imagine this middle-aged man in a classroom surrounded by light brighter "than the summer sun in Rome". I also hope this short piece might encourage you to buy his book, available through [Amazon](#). [Click](#) here for Catherine bio

Creating Harmony in Life by Roberto Assagioli

Introduced, translated and annotated by Catherine Ann Lombard. Istituto di Psicopsintesi, Florence, Italy, 2022. ISBN 979-12-21402-74-2.

Whoever embarks on the work of exploring the unconscious is often stopped in the very beginning by a strange resistance and reluctance that shows up in one's consciousness in various ways, including a vague sense of discomfort, disturbance, or a more definite sense of fear, confusion, sometimes even anxiety. This experience is similar to that of a child who finds herself in a dark unfamiliar room full of unknown objects or in a forest full of shadows and noises. Indeed, the modern man, who is so strong, daring, and self-confident in the external world, is generally like an ignorant and frightened child when he is forced to turn inward and face the dark and tumultuous abyss of his internal world. In his reluctance to do so, there is a certain moral laziness, cowardice, and flight from a task that appears to be arduous, tiring, and painful. But there is also a valid sense of self-defense, an intuition of being deprived of the necessary preparation.

It is appropriate, therefore, before embarking on such work, to be clearly aware of the dangers and drawbacks that it implies and to adequately prepare oneself, to avoid such dangers and instead

harvest the fine fruits that one can gain from this adventure. In order to do this, let us briefly recall how our conscious personality was formed. It has undergone a slow and gradual development. With the awakening of self-consciousness and the consequent opposition of the 'I' to the 'non-I', our conscious personality has slowly differentiated itself from the chaotic psychic mass of the collective unconscious. (This process justifies to some extent egoism and self-assertion as *stages* of development.)

But consciousness of the 'I' is not only egoistic, it is also social. Living amongst others has led to limitations and corrections being placed upon our personality. We have developed a social sense, our instincts and impulses have been curbed by means of 'vetoes', 'taboos' (in primitive societies), and condemnations by society, parents, leaders, judges, public opinion, and religion. In addition, a series of internal constraints (freely accepted norms) have constantly been added to these social restraints and external inhibitions.

Moral prescriptions were gradually internalized and became part of our consciousness. Thus, little by little, the personality was formed and learned to protect itself, in a more or less satisfactory way, from unconscious forces, with a system of barriers, blockades, and protective inhibitions. Now, if we open the doors and break down these barriers without the appropriate and necessary precautions, it can be dangerous in several ways.

One of the first dangers consists in being overwhelmed by the spontaneous eruption of passions and instincts and other inferior forces that we do not know how to handle, thus lowering our moral nature to en-gage in unconscious, impulsive acts, with all their reactions and consequences.

A second serious drawback is dispersion, that is, the danger of becoming lost in the chaos, in the great sea of the unconscious. With the overflow of the multiplicity of the collective unconscious into the conscious personality, we can regress to atavistic, primitive states.

The third danger is that of ‘being carried away’, of exaltation. Forces emerge that give a sense of grandeur and power to the personal self. Without being able to control, possess, or assimilate the inflow of incoming forces, the personal ‘I’ can become ‘inflated’. Jung, who coined the astute term ‘psychic inflation’, describes these facts at length in his book *Die Beziehungen zwischen dem Ich und dem Unbewussten* (“The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious”).

These drawbacks manifest themselves in obvious ways:

1. In mental illnesses:

(a) Mania, in which there is uncontrolled exuberance: incoherent ideas flowing in the stream of consciousness without any critical analysis.

b) Melancholia, where there is an eruption of depressive elements, painful memories, and/or a sense of guilt.

c) Schizophrenia and various kinds of delirium.

2. In people who are mediums, sensitives, or psychics. They are open to external influences and have parapsychological faculties. But if these influences are not ‘possessed’ or controlled, these persons can experience suffering, imbalances, and dangers of neuropsychic illnesses. *Therefore, great caution is needed.* Experiments in this field should always be carried out with the help of competent persons who know how to manage such influences and protect the subject.

3. In artists. They have a fine-tuned sensibility and are easily subject to the eruption of subconscious and superconscious elements. Often these eruptions are valuable, but they can be a source of suffering and travail, not least because of the difficulty artists have in adapting to the demands of practical life. They are often weak-willed and easy prey to their imagination and emotions.

