

**THE NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF METAPSYCHIATRY
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EDITORIAL

Spiritual Maturity was this year's topic of the International Conference on Metapsychiatry in Costa Mesa, California. This then, is the theme of our NEWSLETTER. The report on the conference can of necessity be only brief. This time we did not summarize all the ideas, but rather selected excerpts from the lectures and discussions. The concern was to provide a good overview. For a more comprehensive study of the proceedings of the conference as well as the seminars given by Dr. Hora during his stay in California, there are audio and video tapes available. We are happy to inform you that thanks to the PAGL Foundation our new sound system has produced tapes of high professional quality. The lecture, as well as the discussions, including the questions from the audience, are recorded with beautiful clarity.

Many thought-provoking aspects of spiritual maturity were explored in the presentations. At the end, Dr. Hora summarized the multiplicity of ideas in his concluding paper, where he endeavored to bring additional light to this important issue.

Following are some salient features of the papers presented.

- Jan Linthorst, D.Min., Editor-in-Chief

A DIRECTION

Ann Linthorst opened with this thought: "I would like to share some thoughts with you about spiritual maturity as a 'direction' rather than as 'destination': a direction of interest. The direction which we might consider spiritually mature is *away from self values toward life values*, universal values, existential values, spiritual values. That direction of interest is the mark of spiritual maturity no matter what the level or degree of realization."

In another part of her lecture, Ann continues: "The dialogue between Jesus and his 70 disciples is very instructive. Here the most spiritually advanced followers, who had been sent out to prepare the ground for Jesus' subsequent visits, returned in a state of exaltation and said: "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." Jesus' response was as follows: "I beheld Satan as lightning falling from heaven. Notwithstanding in this rejoice

not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.” (Luke 10:17, 18, 20) This means that the issue in spiritual maturity is not personal mind power, but individual redemption found in the realization of our spiritual identities as living Souls.”

THE FIRMAMENT

Fern Rubin explored the struggle for spiritual maturity. She applied the idea of the firmament, which is the dividing line between the Sea of Mental Garbage and the Ocean of Love-Intelligence, and which stands for spiritual discernment. With the emergence of the firmament we are lifted out of sense-existence into soul-existence. Sometimes this takes many years, but eventually we reach a point where this understanding is clearly established in consciousness, and we have the capacity to be aware of spiritual Reality. At this time we discover that we are living Souls, non-dimensional, spiritual beings. We behold our “absolutely pure and luminous nature which is our original face.” The struggle in this process is called “straddling the firmament.” This is when the “war between the spirit and the flesh” emerges. Here we are being drawn by the soul toward spiritual understanding, but we still have a vested interest in certain aspects of the human experience. In this phase we may think we are regressing, we may experience a sense of turmoil and conflict. Our interest in spiritual life is still incomplete and we are trying to hold on to our human attachments, clinging to the good and attempting to manage the bad. We have not yet learned to appreciate what we really are.

COMING TO TERMS WITH THE WORLD

Jan Linthorst offered a distinction between two steps in spiritual growth by which the process of maturation is accomplished. From the biblical passage of St. John, who speaks of “not loving the things of the world” as well as of “not loving the world,” he drew a comparison with overcoming certain troublesome human thoughts – for instance, sensual thoughts – and overcoming the attachment to the sense of personal existence and corporeality. It is one thing to rise above certain things in the world, such as some sensual desires, and yet another to transcend the whole sense of physical existence and gender identity. This point was explored with regard to four issues:

1. The living Soul identity overcomes the sense of physical identity.
 2. Being here for God replaces interpersonal living.
 3. Harmonious prospering provides security beyond mere material success or failure.
 4. Spiritual selfhood, hidden from the world, sets us free to be what God intended us to be.
- These are some of the aspects of spiritual maturity.

HOW MATURE IS OUR GOD?

Dr. Hora read a paper entitled, “How Mature is Our God?” pointing to the fact that man has been suffering from his immature and invalid concepts of God since time immemorial. He stated that the Bible is a record of man’s evolving and maturing idea of God. From a vengeful, frightening warlord, to a legal authority, a judge, an oriental ruler, a punitive

agency, a merit system operating on the basis of reward and punishment, to a moral disciplinarian, to a loving Father of Jesus Christ, to divine love of the apostle John, the disciple of Jesus, to a cosmic Principle of Love-Intelligence in Metapsychiatry.

“Metapsychiatry states that God is not here for man, but man is here for God. Everything in the universe has the purpose of manifesting the glory of the Creator. We say that everything and everyone is here for God, whether they know it or not. To some people this is a shocking and revolutionary idea, not unlike the discovery that the sun does not revolve around the earth, but the earth revolves around the sun.”

