

**THE NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF METAPSYCHIATRY
P.A.G.L. FOUNDATION – WEST COAST AFFILIATE
Thomas Hora, M.D. Director**

Newsletter

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This issue of the Newsletter contains excerpts from a telephone seminar with Dr. Hora.

“The Empty Leash” beautifully illustrates how a particular life situation can be transformed when seen in the context of God.

Finally, the article “Responding to Herod” addresses an issue that arose during the past winter’s conference on “Healing the Hidden Herod”: whether metapsychiatric teachers and counseling professionals who work in non-spiritual institutions can be faithful to their values without eliciting the ill will of their colleagues.

- Charles Gourgey and Bruce Kerievsky, Editors

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IS THIS METAPSYCHIATRY IN THE SPORTS PAGES?

The New York Institute of Metapsychiatry was founded in 1975 by Dr. Thomas Hora, M.D. for the study and exploration of modes of being in the world, their meanings in terms of qualities of consciousness, cognitive processes, and how these can be altered through educational methods emphasizing prayer and meditation, spiritual values, and existentially valid metaphysical principles.

Metapsychiatry is an epistemological method of truth realization.

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EDITORIAL

On Contributions To The Newsletter

On the occasion of the first issue of the Newsletter to be prepared on the East Coast we would like to invite more students to write and submit articles for future issues. Perhaps you have never even considered writing an article, thinking you have not attained a sufficient degree of enlightenment. It might be helpful, then, to ask what it means to write for the Newsletter, and to offer some existential “writer’s guidelines.”

As is well known, there are six kinds of students of Metapsychiatry. Generally only two of these write articles intended for the Newsletter. The “thinker” thinks about what he would like to write, but can’t quite figure it out. The “dreamer” is too distracted by his fantasies to organize ideas on paper. The “thief” is not interested in presenting ideas to others but only in collecting any information that others might have to offer. The “hitchhiker” is not interested in the process at all, but simply wants to socialize or have a good time. It seems that the only students who attempt to write for the Newsletter are the “knower” and the “seeker.”

Many articles that are sent to the Newsletter but never make it into print are written by “knowers.” The knower has a mistaken idea of the purpose of writing an article: he believes that he is supposed to make a public demonstration of what he knows about Metapsychiatry. He may perceive this motivation as a legitimate desire to teach others, but the supposed legitimacy of this desire is belied by his failure to consider whether he himself has learned what he proposes to teach. One can always recognize an article written by a knower: it seems stilted, lacks clarity, and makes the truths of Metapsychiatry sound like platitudes.

Recognizing the knower’s invalid motivation helps us understand the right motive for writing an article. While the motive of the knower is to teach others, that of the seeker is precisely the opposite: it is to *learn*. A sincere seeker who writes for the Newsletter always writes to learn something he did not know before, or to clarify an issue he is just beginning to understand. In this way his writing becomes an instrument of his own healing, and the fruits of this healing will benefit others who may read what he has written.

You may have been struggling to understand a particular issue and have discovered its clarification through some teaching of Metapsychiatry. You may have attempted many futile solutions to some intractable problem and found that understanding it spiritually has brought you a healing. You may have found that asking the Two Intelligent Questions has radically changed your perception of a particular situation. If so, you might find it helpful to

write down exactly what it is you have learned, in order to see it more clearly. Do not be concerned that what you write must appear in the Newsletter, or wonder about what others will think when they read it. Your writing will be worthwhile as long as you learn something from it. If you think you might like to submit what you have written to the Newsletter, do not worry about whether it sounds learned or displays a deep knowledge of Metapsychiatry. Sincerity, not erudition, is the essential quality that an article must have if it is to be helpful to those who read it. Does what you have written truly help you? If so, it will probably help others as well.

Sincerity and a desire to learn are the guidelines for writers of articles on Metapsychiatry. Articles that follow these guidelines will benefit the writer whether or not they ever appear in print. Of course, if you would like to send what you write to this Newsletter, we would be grateful and most happy to consider it!