4. In mystics. It is difficult to speak of these, since there are various types and degrees of mysticism. Their difficulty is to bear the spiritual forces from the superconscious that burst into consciousness. Such an eruption of higher forces clashes with the lower forces and entails a serious struggle and an intense, exhausting labor. I have discussed this in my essay “Spiritual Development and Nervous Disease.”

Creating Harmony in Life: A Psychosynthesis Approach

Published by the Istituto di Psicointesi, Florence

Available from Amazon ISBN 979-12-21402-74-2

Originally published in Italian in 1966 as *Psicointesi: Per l'armonia della vita*, this book provides a fundamental overview of psychosynthesis by bringing together the early lectures of Roberto Assagioli. These lectures explore what psychosynthesis is and how it can be applied towards the practice of personal and spiritual self-development. A great book for anyone new to psychosynthesis, *Creating Harmony in Life* is also a treasure trove for experienced psychosynthesis practitioners, with Assagioli's nuggets of wisdom waiting to be discovered, contemplated, and put into practice.

“Your Voice” Letters to the Editor

In the December quarterly issue, we introduced “Your Voice”. We often receive comments after each publication of the Quarterly. “Your Voice” is an opportunity to share these with you. After reading the Quarterly, if you wish to share your thoughts, comments, or feedback, please send them to newsletter@aap-psychoanalysis.org. We ask that you be kind and respectful as we are all doing our best.

September 12, 2022

Dear Esteemed Steering Committee,

With respect and appreciation as a new member of this community, **I would like to open up a dialogue in regards to my surprise and disappointment with the article titled “Becoming Indigenous” that appeared in the September 2022 issue .** I am very excited and proud to have my article included in Psychosynthesis Quarterly, however I have not felt comfortable sharing it broadly due to the aforementioned article.

Especially in regards to events and Indigenous Rights movements in recent years, some of the ideas and languaging expressed in the article "Becoming Indigenous" have been further illuminated as not celebratory, inclusive, and sensitive, even if that is the loving intention by which they are offered. The call of the moment for intentional engagement of cultural appreciation, avoiding exotization, othering, and appropriation, is not mine or new, but I feel the responsibility to use my privilege to bring into the conversation the voices of many Indigenous activist and scholars that have named these portrayals as harmful that I continue to proactively learn from—folks such as Dr. Kimberly Tallbear, Matika Wilbur, Dr. Adrienne Keene, Desi Small-Rodrigues, Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, Walelu Goodman, Sacheen Littlefeather, Dr. Joseph Patrick Gone, Dylan Mooney, Dr. Vine Deloris, Tommy Orange, and many other Indigenous elders past, present, and emerging around the world. Regardless of intention, a white person claiming Indigenity contributes to Indigenous erasure and perpetuates cultural genocide at the hands of colonialism.

As someone committed to embodied social justice and reparations as part of my growing understanding of psychosynthesis, I am curious how we can utilize this as a learning moment together with the intention of fostering a more inclusive community moving forward?

Take gentle care,
Cacky

--

Rev. Dr. Cacky Mellor, Ph.D., RSME/T, SEP
She/Her/Hers

‘Inspirational PS Quotes’

Introducing ‘Inspirational PS Quotes’. We invite you to submit inspirational quotes related to the theme of each quarterly. The Steering Committee members selected a handful of quotes related to the March quarterly theme, ‘Psychosynthesis and Work’ as an example. If you would like to submit a quote for the June 2023 Quarterly theme of “**As within, So without: Psychosynthesis and the sacred work of Social Justice**” please send via email to AAPSC01@gmail.com with the Subject titled “PS Quotes” no later than May 15th, 2023. Please reference authors/thinkers in psychosynthesis or related fields. We are looking for quotes that capture the essence of psychosynthesis and are pertinent to the theme of the quarterly.

March Inspirational Quotes - Psychosynthesis and Work

“Approach every task with a smiling face and your work will almost do itself, recompensing your size with satisfaction” — Assagioli, R (2007). Transpersonal development. The Dimension Beyond Psychosynthesis. Inner Way Publications, Findhorn. P 262

“Through all your mortal work your soul should sing to God” — Roberto Assagioli, in Transpersonal Psychology, a collection of his spiritual essays and lectures

“Yet another source of joy, if we are able to achieve it, is work or activity. Since in one way or another this occupies us for many hours of the day, we will appreciate how important it is to work serenely and joyfully. Even when engaged on some unpleasant, painful task we can find reason for spiritual joy, based on our ability to overcome circumstances.” (Roberto Assagioli, in Transpersonal Psychology, a collection of his spiritual essays and lectures).