Dr. Hora defines eight forms of maturity and describes the process of maturation with the help of structural elements of the cross as symbolic of man’s ascending spiritual journey.

“MY MEAT”

Ruth Robins offered a definition of spiritual maturity as a life governed by spiritual values, spiritual qualities, and inspired ideas. She then asked, “What is spiritual immaturity?” Spiritual immaturity, in juxtaposition to spiritual maturity, must be a life governed by values, qualities, and ideas exclusive of spiritual ones. When the disciples asked Jesus to eat, he responded: “I have meat to eat that ye know not of. My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.” (John 4:32) This challenging statement inspires the inquiry: what is this meat? What is God’s will? And what does it mean “to finish his work?” Metapsychiatry provides the understanding: God is spiritual Reality. The real meat, the substance which really nourishes and sustains life, is spiritual, consisting only of spiritual values, spiritual qualities, and inspired ideas. A life governed by these qualities and ideas is a spiritually mature one. What is the greatest of these spiritual qualities? It is compassion. In his book, *Forgiveness* (PAGL Press, 1983), Dr. Hora describes compassion as the highest form of love. Therefore, compassion seems to be the distinguishing characteristic of spiritual maturity. God’s work is finished when compassion overcomes the world.

LOVE

Charles Gourgey suggested that spiritual maturity is known by the presence of existential love. By “existential” is meant love as a mode of being-in-the-world. What is the nature of this love? Existential love is not the *eros* described by Freud, but the *agape* described by Paul in Chapter 13 of his First Letter to the Corinthians. It is defined very simply by Thomas Hora: “Love is a desire to express goodness, non-conditionally.” (Hora, 1977) “Love is non-conditional, non-personal benevolence.” It expects neither physical gratification nor personal validation in return.

What makes this kind of love possible? It seems to be an ideal so far beyond human aspiration, Freud himself thought it contrary to human nature. Nevertheless, two things make it possible. The first is that it **is** our true nature. The call to spiritual love is only the call to realize what we already are, to remember something we suspect exists in our consciousness but that we have long forgotten. We would be so preoccupied with searching for our completion in others that we could not love them non-conditionally. But if this were

our true nature, then we also could not be inspired by Paul's hymn to love. When he says, "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things," (I Cor. 13:7) he would not be uplifting to us, but merely asking us to become doormats. However, the fact that we are inspired by these words, and by the similar words of many others, means that we have just begun to remember who we really are.

The second thing that makes spiritual love possible is that spiritual love is "the perfect love that casteth out fear."

Charles Gourgey went on from here to describe and analyze a number of obstacles to existential love and ways to overcome them.

DISSOLVING INTO LOVE-INTELLIGENCE

The discussions with Dr. Hora yielded a rich harvest of ideas. Some, which particularly related to spiritual maturity, are recorded here.

Dr. Hora: When we are confronted with something that cannot be touched or grasped or defined or put into words, then we must use symbolic language, like for instance, "your names are written in heaven." For years it seemed that this was futile even to try to understand. Is there a celestial bookkeeping system? [laughter] Or do they keep track of us with computers? You see, when language fails us, we tend to call it mystical teachings. It cannot be imagined, we cannot draw a picture of it, we cannot measure it, because it is non-dimensional Reality that must be realized somehow. Sometimes one has the impression that what is required is total annihilation. The personality has to accept annihilation. We cannot figure it out, or be smart about it, there is nothing to sink one's teeth into. Of course, various religious denominations try to get by this problem by saying that if you observe the Ten Commandments, or go to church, or are a good boy or girl, then by the grace of God you are going to know it, if not in this life, perhaps in the next. After you die, there may be a pie in the sky. [laughter]

Metapsychiatric research has led us to a point where we have to face what existential philosophers spoke about for many years, namely, the dread of nothingness: a fear of non-being. We are dissolving into a sort of emptiness, as the Zen Masters speak of it – sunyata. What will happen to us then? We have been led to define this Reality as non-dimensional. This very word boggles the mind because the carnal mind cannot possibly grasp what non-dimensional means. Even the Zen Masters fail to grasp it, they say, "it is nothing." Now what's so great about nothing? This kind of non-dimensional nothingness is the greatest "no-thing" there can be. It is pure wisdom and love and a constant flow of creative intelligence which makes it possible to live harmoniously in a world full of tribulation. So all that Metapsychiatry asks of us is to dissolve into pure Love-Intelligence and realize that it is God in us. When Jesus said, "I am in the Father and the Father is in me," he provided a statement for contemplative meditation with which to confront our conventional ways of thinking.

