

PAGL Associates Newsletter - Sept '00

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Donations

Donations toward the publication and distribution of the Newsletter are gratefully accepted.

Please send all donations to the Treasurer of the PAGL Foundation

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Editorial

The "Newsletter" has a long tradition. The first one was published in 1974. It was to report on our first conference in McCall, Idaho. Twelve people attended and Dr. Hora sent a tape. It was on the third principle, "There is no interaction anywhere, there is only omniaction everywhere." It is fitting to start the rebirth of the Newsletter with Dr. Hora's comments on "many minds/ One Mind."

The purpose of re-birthing the Newsletter is to give form to the life which the ideas of Metapsychiatry have awakened in many people across the land. It is to mutually inspire; to facilitate growth.

In addition to an excerpt from Dr. Hora's writing, we will publish news from the PAGL Foundation, from the Bookstore and from the PAGL Associates meetings, as well as articles by students of Metapsychiatry. Deadline for articles for the next issue will be November 1.

The Newsletter will be published three times a year. The Newsletter will be mailed regardless of subscription. Only if you do not wish to receive it, please inform the Editor.

PAGL Associates News

The website listing PAGL Associates is up at paglassociates.com. Anyone wanting to be listed, email webmaster Bruce Kerievsky at kerievsky@cs.com.

Two national meetings are planned for the year 2001: February 17 in Orange, California and April 29 in New York. Details will be mailed in time. Anyone wishing to read a paper at these meetings, please submit a text to Jan Linthorst before January 1st for the Western meeting or March 1st for the Eastern meeting.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK by Michael Leach, President of the PAGL Foundation

When you imagine the PAGL Foundation, do you see a New York brownstone with a wood-paneled library and a gothic fireplace? With a bookkeeper out of Dickens bent over a leather-bound ledger, and visitors hunched over mahogany tables, studying Metapsychiatry? If this vision seems at all right, please do not pass "Go" but go immediately to one of my favorite hangouts, "the sea of mental garbage," and try again.

Or better yet, check out the Q and A that follows.

Q: What is the PAGL Foundation anyway?

A: Its a beneficial idea, meant to help people find peace, assurance, gratitude, and love (PAGL) through the teachings of Metapsychiatry. It manifests itself as a non-profit, public benefit corporation (501c3), organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes.

Q: What is the PAGL Foundation set up to do?

A: According to the bylaws, "It will provide an economic base for the goodwill of many individuals to benefit people all over the world; to receive contributions; and to allocate funds to further the study, research and teaching of Metapsychiatry."

Q: When did the foundation begin?

A: The foundation began in 1980. Dr. Thomas Hora, the founder of Metapsychiatry, together with students Jan Linthorst, Emory Ayers, Heather Brodhead, and Grey Means, had a dream to help others get "beyond the dream." Their vision first enabled Jan to establish the School of Existential Metapsychiatry in Orange, California. This further extension of the New York Institute of Existential Metapsychiatry, headed by Dr. Hora, drew many new students and featured weekly classes with Dr. Hora by way of speaker phones. Another first fruit was the publishing of a number of mini-books on Metapsychiatry, as well as the first edition of Dr. Hora's seminal book, "Beyond the Dream."

Q: What has the foundation done since then?

A: Under the direction of its volunteer board and the leadership of its first president, Emory Ayers, the foundation continued to bring out books and tapes, and established the PAGL Bookstore, managed by Ruth Robins, to distribute them. The foundation has

donated many books to prison libraries and to public libraries. A web page (PAGL.org) is another important teaching tool that reaches people all over the world.

Q: What's happening now?

A: The foundation is bringing out a new edition of Dr. Hora's **In Quest of Wholeness** in September, and a new posthumous book titled "One Mind: A Psychiatrist's Spiritual Teachings," early next year. The eagerly awaited "One Mind," funded by two grateful students, features never before published dialogues with Dr. Hora on a variety of life-issues. The foundation is also reprinting several mini-booklets, improving the quality of its audiocassettes, updating the PAGL website, and funding this tri-annual PAGL Associates Newsletter. As it did earlier this year, the foundation will again sponsor an all-day conference for students of Metapsychiatry, to be held in New York City on April 29, 2001.

Q: Where does the money come from for these programs?