"At present we are witnessing violent, excessive, and ill-considered attempts to change everything at once. The renewal can and should be regulated by appropriate choices, wise decisions, and a firm will. We should not abandon established ways without having found new and better ones. But once we have found new ways, we must have the courage and the will to throw ourselves boldly and joyfully into the adventure which the future holds." (The Act of Will, 1974, by Roberto Assagioli. From the Turnstone Press edition, 1984, page 169).

"There are two educations. One should teach us how to make a living, and the other how to live." — John Adams

"You have to go wholeheartedly into anything in order to achieve anything worth having." — Frank Lloyd Wright.

"No work is insignificant. All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence." — Martin Luther King

"It is far better to perform one's natural prescribed duty, though tinged with faults than to perform another's prescribed duty, though perfectly. In fact, it is preferable to die in the discharge of one's duty, than to follow the path of another, which is fraught with danger." — Bhagavad-Gita: Chapter 3, 35

"Creative type - Psychosynthetic tasks: Will of persistence. Self-control. Steadfastness. Self-discipline. Discipline in work. Equilibrium. the pairs of opposites. The Noble Middle Path. Synthesis. Organisation. Planned activity. Plan and purpose and not merely passive inspiration. Harmonizing the higher and the lower." — Archivio Assagioli, ID image 001930, ID doc 2491

"Roberto Assagioli's approach to human development could be called **embodied transcendence** because it teaches us to bring heaven to earth, one little step at a time. In a newly translated article, he states: "Although Psychosynthesis postulates the presence in man of a transpersonal essence, it maintains that man's purpose in life is to “embody” and manifest this Self or essence as completely as possible in the world of daily life.” — Psychosynthesis Scholar, Kenneth Sorensen, in a note to the Psychosynthesis online community group, 16/2/2023. <https://kennethsorensen.dk/en/what-is-psychosynthesis-2/>

Contribute to the June 2023 Psychosynthesis Quarterly

As within, So without: Psychosynthesis and the sacred work of Social Justice

With guest editor Rev. Dr. Cacky Mellor, Ph.D., RSME/T, SEP

“As above, so below, as within, so without, as the Universe, so the Soul” - The Egyptian Book of the Dead

"From a still wider and more comprehensive point of view, universal life itself appears to us as a struggle between multiplicity and unity - a labor and an aspiration towards union. We seem to sense that - whether we conceive it as a divine Being or as a cosmic energy - the Spirit working upon and within all creation is shaping it into order, harmony, and beauty, uniting all beings (some willing but the majority as yet blind and rebellious) with each other through links of love, achieving - slowly and silently, but powerfully and irresistibly - the Supreme Synthesis." - Roberto Assagioli

Assagioli recognized the interconnection of all things through the intimate symbiosis of our inner and outer worlds. With this understanding, the work of social justice can be understood as a sacred calling for individual and collective healing, what Assagioli referred to as the Supreme Synthesis. This places psychosynthesis into broader context. The pursuit of collective liberation is a multifocal project that demands a constant oscillation between deep internal work and external facing action. Both are necessary for holistic wellbeing. Where we are closing off to ourselves, we are reinforcing rifts in the collective. Equally important, where we tend to healing and liberation, the effects extend from the smallest to the greatest scale. Making this connection between our inner and outer worlds explicit empowers us to have intentionality in how we choose to navigate this sacred work.

The full expression of psychosynthesis must include heartfelt care for suffering from the micro to the macro as well as tangible acts to midwife into existence a more liberatory world. The individual psyche does not exist in a vacuum. We are each integral facets woven into the greater waking world consciousness. We are only as healthy as our communities, human and non-human. Ignoring the interplay between the personal and collective only contributes to further separation, suffering, and systemic inequities.

Whether your journey first manifests in observable acts of social justice or through internal sustained shifts, these paths are inextricably interwoven, drawing us deeper into synthesis. It is potentially transformative work to tend to our internalized privilege and oppression and actively decolonize psyche. Decolonization is the philosophy and practice of disrupting cycles of systemic violence and injustice perpetuated under centuries of colonization. Part of the intention of decolonization is undoing power inequities and cultivating greater liberation for all peoples and nature. This includes centering the experiences of those with greater barriers to social power and agency such as historically colonized and oppressed communities. Doing this ongoing work deepens our capacity to more sustainably take action for social justice without leading to burnout or unconsciously replicating harm.