SPIRITUAL VALUES

Ann: I have always found that the definition of Reality in terms of spiritual values is a most useful concept because these values are unimaginable and non-dimensional. Yet they are somehow tangible to human consciousness at a certain level of realization. One lady who had a very unhappy interpersonal life, picked up a card once that had all the spiritual values written on it – grace, love, peace, joy – and a wish for a happy birthday: she gasped and said, “I have never known any of these in my life.” What was striking about this was that, even though she had never known any of those, she could clearly recognize their value. This is what makes them so wonderful: we can love them and look in their direction even if we don’t know how to attain them. Love is still beautiful and good.

THE LA JOLLA CONFERENCE

“THE METAPSYCHIATRIC RESPONSE TO THE ISSUE OF SUICIDE”

On Saturday, February 18, a seminar was held at the Colonial Inn in La Jolla, California, on the topic, “The Metapsychiatric Response to the Issue of Suicide.” The two-hour meeting constituted the February meeting of the regular monthly Case Conference, held at the School of Existential Metapsychiatry. It was intended for counseling professionals, but was also open to the public. In the first hour, Ann Linthorst, M.Div., introduced the Metapsychiatric approach to problems in general, and then discussed the meaning and the healing of suicide from that perspective. Elizabeth Buckner, R.N., counselor in an outpatient treatment center, presented the psychological understanding of suicide and its treatment. In the second hour, Dr. Hora discussed cases presented by Dr. Larry Lambertson, a psychiatrist in Orange County.

Ann: Metapsychiatry, Dr. Hora reminds us, does not treat symptoms or diseases, and it does not treat people. It treats modes of being-in-the-world. The Metapsychiatric counselor, we might say, is “a place where truth treats ignorance.” Truth “treats” ignorance the way light “treats” darkness: by revealing it to be nothing. In contrast, the conventional human approach to problems confirms the symptoms or problems to be something which we then try to operate on in some way in order to change or fix them. This, unfortunately, confirms rather than dissolves the very appearance we are trying to get rid of. Metapsychiatry sees problems as phenomena, manifestations of ignorant thoughts, which can be healed only by a realization of the truth of being.

When suicide is approached in this way, the Two Intelligent Questions are applied. The meaning of suicide is discerned to be a power issue. It reveals the self-destructive nature of the self’s preoccupation with power. The existential crisis which may manifest itself in suicidal thoughts is the realization of personal powerlessness: “I can’t make anything happen the way I want it to happen. But . . . I can do something. I can kill myself, proving that I am and I have power.”

Jesus said, “Rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, that your names are written in heaven.” (Luke 10:20) This is good therapeutic advice for the counselor who must be alert not to be seduced, provoked, or intimidated into “wrestling”

with the patient or power.

A realization of the powerlessness of human selfhood is not a bad thing. Personal selfhood and personal power **are** illusions. But this realization needs to take place in a context of God as Omniactive Love-Intelligence. Then this crisis, instead of manifesting in self-destructive ways, may manifest in the new-found freedom from personal sense that opens the door to real Life.

The following comments by Dr. Hora on this issue were excerpted from the hour-long discussion:

Power Belongs to God

Dr. Hora: Society doesn't know the difference between healing work and police work. Here is a physician who has been studying for years to be a healer, but feels obliged to stand in the doorway to control his power-mad patient with the power-madness of society: power-madness and control are the same thing. When working with so-called suicidal patients, one thing is clear, namely, the power-madness of a patient aims at inducing a sense of powerlessness in the therapist. Whenever one is placed in a position of powerlessness, one is provoked to become power-mad and to counter personal power with personal power. Now how could that be helpful? That will accomplish nothing. What usually happens if a therapist succeeds in overpowering a power-mad patient is that the patient will make exceptional efforts to increase his own power over the physician, the police, the fire department, or the administration of a hospital. What results is that the condition gets increasingly worse. The patient only sees that he needs more and more power to survive. There arises a condition of increasing delusional preoccupation with power against society, doctors and against the police. Fantasies of megalomania may develop. The patient sees that he cannot cope with these power-mad institutions that surround him, therefore he may say, "Well, I have one alternative left, I'll kill myself and then they will see that they have no power over me."

In trying to help people on their own terms, everything tends to become worse. If you succeed in hospitalizing this patient today, then two days later, two weeks later, six months later, a year later he may be more fanatically committed to power-madness than ever. What are we accomplishing? Nothing if we don't understand the meaning of the patient's problem.

A Metapsychiatric therapist will understand that this individual is suffering from a tragic ignorance of the fact that man doesn't have personal power – even if he has the uniform of a policeman or a white coat. God is the only power, and the way to cope with life is not by wrestling but by yielding to the love of God. The task of the therapist is to understand the meaning of the patient's problem, to shed light, and to bring the patient to a realization that in order to survive and prosper, it is not power that we need but understanding of our absolute oneness with, and contingency upon, divine Love-Intelligence.