Dialogue

SOUL EXISTENCE VERSUS SELF-EXISTENCE

Question: Dr. Hora, could you please clarify the difference between self-confirmatory ideation and God-confirmatory ideation? Are they just different types of thought?

Dr. Hora: They are preoccupations with certain types of thoughts.

Question: So the question I have is this: What frame of mind or what perspective is it that allows us to move from a self-confirmatory ideation to soul existence?

Dr. Hora: It is very simple; it is called Metapsychiatry.

Comment: I was alone in a hotel room and I meditated on the idea "let God decide" and it worked out beautifully, much better than I could have planned it.

Dr. Hora: You were actualizing a prayer and you had a demonstration of the validity of that prayer.

Question: What was the nature of that prayer? I gave up the idea that I could do something. Is that the prayer?

Dr. Hora: No, the prayer is, "God helps those that let Him." This is principle No. 5 in Metapsychiatry.

Comment: Yes. So when we realize that God will help us and we cannot control the situation, is that the point at which we would move?

| Dr. Hora: It is not necessary to say, "God will help us." God is not in the future. God is, always. So saying, God helps those who let Him, is enough.

Question: And we experience God's help even though we are not yet enlightened?

Dr. Hora: That's right. But we are not noticing it if we are preoccupied with self-confirmatory ideation, or with a desire to influence people or events.

Question: If we are the manifestations of God, how is it that we are endowed with the capacity to ignore that truth, while the rest of what seems to be the natural world, simply demonstrates that truth?

Dr. Hora: What do you mean?

Comment: I mean that nature – plants and animals – simply do what they do, but we seem to try to fight against and ignore the nature of our being.

Dr. Hora: Nature and animals are demonstrating human consciousness. The surprising issue with nature and animals is that they are actually human. As you may know, in the story of Adam and Eve – as described in the second account of creation – God gave Adam the privilege of naming the animals. Now, what do you think this means?

Comment: I don't know. Could it have something to do with God giving man dominion over the animals?

Dr. Hora: That refers to another issue. Essentially, a name is a description of the character of a life-form. So Adam has given animals their characters. They do not manifest divine characters but human ones. As far as man having dominion over animals, over the fish of the sea and the fowls of the air, this refers to man's God-given faculty to be aware of the thoughts he entertains as well as of being aware whether they are valid or invalid. This capacity – this gift of God – gives us dominion over our thoughts. We had an example of this just a few minutes ago when it was described how becoming aware of the difference between entertaining self-confirmatory thoughts and God-confirmatory thoughts resulted in the ability to tune in on divine Reality. This individual exercised her God-given dominion and as a result was blessed by that experience. The application of this gift of God the Bible calls dominion.

Question: I would like to understand whether there is a difference when we cry from self-pity or from happiness. Is there ever a time when tears would be valid?

Dr. Hora: Are you asking for a license to be sentimental?

Question: Is that what tears are, sentimental?

Dr. Hora: Yes. And sentimentalism is self-confirmatory. Now it doesn't mean that it is forbidden to cry, or that it is a sin, but you have to realize that there is always an element of self-pity in it that is not healthy.

Comment: Okay. I can see that. Thank you.

Question: It seems that it can happen even when there is a long period of awareness of God's presence that we become self-preoccupied, and then that can become a stumbling block to continuing awareness of God. Do we then just return to God-awareness?

Dr. Hora: Yes. The Bible says, "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." (Isaiah 30:15) We have to continuously return to God-consciousness because the world is very much with us, and we are constantly distracted. So we have to be alert and maintain vigilance. Jesus said, "What I say unto you I say unto all, watch." (Mark 13:37) "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." (II Peter 5:8)

Comment: Christ, before he raised Lazarus from the dead, wept, as I recall in the Bible.

Dr. Hora: Yes.

Question: Is that a case where Christ was out of touch, shall we say, with the spirit, or is there a different meaning to that type of weeping?