I invite you to explore the connection between psychosynthesis and social justice for yourself and in dialogue together:

- How are you taking up the sacred calling of Supreme Synthesis?
- How do you understand and practice the symbiosis between psychosynthesis and social justice?
- What can psychosynthesis contribute to repairing and healing challenges to social justice such as prejudice, white fragility, and appropriation, on the personal and collective levels?
- Where are you finding your learning edge in this balance of inner work and collective action?

I invite you to embrace the intersectionality and layered complexity inherent within this inquiry.

We welcome articles from all who study, teach, coach, counsel, and play with psychosynthesis. **We are of course particularly keen to include a range of different perspectives from people with direct experiences of discrimination and marginalization.**

We hope our suggestion of 1500 words may serve as a guideline that helps your writing. We prefer that you use the APA style guide when possible, for things like punctuation and references.

Announcements, book reviews, and upcoming events are also welcome, with a request that nonmembers who wish to submit advertising make a donation to AAP. To donate, [click here](#).

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS MAY 1, 2023

Please send submissions as soon as they are ready so we can get started reading and editing before the deadline. Thank you so much!

Send your articles, exercises, poems, photography, and art to attn: newsletter@aap-psychosynthesis.org

Webinar to follow Sunday, June 25, 2023 for 1.5 hours. Details TBA

Dr. Cacky is Visiting Faculty at Lesley University's Psychology & Applied Therapies department and has a remote somatic private practice, Somatic Reclamation, working with individuals. She has spent the past 15+ years studying the power of words on the body, mind, soul, and society.

As an undergraduate, Dr. Cacky studied art therapy and holistic psychology at Lesley University. After this she received her Masters of Education in art-based activism and social entrepreneurship from Lesley's Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences. She earned her Ph.D. in Depth Psychology with an emphasis in Somatic Studies at Pacifica Graduate Institute. Dr. Cacky was awarded the Peter A. Levine Research Award in Dissertation Leadership in 2022 for her dissertation, "Somatic Reclamation: Exploring the Lived Experience of Words".

Dr. Cacky was exposed to Assagioli's work through her studies at Lesley University and Pacifica Graduate Institute. She is drawn to the similarities and differences between Assagioli, Jung, and other post-Jungian/depth psychological scholars. The rich interconnection creates a beautiful playground for engaging with reflexive work.

Dr. Cacky has cultivated a diverse somatic toolkit to support clients on their healing journey. She is a Registered Somatic Movement Therapist and Educator, Somatic Experiencing® Practitioner, and RYT-500. Additionally, she is an experienced Reiki Master practitioner and has done training in energy work, embodied social justice, EFT, NLP, and somatic attachment therapy. She is also a non-denominational reverend. Dr. Cacky draws from her eclectic background to meet each client's unique needs and goals.

Dr. Cacky's current scholarship is centered around the internalization of language, narrative, and trauma on a somatic level and how it affects interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships. She is deeply passionate about social justice, the arts, intergenerational trauma, and somatics.

She lives in the Boston area with her beloved partner and cat.

*Website: www.somaticreclamation.com
Email: somaticreclamation@gmail.com*



Exploring the Path of Sacred Activism – Online Course

Seeing World Service as a Spiritual Path

A Three Month Online Course created by Serge Beddington-Behrens Ph.D.

My course on Sacred Activism is a three-month online course. Read about it here:

<https://sergebeddingtonbehrens.com/sacred-activism-online-workshop-spring2023/>

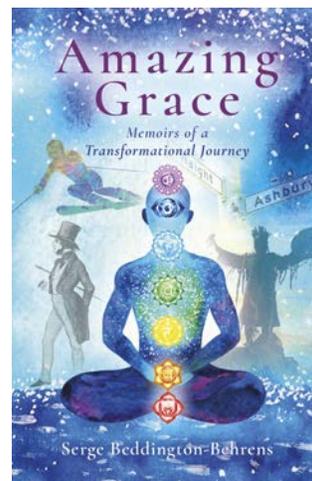
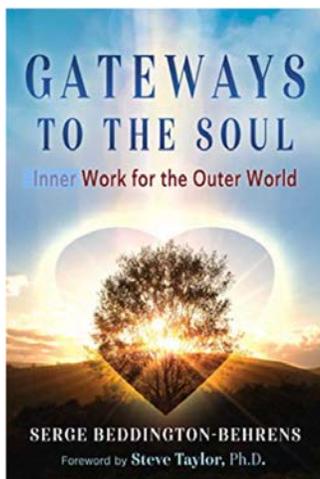
<https://sergebeddingtonbehrens.com/exploring-sacred-activism-newsletter-online-course-intro/>