A: Thank you for asking. From you, and from others like you who are interested in PAGL and see value in Metapsychiatry. What comes in goes directly to the work. The officers work for free. You can send a tax-deductible check to the PAGL Foundation, c/o Bruce Kerievsky, Treasurer, 7 Arrandale Ave., Great Neck, NY 11024.

Q: But what about the brownstone, and where is the "President's desk?"

A: There is no brownstone. And the desk is right here, in my house, where I wish you PAGL. All the time.

From The PAGL Bookstore, by Ruth Robins

The PAGL Bookstore opened in 1995 following the passing of Dr. Hora, at the request of his estate, so that the books and tapes of Metapsychiatry would continue to be available. Primarily these materials sold by word of mouth. In 1998 the PAGL Foundation donated copies of **Beyond the Dream** to 4500 public and university libraries, prisons and correctional centers throughout the US. Concurrently the Metapsychiatry website was established. Since then requests for books and tapes have been coming in from the above institutions as well as from bookstores and individuals around the world.

A number of inmates write for clarification of ideas on a regular basis. It is gratifying to see how helpful Dr. Hora's work is to them. The Bookstore does not charge for this service.

Here are comments from some of their recent letters:

For most of my life I've been in and out of prison... In 1995 I adopted Christianity as a way to escape the destructive path my life had travelled.

I was released from prison with my newfound religion and within five months I started a ministry for ex-offenders, and within two months I found myself back in prison. Something was missing still from my life. I've come to understand that what was missing was the right understanding of the recognition of who I truly was as an image and

likeness of God, a spiritual being capable of transcendence. I came to this understanding by way of Dr. Hora in his book, "Beyond the Dream." What a contribution to the healing of mankind. I am beginning to find true peace and fulfillment from this new realization and my healing has begun, thanks to Dr. Hora.

As you can see I am incarcerated at this time... It just so happened that I spotted this book "Beyond The Dream." I've read the book three times, took notes and still hunger for more. Since reading the book I feel and see life in a whole new way. I can go on and on about the knowledge I received. All I ask is if you have any other material I can study, please send it to the above address...

Now, for the first time, all of Dr. Hora's books and tapes are stored in one location, in my home office, which makes our work effortless, efficient, and effective.

Over the past five years, six of the booklets (formerly called minibooks) have been reprinted, and two more are currently at the printers.

Eagerly awaited is the publication of Dr. Hora's last book, **One Mind: A Psychiatrist's Spiritual Teaching**. Now in its final phase of editing, it will be published by the PAGL Press, and available in early 2001.

Dr. Hora's first book, **In Quest of Wholeness**, which has been sold only in photocopy form, has been reformatted by a student in New Zealand, and is available in soft cover at the Bookstore.

The class and conference tapes are at present being professionally mastered to improve their quality and to be preserved on CDs for archival purposes. These newly enhanced tapes will be available soon on either CDs or cassettes.

Next to be preserved are the Conference video tapes -- if we can locate them. The only ones in our possession are of the conference, **Healing Herodian Thought**. If you have any of the other video tapes, we would appreciate it if you would contact us and let us borrow them for this purpose.

Over the years the Bookstore has received many thoughtful comments from individuals grateful to have found Metapsychiatry. Here are a few of them:

- A graphic designer said: Beyond the Dream is the most clear and elegant statement of Reality I've ever found.
- A businessman wrote: Metapsychiatry guides you better than anything else. It doesn't try to tell you or brainwash you. It makes you think.
- A survivor of Auschwitz said: Metapsychiatry is the most nonjudgmental and compassionate teaching I have ever found.
- A woman commented: I've read 1,000 books in the last 10 years and this is the best. Original thought, clear concepts and definitions. I found it in the library.

- A business consultant wrote: Such wisdom blended with superb humor!
- From a retired UN diplomat and his wife came the following: One of the most brilliant books written in the last hundred years at least. We both can't believe how it escaped us until now.
- A psychologist stated: "Beyond the Dream" is the most profound book I've ever read. I didn't know that I didn't know.
- Another wrote: I've never read anything so good. I can't stop reading!

Recently Amazon.com has begun to offer "Beyond the Dream" and "Dialogues in Metapsychiatry." We encourage you to post your comments about the books on their web site.