Dr. Hora: It is not necessarily true that he wept. That is what people saw. You don't have to be very particular about such details. There is no prohibition against weeping, but there are all kinds of reports about Jesus: That he was angry, that he became violent and aggressive, that he was complaining and crying, and so on. People are trying very much to humanize Jesus in order to have an excuse to be human. But it is no big deal being human; there is no advantage to that. We aspire to be spiritual as far as possible. So let us not use such biblical statements as an excuse for human weaknesses, like for instance: If Jesus could slip, if it is all right for us to slip, and so on. If we want to cry, let us cry, period.

Comment: Dr. Hora, it seems that when you say that crying is self-confirmatory, this could be taken as a "should not."

Dr. Hora: Right.

Comment: And you are not saying more than just describing a certain framework of thought.

Comment: So it is just a description of a human way of thinking and behaving, and that is all that it is.

Dr. Hora: Yes, and anyone has the freedom to do that.

Comment: It is inevitable. We still have to eat and do various things that are human.

Comment: So we can see it as just describing a certain framework of thought; then we can clearly distinguish between that framework and the divine spiritual qualities – then the

element of “should” thinking could disappear.

Article

THE EMPTY LEASH, or: THE REAL SOURCE OF GUIDANCE

By Karen Luxton

Last year while I was at the dog-guide school learning to work with a new dog, I heard the trainer say something peculiar. He was teaching us the proper way to heel a dog (i.e. to allow the dog to walk beside you when you do not need him to guide the way) and said, “Your goal is an empty leash. When you are truly side-by-side, there is no pulling, no pushing, no friction or tension of any kind.”

I appreciated this thought, and even imagined that I understood it until someone – was it a trainer, or was it Polly Berends? – observed that the idea applied not only to those occasions when the dog was relaxed and at heel, but also to those time when he was “working” or “guiding” as well.

I have used a dog guide as a means of navigating safely, and with relative independence, for more than fifteen years. Only recently have I been helped to see that living and working with such a companion is both a metaphor and a vehicle for spiritual growth.

Traveling with a dog guide requires several kinds of intelligence, on the part of both the dog and his master. The master must “know” where they are going, so that at every choice point – usually a street corner – he or she can direct the dog to go “forward,” “left,” or “right.” The dog must follow these commands efficiently; at the same time he must be alert to obstacles or other dangers such as stairs, so that the duo can negotiate safely around them. The master in turn must be obedient to the dog’s signals; he must also be alert to those moments when the dog is being distracted. Finally, the dog must be so clear as to the nature of his task that he will actually disobey a command if following it would put the two in danger. (For example the master might command “forward” at a noisy crossing, not realizing that at that moment a car is turning.)

I had always thought it was my task to lead the dog mentally, but follow him physically. At the dog-guide school I learned, to my surprise, that I am not supposed to follow him at all. We are supposed to walk *with* each other! “What?” thought I, “No one’s on top, no one’s on the bottom? No one in front, no one behind?” Could a spiritually based idea be revealing itself here, right in the midst of a very practical physical training process? Apparently the idea of the “empty leash” applies not only when the dog is at heel, but even while he is working and supposedly “guiding” his master.

The idea that “you must control your dog” has been drilled into every dog-guide user. The usual interpretation of this advice is “I’ve got to make him do what I want!! In the end it’s up to me if I expect us to get where we’re going.”

This notion implies two wills, the dog's and mine. It implies an "interaction" between me and the dog, especially since the two of us will often be headed in different directions. Given such a frame of reference, the possibilities of our walking and working with each other seem utterly nil. In fact, the very idea of dog-guide work is undermined if viewed from the perspective of two wills, egos, or selves, each one constantly struggling to be the "top dog."

What is really going on here? How does it happen that master and dog are able to negotiate safely and smoothly from one point to another? Clearly there must be more at work here than the efforts of two separate, finite minds. Is it possible that a higher intelligence underlies, animates, guides, and empowers both individuals? Perhaps neither the person, nor the dog, but Love-Intelligence is in control. If this is the case, then as Polly likes to say, the dog and I become "sidekicks to each other." Both of us can manifest intelligent and loving qualities in our own unique ways. If I can see that the guiding and empowering are *given*, moment to moment, rather than willed by master or dog, then a "person" need no longer "command" a dog. We discover that we are not separate minds and competing wills, but that the same standard of good leads us both.