Our dear mutual friend Tom Yeomans was my Psychosynthesis teacher and I trained three years with him in San Francisco, six months with Martha Crampton in Canada and the rest at the Psychosynthesis trust in London, so I am very psychosynthesis-oriented in all my work, though over the years I have linked it with Shamanism, Creation Spirituality and Buddhism.

I feel it so important that all concerned people, especially transpersonal psychotherapists, take sacred action as part of their work, as a) we are not only dealing with personal humanity but with collective humanity, and b) training our clients or training our therapists to go for deeper domains of world service, will do much to heal their personal psyches. Personally speaking, I have received more therapeutic help as a result of being engaged with this deeper work, than I have from my many, many years when I was only in personal psychotherapy..

I also trained in other disciplines and integrated them with Psychosynthesis. These included doing the A.H. Almaas work, working for a long time with a Jungian analyst, being a student of Shamanism and working for a long time with the tradition of Creation Spirituality - basically the Christian mystical tradition through mystics like Hildegard of Bingen.

But the Psychosynthesis discipline shines through. If asked what is the most important influence on my development and my work, I would definitely say Psychosynthesis. In my last book, Gateways to the Soul; Inner work for the Outer world, every chapter has exercises at the end and all of them are pure Psychosynthesis. I have written many articles about how I work, like Tom, calling what I do Spiritual Psychology. See my website www.sergebeddingtonbehrens.com. I also have a new book coming out in September, which is my spiritual memoir, called Amazing Grace.



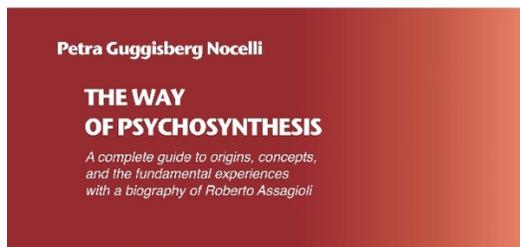
Petra Guggisberg Nocelli

La Vía de la Psicosisíntesis

Una guía completa de los orígenes, conceptos
y las experiencias fundamentales de la Psicosisíntesis
con una biografía de Roberto Assagioli

Psychosynthesis Books, 2022

Link: <https://www.psicosisintesi.ch/en/prints/la-via-de-la-psicosisintesi/>



"Petra Guggisberg Nocelli esboza con profundidad y claridad la historia de la Psicosisíntesis hasta nuestros días. Una obra imprescindible para quienes quieran comprender esta aventura del espíritu."
—Piero Ferrucci, filósofo, psicoterapeuta, y autor de bestsellers

**“The Way of Psychosynthesis –
A complete guide to the origins, concepts and the fundamental experiences,
with a biography of Roberto Assagioli”**

is now also available in Spanish (paperback and eBook)!

This book is an invitation to anyone who wants to gain a broad and comprehensive overview of the evolution of Psychosynthesis, from the first written works published by Roberto Assagioli in the early 1900s to the great contributions of his students and other contemporary Psychosynthesis practitioners.

- Who was Roberto Assagioli and how did his life influence his work?
- What important contributions did he make to the birth and development of the major forces of psychology?
- What is Psychosynthesis? What is the Psychosynthesis view of human nature and self-realization?
- What constitutes the essential core of this approach?

In answering these fundamental questions, this book guides the reader through a fascinating journey to discover, step by step, the key concepts and experiences of Psychosynthesis.

Petra Guggisberg Nocelli is a member of the Swiss Association of Psychotherapists (ASP), of the Italian Society for Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy (SIPT) and trainer at the Institute of Psychosynthesis founded by Roberto Assagioli. She is the author of *The Way of Psychosynthesis - A complete guide to the origins, concepts and the fundamental experiences, with a biography of Roberto Assagioli* (available in English, Italian, French and Spanish) and of the two volumes entitled *Know, Love, Transform Yourself - Theory, techniques and new developments in Psychosynthesis* (available in English and Italian). She works as a psychotherapist in a private practice in Lugano (Switzerland) and leads courses and seminars collaborating with various training agencies. Website: <https://www.psicosintesi.ch/en/home/>

BOOK REVIEWS

"The science of psychology was born and developed as we know it today in the course of the past century. In that same fertile period Roberto Assagioli created Psychosynthesis. In this book Petra Guggisberg Nocelli outlines with depth and clarity its history to this day, its main ideas, techniques, aspects and applications. An essential work for those who want to understand this adventure of the spirit."