The Metapsychiatric response introduces an entirely different level of seeing and

understanding. We open up to the patient a new world – the world of Love-Intelligence – where the issue of power doesn't exist because power belongs to God.

Of course words alone will not do it. For instance, one could have read some of the literature and know that there is Love-Intelligence which has the power to heal, and that we have to yield to it and receive it in gratitude, but if the therapist has not been redeemed of his own ideas of personal power-madness, he will not be able to communicate this to the patient in a meaningful way. Therefore, the training of Metapsychiatric therapists is very important. It moves in the direction of qualifying them to communicate spiritual truths in a meaningful way rather than just intellectually.

Teaching Truth

Jan: During our discussion Dr. Hora mentioned that the metapsychiatric therapist has the possibility of discerning the meaning of symptoms and to open up to the patient a new world. The Second Intelligent Question which asks, "What is, what really is?" can open up the discovery of living in the realm of Love-Intelligence. Now, we can see that here the Metapsychiatric approach also opens a new world to the counselors, psychotherapists, and professional mental health workers. We don't have to work in a dreadful world of ignorance, we are not required to do police work. If we are involved in that right now, Metapsychiatry opens up to us the possibility of having a beautiful and harmoniously unfolding practice in which these burdens can be diminished to a great extent. We shift our sense of professional identity from therapists (as Dr. Hora clarified it) to being actually teachers of truth. Once we see that we are teachers of truth, a whole new thing will happen to our practices. Whether we are working in a mental health hospital or an outpatient clinic, as teachers of truth, we will see something entirely different happen to our careers. We will be lifted out of oppressive power games, and we will learn to discern the meanings of people's modes of being-in-the-world. Gradually we will find that people seek us out not because they think we can control them, but because they see that we may help them find the truth that heals. They will not be interested in manipulations.

The Metapsychiatric training program and approach opens up a new world for the counselor and the patient.

MEDITATIONS ON REACHING SPIRITUAL MATURITY

By Joan Rubadeau

Spiritual maturation consists of increasingly becoming aware of the fact that we are not human personalities – good or bad – but we are spiritual beings and the Mind of our minds has no evil in it. It is all good; it is all loving; it is all intelligent. It is absolute purity.

Following are correlative passages from the Bible and Dr. Hora's writings:

I

Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator . . . (Romans 1:25)

There is no such thing as man in and of himself.

Man can only be understood in the context of God.

II

For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality. (I Corinthians. 15:53)

The evil and bad of the human personality can be discarded and exchanged for the pure enlightened manifestation of divine Love-Intelligence.

III

The flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh and these are contrary the one to the other. Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. (Galatians 5:17, 16)

Before reaching spiritual maturity, there is often a period of war between the spirit and the flesh. It is a conflict of interests. If there is a conflict within us, it means that we have not yet reached a wholehearted interest in the spiritual life.

IV

Then Jesus said unto his disciples, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." (Matthew 16:24)

The process is that of moving from sense existence to soul existence – from unenlightened human personality to enlightened spiritual being when you discover that you are really a divine consciousness.

V

Old things are passed away and all things are become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Through a spiritualized consciousness, we find a new identity derived from a sense of divine sonship.

VI

If thine eye be single, thy body also shall be full of light. (Luke 11:34)

Wonderful things happen when we reach a point of understanding that we are not separate

units of life. We are one with the creative Principle of our existence. Infinite Mind is our creator and spirit is our substance.

VII

Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him. (Isaiah 42:1)

When our consciousness is filled with Love-Intelligence, we glow. There is a radiance around us. We are manifesting God. Right where a physical person seems to be, there is nothing material there. The whole place is filled with God.

A DAY FOR GOD

Quoted by Jan Linthorst from a student's spiritual notes.

Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honor all the day. (Psalm 71:8)

Each day I seek a moment of realization of the good of God and seek carefully to maintain it. When I awaken in the morning physically, I also need a spiritual awakening. I need to awaken to PAGL. I will not continue dreaming or indulging in the thoughts that have accumulated during the night. Just as the light of dawn signals the new day, I turn to God to awaken to the fact that I am here for God and that the highest priority of the day is to attain PAGL. The dawn of truth in consciousness is the realization of the good of God which is present and awaits acknowledgement and expression.

As the sun rises to the zenith, I seek to realize the good of God until this realization comes to the fullness of a high noon. I sincerely study and meditate until I have a moment of full awareness of the good of God. With this awareness I can face the problems and challenges of the day. They come to us in the afternoon with what is sometimes called "the devil of midday." These are the distractions that every day brings, but with the full realization of the good of God, I am able to overcome them, have dominion, and heal them. By evening I can retreat and contemplate the harvest of the day. A day without a realization of PAGL, at least once, is a wasted day. A day for God is a day in which spiritual blessedness has been manifested that day, and so each day.