Of course, both dog and master can at times be stiff-necked and stubborn. But I can witness, with much gratitude, the fact that when I become willing to drop my concern about what I want or what I think the dog wants, the experience of walking down the street changes completely. A wonderful sense of smoothness and freedom is present. We are alert and aware. We almost lose track of who is cueing whom, and mostly it does not even matter. The walking is frictionless, and there is much appreciation. At such moments the leash is empty, perhaps even at both ends!

Article

RESPONDING TO HEROD

By Charles Gourgey, Ph.D.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for some men persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Matthew 5:10-12)

The beatitudes are among the most beautiful of all of Jesus' teachings. As we read them, we feel assured and inspired – until we come to the last two. The beatitudes concerning persecution are difficult to understand, and their misunderstanding has led repeatedly to violence and tragedy.

If we dedicate our lives to the teaching of spiritual values, we may begin to wonder whether persecution might be inevitable, and perhaps even a blessing to be valued. Religious movements have indeed suffered persecution throughout history. There seems to

be something in the world that is openly antagonistic to spiritual values. We might call this the “Herodian thought”: the desire to kill any expression of spiritual truth, even as Herod sought to kill the Christ-child while pretending to worship it.

Do Jesus’ words imply that to suffer persecution for one’s spiritual commitment is desirable?

Let us note immediately that Jesus never called persecution a blessing, even though many of his followers misinterpreted him as doing so. The only blessed ones are those who are persecuted *for righteousness’ sake*. To understand what this means let us ask: what is the meaning of the urge to persecute? What is the meaning of being persecuted? There is something about spiritual values that arouses in the unreceptive consciousness an urge to persecute. Even St. Paul persecuted the followers of Christ before he experienced his conversion. The urge to persecute is an expression of fear. The ego has a clever way of dealing with fear: it looks for an outside source to blame, and turns its fear into hostility. What kind of fear can turn into an anger so intense that it would seek to kill the very values that promise peace?

Spiritual values seem to deprive us of the good we seek. Jesus taught, “Take no thought for your life, or for your body,” and “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth.” These teachings appear to assault our inalienable right to the pursuit of pleasure. We may also resent a teaching like “Turn the other cheek,” believing that it requires us to be an uncomplaining target for the abuse of others. We insist on the right to protect ourselves and to resent our antagonists, while Metapsychiatry would ask us to transcend the interaction thinking that gave rise to the conflict in the first place.

Spiritual values also seem to attack the belief systems upon which we base our lives. Spirituality asks us to reorient our outlook on life completely, and we may be reluctant to do so, especially if it means discarding systems of belief that have given us a sense of security. The depth of this need for security is demonstrated by the historical fact that often people have been willing even to go to war to defend their belief systems or to impose them on others.

Finally, we may feel that spiritual values pronounce a severe judgment upon us. If spiritual values promise healing and we are still unhealed, we may see this as an indictment. If we turn to medicine for a cure and fail to find it, then we simply blame the disease. If we turn to spirituality for a healing and fail to find it, then we often blame ourselves, especially if we learn that the disease has a meaning. To escape this self-blame it is often tempting to blame God or to find fault with the spiritual teaching.

Just as the urge to persecute has a meaning, so does the experience of persecution. Persecution itself is a form of interaction, and therefore involves the overlapping fantasies of both aggressor and victim. The aggressor, in fact, considers himself to be the victim, and persecutes to relieve his fear. What aggressive thoughts might there be in the consciousness of the one who is persecuted that might invite such an experience.