—Piero Ferrucci, Philosopher, Training Psychotherapist, Clinical Supervisor and Author, SIPT

"*The Way of Psychosynthesis* is the first comprehensive view of how Psychosynthesis fits into the entire field of psychology, noting how it helped to define the 4th force, transpersonal psychology, and via 'psychoenergetics' how it leads the future of the field. A work of great love and deep scholarship, it is an amazingly thorough book and one we need. Dr. Nocelli has taken on a challenge in Psychosynthesis literature which has not yet been engaged in. I am so very happy to have it in the world."

—Dorothy Firman, Professor, Author, Trainer and Director of The Synthesis Center

"Each chapter of *The Way of Psychosynthesis*, while having autonomy in a monographic sense, is an organic whole and offers a real path of research and development of psychosynthetic theory and practice. You have the impression of being in front of a harmonious and richly colored mandala, which allows us to look through Psychosynthesis in the multidimensionality of space and of time."

—Gianni Yoav Dattilo, Psychologist APA, Training Psychotherapist and Clinical Supervisor, SIPT

"Welcome to this 'guide' to the 'Way of Psychosynthesis'. The young author, of the latest generation of psychosynthesists, creates a truly large framework that tends toward an essential completeness. This volume deserves to occupy a significant place in the recent development of psychosynthetic literature. It is recommended to anyone interested in understanding Psychosynthesis, not in a superficially informative way but essentially and with a broad breadth."

—Massimo Rosselli, Psychiatrist, Training Psychotherapist and Clinical Supervisor, SIPT, and Past President, EFPP

"A great achievement: well written, informative, interesting and engaging. Every training organization should have it on their essential reading list and I will certainly be recommending it to my students."

—Will Parfitt, Psychotherapist, Psychosynthesis Trainer, Director of PS Avalon and Author

"The most comprehensive academic textbook on Psychosynthesis to date. I am happy for the cause of Psychosynthesis that Petra Guggisberg Nocelli has done such a magnificent work and contributed to the legacy of Psychosynthesis and Assagioli."

—Kenneth Sørensen, Psychotherapist, Psychosynthesist, Manager/CEO at JivaYou and Author

"*The Way of Psychosynthesis* is an intrinsic work of psychosynthetic spirit. By avoiding superfluity, the author says all the essentials with a clarity that makes it very easy to assimilate. A vacuum has been filled in the psychosynthetic literature. Definitely recommended as a didactic text."

—Vittorio Viglienghi, Psychosynthesis Trainer and Author, Institute of Psychosynthesis and IPE

"This book is an excellent text of Psychosynthesis, complete and exhaustive. It was written with the mind and heart and deserves wide circulation."

—Alberto Alberti, Psychiatrist, Training Psychotherapist, Clinical Supervisor and Author, SIPT

"*The Way of Psychosynthesis* is a systematic and accurate vision of Psychosynthesis, which also takes into account recent developments in Assagiolian theory."

—Andrea Bocconi, Psychologist, Training Psychotherapist, Clinical Supervisor and Author, SIPT

- **BROWSE** the table of contents
- **WATCH** the conversation between Roger Evans (*The Institute of Psychosynthesis*) and Petra Guggisberg Nocelli where they discuss "The Way of Psychosynthesis"
- **READ** the interview with The Psychosynthesis Trust on the writing of "The Way of Psychosynthesis"
- **Facebook** page
- **Get Petra's books**

SPANISH-LANGUAGE PRESENTATION

¿Quién fue Roberto Assagioli y cómo se entrelazaron sus acontecimientos biográficos con la formulación de su pensamiento? ¿Qué importantes contribuciones hizo al nacimiento y desarrollo de las principales fuerzas de la psicología? ¿Cómo podemos definir la Psicosisíntesis? ¿Qué visión del ser humano y de su camino de autorrealización propone? ¿En qué consiste el núcleo esencial de su enseñanza?