From time to time we have been busy enough to ask students to help fill tape and book orders. Among these Bookstore elves are Annemarie, Susan and Patrick. We thank them for their service. Students have contributed talents in many other projects as well, for which we can all be grateful. So clearly the Bookstore is thriving.

The following is an excerpt from the first chapter of Dr. Hora's new book, "One Mind: A Psychiatrist's Spiritual Teaching," to be published posthumously by the PAGL Press in early 2001.

Many minds/One Mind by Thomas Hora, M.D.

We look around and we see millions of people, and everyone seems to have a mind of his own, and most everyone's mind is at loggerheads with everyone else's mind. There are only a few of us here and we all seem to have our own minds. Now when we try to communicate with each other, this one thinks differently from that one. The meeting of two minds always involves some kind of tension or interaction. Even under favorable circumstances, it seems very difficult for minds to meet and establish harmony. So the impression is very powerful that this world consists of billions of separate minds which cannot find harmony with each other. And if there is harmony, it doesn't last long. There seems to be a tremendous diversity of individual minds, and that makes life very complicated and very difficult.

Beyond that, every individual mind has a desire to assert itself as superior to every other mind; so what we have in the world is a constant battle of minds. There is a battle of the sexes, and there is a battle of minds going on all the time, and this makes life rather stressful. People are inflicting tremendous suffering on each other with their minds. But the Bible says that there is only one Mind, the Mind of Christ, and besides this Mind there is no other mind. How can we understand that? Is that possible?

Meditation is a way of trying to understand that. In meditation we seek to understand the one Mind, and in proportion that this understanding reaches our consciousness, we become transformed into beneficial presences in the world, because we see reality in its true light. We don't see many minds at war with each other trying to gain advantage; we see infinite wisdom and love manifesting itself everywhere in an infinite variety of ways. That's what meditation could do for every one of us; this is what the world needs.

In meditation we reach a point of complete quietude, where there are no more thoughts and we don't have to think about the one Mind; there is only a state of awareness which the Buddhists call emptiness. In this emptiness, God rushes in with a message or an idea. We can then hear the soundless voice of God speaking to whatever need happens to be before us at the time when we are meditating. And this soundless voice, this message from God, gives us an awareness of PAGL. With this awareness of PAGL we can get up and face life in an effective way, and whatever problems we had will be solved. We can be healed. Whatever has bothered us will be healed in that emptiness.

The Bible speaks of the desert place. There is usually a healing message, and more than that, we become increasingly aware of the fact that there is only one Mind, and we are not depressed anymore by the multitude of minds, and they don't threaten us. Whenever someone tries to exercise control over our awareness -- either through deception, or arrogance, or pressuring, or cheating, or lying -- we are aware that this is not real; that it isn't happening. This cannot touch us because God is the only Mind, and whatever comes from the Divine Mind is always loving, is always honest, is always intelligent and benevolent. So even if we are facing a con artist, it doesn't disturb us because we know this is not real. Now these are the blessings of meditation.

The issue in practical living is not beauty, not harmony, but the battle of minds. This is the greatest problem we face every day. We can see beauty, we can see harmony; we can listen to music, we can watch the sunset, we can look at flowers. This will not have sufficient power to liberate us from this very painful experience of being at loggerheads with every other human being most of the time. Only the right realization of the one Mind will give us peace, and will enable us to look at the battleground and see everything is peaceful.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM STUDENTS

Following are articles by students of Metapsychiatry. The editorial policy regarding contributions of students is to see to it that the article is substantially related to the teaching of Metapsychiatry. The opinions expressed are entirely the responsibility of the writer. Neither the PAGL Foundation nor the PAGL Associates Newsletter editor is endorsing them. Our interest is to encourage inspired expression of ideas and not to impose rules that stifle them. Editor.

On the Necessity and Consequences of Slaying the Buddha, by Bruce Kerievsky

There is a famous statement in Buddhist literature: "if you meet the Buddha on the path, slay him." Upon first encountering this conditional imperative, I was as puzzled by it as the next wannabe student of enlightenment. It is only after several decades of chasing after understanding of the realities of life that I have come to know what it means.