Con el objetivo de responder a estas preguntas, el lector se adentra en un apasionante viaje para descubrir las ideas clave de la Psicosisíntesis:

- una reconstrucción precisa de la historia de la vida de Assagioli;
- la contextualización de la Psicosisíntesis en relación con el Conductismo, el Psicoanálisis, la Psicología Existencial-Humanista, la Psicología Transpersonal y la Psicoenergética;
- las definiciones, los esquemas, las técnicas y los diferentes campos de aplicación;
- el tratamiento detallado de las siete experiencias fundamentales, desde los enunciados originales hasta los desarrollos actuales (la multiplicidad de la psique y las subpersonalidades, la desidentificación, el "Yo"/sí mismo personal y el Sí Mismo transpersonal, la voluntad, el modelo ideal, la síntesis y el superconsciente).

La guía más completa sobre el tema publicada hasta la fecha.

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RESEÑAS DE LIBROS

"Petra Guggisberg Nocelli esboza con profundidad y claridad la historia de la Psicosisíntesis hasta nuestros días, sus principales ideas, técnicas, aspectos y aplicaciones. Una obra imprescindible para quienes quieran comprender esta aventura del espíritu."

—Piero Ferrucci, filósofo, psicoterapeuta y autor (Italia)

“Hasta hace poco había una escasez de libros sobre Psicosisntesis, pero en los últimos años se han publicado varios títulos nuevos. Este libro está muy por encima de los demás, por estar bien escrito y es interesante y atractivo.”

–Will Parfitt, psicoterapeuta UKCP hasta su jubilación, escritor y autor (Reino Unido)

“Un excelente texto de Psicosisntesis, completo y exhaustivo. Fue escrito con la mente y el corazón y merece una amplia difusión.”

–Alberto Alberti, psiquiatra, psicoterapeuta y autor (Italia)

“Un marco verdaderamente amplio que tiende a una exhaustividad esencial. Este volumen merece ocupar un lugar importante en el desarrollo reciente de la literatura psicosisntética.”

–Massimo Rosselli, psiquiatra, psicoterapeuta y ex presidente de la EFPP (Italia)

“Un trabajo de gran amor y profunda erudición, es un libro asombrosamente completo y necesario. La Dr. Guggisberg Nocelli ha asumido un reto en la literatura de la Psicosisntesis que aún no se había abordado. Estoy muy feliz de tenerlo en el mundo.”

–Dorothy Firman, profesora, autora y formadora (EEUU)

“El libro de texto académico más completo sobre la Psicosisntesis hasta la fecha. Me alegro por la causa de la Psicosisntesis que Petra Guggisberg Nocelli haya hecho un trabajo tan magnífico y haya contribuido al legado de la Psicosisntesis y de Assagioli.”

–Kenneth Sørensen, psicoterapeuta y autor (Dinamarca)

“Un libro estelar sobre Roberto Assagioli y la Psicosisntesis. La autora nos ha hecho el gran regalo de conocer mejor a Roberto Assagioli - el hombre y su visión - y de ayudarnos a comprender cómo apoyar con más habilidad y sabiduría las complejidades y bellezas de todo el desarrollo humano.”

–Thomas Yeomans, fundador del Concord Institute, y autor (EEUU)

“Con esta exhaustiva síntesis, Petra Guggisberg Nocelli ha elaborado un excelente y casi completo libro de estudio sobre uno de los movimientos psicoterapéuticos y psicoeducativos más importantes, una psicología positiva ante litteram. Una mina de oro para los interesados en la Psicosisntesis y la Psicología Transpersonal.”

–Jan Taal, formador y director de la School voor Imaginatie, escritor y psicólogo (Países Bajos)



Petra Guggisberg Nocelli es miembro de la Asociación Suiza de Psicoterapeutas (ASP), de la Sociedad Italiana de Terapia de Psicosisntesis (SIPT) y formadora del Instituto de Psicosisntesis fundado por Roberto Assagioli. Ha publicado *La Via de la Psicosisntesis* (también disponible en inglés, italiano y francés) y *Know, Love, Transform yourself* (disponible en inglés e italiano).

Trabaja como psicoterapeuta en una consulta privada en Lugano (Suiza) y realiza cursos y seminarios colaborando con diversos organismos de formación.

Página web: www.psicosisntesi.ch

Psychosynthesis of The Couple

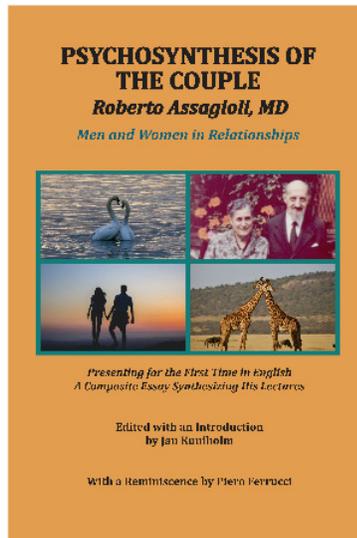
By Roberto Assagioli, edited with an introduction by Jan Kuniholm

Review by Kenneth Sørensen

I had mixed feelings when I first heard about this synthetic essay; one part of me was a bit skeptical because I had encountered some quotes by Roberto Assagioli which I had found old-fashioned and limiting with respect to the roles of each gender; however, the prospect of having new light cast on the important topic of the psychosynthesis of the couple inspired and fascinated me.

After reading through this little book, which Jan Kuniholm has synthesized with the utmost care, I must admit that my worries were completely unfounded. Assagioli's wisdom and loving nature give us a beautiful understanding of the purpose and the meaning of a committed relationship. It is not just about individual development, even though there are formidable benefits from being in a close relationship when your loved one complements your qualities and helps you to grow into the best version of yourself through struggles and loving affection. However, it is the creation of the third factor, the new

psychological entity of the couple, which is the real objective of a loving relationship. His egg-diagrams for different types of relationships, which were unknown to me, illustrate the different types of relationships in a vivid way. Some relationships are mainly about sexual and material gratification and leave out the higher possibilities of the couple; other types of relationships are primarily connected on idealistic and transpersonal levels and become ungrounded with a lack of emotional depth.



Assagioli's vision of the couple includes a synthesis on four levels: material, emotional, mental, and intuitional, bringing into play all the energies and resources of the couple in an active and beneficial life form. There are indeed many conflicts and struggles ahead for any couple that aspires to such a lofty goal. The multiplicities of different subpersonalities in each person, the typological, biological, and qualitative differences must be brought into awareness and worked out.

There are so many insightful factors considered and valuable advice in this little book that I can only mention a few of them. Even when it comes to the differences between men and women, I sense that Assagioli managed to uproot his own social and cultural prejudices in his last years, presenting a vision where each person is free to develop his or her own capacities, liberated from social pressures and norms, if they so choose.

We learn that the Soul is a *fusion* of masculine and feminine, will and love; and in this respect, it is non-binary. We also learn that on the psychological level, each man and woman has access to a *spectrum* of masculine and feminine qualities in different proportions. Will, combativeness, rationality, discipline and efficiency on the practical levels are masculine qualities, while love, sensitivity, openness, affection, imagination and intuition are feminine qualities. We can and should develop the qualities we lack, as part of our psychosynthesis, no matter our gender, and a committed relationship helps in that regard. Assagioli also takes into consideration the effect of social norms, which we can learn to disidentify from, and biological differences via the functions of mother and father roles and the roles of man and woman; so there is indeed a lot to digest.

Let me wholeheartedly recommend this book to all who are interested in the higher possibilities of the couple, and let me also express my gratitude to Jan Kuniholm for providing us with so many new insights from the hand of Assagioli.

Kenneth Sørensen is a counselor, teacher, and psychosynthesis trainer who lives in Norway with his wife and daughter. He is the author of many books, such as The Soul of Psychosynthesis, and has commissioned the recovery, translation and publication of numerous writings by Roberto Assagioli, most recently Subpersonalities: A Collection of Articles by Roberto Assagioli.

His work is found at <https://kennethsorensen.dk/en/>

SYNTHESIS CENTER SAN FRANCISCO AND THE SYNTHESIS CENTER



DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS IN PSYCHOSYNTHESIS

BEGINNING SPRING/SUMMER 2023

**PSYCHOSYNTHESIS COACHING:
*THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WHAT MATTERS***

120-HOUR PSYCHOSYNTHESIS COACH TRAINING PROGRAM

The Synthesis Center/ Synthesis Center San Francisco has been qualified by the Center for Credentialing and Education, Inc (CCE) as a Registered Credential Training Provider, RCTP1010-BCC, to provide training courses qualified for credit for eligibility for the CCE BCC CREDENTIAL. Courses that qualify for CCE credit are clearly identified.



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