In the beginning, I was as haphazard in my search as I have been undisciplined in my practice. I was finally led to my teacher by the woman who became my wife. Together, we studied for many years with a man whose startlingly clear insights and brilliance at defining spiritual terms and ideas, and enunciating profoundly helpful principles seemed light years in advance of all of the popularly celebrated new-age gurus. That I have

apparently failed to absorb any significant measure of the wisdom he consistently exhibited and communicated indicates somewhat the deficiency of his instruction (but not his message) but more importantly my individual reluctance to "slay the Buddha."

What it means is that "the Buddha" (like "the Christ" or "the Messiah") is never a person, but rather a quality of awareness discovered by those rare souls who have sought it purely and single-mindedly. As such, it can only be realized in consciousness, and not obtained from any other individual who is, at best, just pointing the way. It is incumbent on the genuine seeker, i.e. one on the path, to destroy the cherished image of the teacher as the Buddha, as an individual endowed with exceptional, unique perceptual powers beyond his or her own capacity. This does not mean devaluing our invaluable guides, but merely recognizing them as fellow travelers on the unending journey to the truth. Excessive reliance on teachers reveals a sense of inadequacy, and the acceptance of such a defect in character undermines the quest for understanding.

My teacher, despite his apparent good humor and stated disinterest in taking himself or anyone else seriously, did not hesitate to influence the use of certain language in group meetings. He would emphatically correct terminology which deviated from the established norm, sometimes ridiculing the perpetrator, and jokingly calling the technique "a verbal bamboo pole," which refers to the traditional attention-directing method employed in certain Zen Buddhist schools. Although his precision with language and quintessential definitions of phenomenological and noumenal issues were and are enormously beneficial and welcome blessings, the intolerance exhibited toward the ideological and linguistic struggles of his students, too facetly classified as "a lack of sincerity," has proven more demoralizing than challenging or uplifting to most of his followers.

Further, whenever excessive intimacy is achieved between teacher and student, inevitably, over time, certain human foibles (which seem to render inauthentic the spiritual wisdom that has been expressed) become evident. This revelation, no matter how disingenuous the student considers himself or herself, never fails to detract from the heretofore total credibility of the teacher. What is crucial for the student is to learn to distinguish and appreciate the teaching above the teacher. All too often, the shocking disillusionment experienced by the would-be seeker upon encountering the fragility or fallibility of the leader is transmuted into a sense of bitterness and spiritual hopelessness, and followed by a renunciation of the message.

This occurs most frequently when the acolyte is focussed more on the relationship with the master than on the spiritual truths to be learned. Such an interpersonal perspective is certain to produce disappointment, for no individual is consistently capable of the perfection attributed to him or her by the beginning student, and no individual can long withstand the more critical scrutiny of the experienced student.

And the discomfort, not unlike that of a divorce, involved in noticing the imperfections of the master, in questioning one's own judgement and qualifications, and in determining a viable course for the future, is substantial. One is both anxious to find a new guide and hesitant to consider any alternative ideology which would contradict those parameters of reality one has come to trust. The period resembles that of mourning, during which the

events and realizations of the old life are carefully reviewed while a pall of uncertainty about one's new life and search hovers. Family, friends and even fellow students are of small consolation after the Buddha has been slain. How this interim is mediated is clearly of great consequence in the spiritual destiny of the slayer.

Being confronted by the shortcomings and limitations of the previously presumed paragon also impels us into examining the very notion of enlightenment. Can an individual attain sufficient understanding of reality that he or she becomes forever thereafter permanently immune to the self-confirmatory inclinations of human consciousness? It appears, based on the evidence of personal observation and biographies of spiritual guides, that there are no such enlightened individuals. Rather, there are only enlightened ideas, which, nevertheless, themselves merit our profound gratitude.

This realization can help us to further appreciate the oft-mentioned assertion that "the thinker and the thought are one." It declares that there is no enlightened consciousness, and hence no enlightened individual, without an enlightened thought filling it. For the quality of our lives depends on the quality of the thoughts welcomed into consciousness, and the nature of those thoughts, as phenomenology teaches us, depends upon what we value.

Becoming a finder of spiritual reality demands a departure from the well-marked trail of the teacher's accumulated knowledge, and a turning toward a mind-inspired bushwhacking course up the enticing but rigorous slopes of the mountain of truth. The meaning of the meager evolution of spiritual understanding among mankind lies precisely in the difficulty of this task of breaking away from the messenger, and of integrating the message into our being in an authentic and mutative way. It tends to discourage nearly all that are willing to face it. And yet, if one can examine oneself and discern a "sincere interest" in attaining wisdom and understanding, one will find a way to persevere. Commitment to constantly assessing one's receptivity to inspired ideas is required, and the cultivation of such a seeking orientation needs to be a preoccupying priority.

The path of the spirit is ever difficult, always unmarked, and unusually susceptible to self-deception, with progress, stagnation and regress occurring in ostensibly random fashion. What it has to offer, however, is precious beyond measure, despite being only truly knowable to those mysteriously drawn to it, and always not provable to others. It is the light, the answer, the reason for being, the promise of redemption after all our mistakes to those souls yearning desperately for it (i.e. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"). And despite the many available guides that inform us of and validate its reality, ultimately it is a voyage made in solitude.

Therefore, the apparent Buddha must be transcended in order for the trip to continue. Spiritual hitchhikers huddling too long close to the warmth of their teachers represents, not the healthy symbiosis as which they originated, but rather an inexorable tendency to decline into an unhealthy parasitism. Our gratitude and loyalty to our leaders serves to bond us too strongly to them. We must separate, preferably not by being cast out by them in order to fend for ourselves, but by recognizing that our own individual salvation depends upon it. There are no instances in history where a disciple of a spiritual teacher communicated the identical ideas and description of truth as the predecessor.

Finally, our uniqueness, individual perfection, and spiritual reality can only be known when we are ready to find them.

The first Principle of the Eleven Principles of Spiritual Progress. From a paper read by Jan Linthorst, D.Min. at the PAGL Associates meeting, April 29 2000, in New York.

The first Principle: "Thou shalt have no other interests before the good of God, which is spiritual," provides us with basic guidance, or orientation. It is epistemological in that it refers to the keynote of life: where our interest lies; and it is spiritual in that it defines where this life is to be found: in the good of God only, and that this good is spiritual only.

What is the good of God and how does it differ from the good of the world? We may find that the good of God develops in our experience in three phases of development.

First, we discover His good in a meaningful way. This occurs more often than not in a crisis, when the good we have been seeking turns out not to be lasting and fulfilling. This may be an illness, a financial problem, or a relationship crisis. We experience a crisis with regard to the good of the world. At this point we may receive help from someone who can open our eyes so that our consciousness is awakened to God's good as the only source of lasting happiness. We discover that the spiritual, which at one time may have seemed so insubstantial is actually substantial, even "an ever present help in trouble.." (Psalm 46)

From here on we may develop a second phase of enlightenment. We learn to appreciate the good of God on a deeper level and more and more discover that it is an everpresent reality and besides it, there is nothing else. We learn the deeper meaning of the biblical summons: "Hear O Israel, I am the Lord thy God, there is none else." We also discover that this good is not an objective reality, not something to hold onto. It is entirely a subjective realization. It is entirely in consciousness. Since there is no limit to conscious awareness, we come to realize the infinity of it, which is at once its hereness as well as its nowness. The only limitations are those we set for ourselves. The good of God is now realized as limitless, boundless, everpresent, absolute goodness and perfection that only God is. It is the absolute realization of infinite perfection already present.

A third development is that once we have realized in some measure the Kingdom of God's good within, we now see the world and the good of the world differently. We see it in the context of God, through the lens of God. This third development opens our eyes to the good of God as it appears in the form of human good: a good home, a good relationship, good children and family, a good job. These now turn out to be essentially spiritual good, reflecting harmony, love, goodness, abundance, despite being labeled human and limited. And from this viewpoint they are not limited. Their unfoldment is boundless.

This change of viewpoint, of course, makes all the difference. The good of God as we are now seeking we are now finding in everyday life simply as it is. We begin to appreciate everything as it is, everything just as it is. There is a difference with the mystical experience, as Ken Wilbur refers to it. In the mystical experience there is often a sense of

overwhelming bliss. Not with this realization: Life is extraordinary ordinary. Just this!
And just this!

To conclude the commentary on the first Principle with the words of Ramana Maharshi:
"The world is illusory. Braman only is real. Braman is the world."