Perhaps the most common aggressive thought that a student or teacher of spiritual truth might entertain is the desire to influence others and convince them of the importance of spiritual values. If we are new to the study and enthusiastic, we may want to convert the world; if a little less zealous we might settle for just a few of our friends. An individual who fears spiritual-values might experience our enthusiasm as a judgment, which, in fact, it is. We judge others whenever we condemn them for not following our path or become impatient when they are not receptive. We may also judge in more subtle ways, even by thinking that “so-and-so could really use Metapsychiatry” and pitying him for his ignorance. The one whom we would help will register our judgmental thought and react to it, and before we know it, we are on the defensive.

Another way that students of spiritual approaches to healing often infuriate others is by appearing to deny outright the experience of one who is suffering. Unless we discern that someone truly desires to know the truth, then to tell him, while he is still upset and cannot think of anything else, that his experience is not real, or that he is a whole and perfect living Soul and his problem cannot touch him, will do more harm than good. He will think either that we are insulting his intelligence, or trying to sell him “snake oil,” and in any case our hasty efforts to comfort him indicate a lack of compassion. It certainly cannot be helpful if we ourselves do not understand the truth of what we are saying.

If we would like to avoid stimulating the Herodian thought in others, we need to present Metapsychiatry with a sense of complete integrity. This requires that we adhere to a single, consistent set of values. Non-conditional love judges no one; therefore if we judge those who reject what we are teaching, we are contradicting ourselves. If we try to make others believe in Metapsychiatry we are also contradicting ourselves, since Metapsychiatry is not a system of beliefs but a path toward realization. If we preach a truth we do not yet realize but only believe, we will sound insincere, and our hearers will know it. The urge to convince others of the truth of Metapsychiatry is usually a sign that we are trying to convince ourselves. Therefore it is best first to learn what it means to present Metapsychiatry *nonverbally*, before we venture to speak.

Whenever we present Metapsychiatry it is important to be aware of the sensitivity of our audience. If we are overzealous we may unwittingly scrape the raw nerve of a listener’s self-rejection, and be surprised when he suddenly bites back. If our values are inconsistent, we may fail the needs of the listeners who are searching for a truth that lives up to the beauty of the words that express it. If we glibly deny the experiences of our audience, we may inadvertently convey the impression that Metapsychiatry is uncompassionate.

The two qualities most necessary to protect us from the Herodian reaction are therefore *integrity* and *compassion*. If our values are consistent and pure, and particularly if we do not allow personal ambition to carry us away, we will be far less likely to trespass upon our listeners’ soft spots without our realizing it. If we are compassionate, we will meet the objections of our audience with patient love rather than defensiveness, and we will not stimulate their hostility by judging them. It is helpful to remember that while we may be willing to be embarrassed about our own self-confirmatory thoughts, someone who has never studied Metapsychiatry most likely still *identifies* with these thoughts. He may

therefore feel personally attacked when these thoughts are questioned, and desire to kill the questioning, or even the questioner. If anyone needs to retreat from the bright light of spiritual truth, we ought not hesitate to allow him to do so. We have no right to interfere with the right of another to seek nonspiritual solutions to his problems.

Metapsychiatry has no ambitions for itself. As metapsychiatric teachers we are happy to keep a low profile, and will not complain even if Metapsychiatry never gains a single new student. We do not proselytize, but allow God to direct the progress of our work, to make sure it attracts only those who are ready to hear its message. Metapsychiatry will thrive only as long as we realize that it is God and not we who direct its growth. If we would ever forget this, then Metapsychiatry will become just another religion, and will suffer the fate of all religions.

There are only three ways we can invite the Herodian reaction: if we love it, if we fear it, or if we condemn it. If we see ourselves as martyrs for a cause, then we love it. If we believe that the power of Herod is real and inescapable, then we fear it. If we judge those who choose not to receive our message, then we condemn it. These are the three possible ways of being persecuted; there are no others.

If we are persecuted *for righteousness' sake* – that is, *while maintaining right values* – then we stand in the position of Daniel. His value system threatened and put to shame all those around him; they sought to kill him, yet he never contended with them nor judged them. He remained solitary with God, and although he understood and responded to the world of his adversaries, he never entered it.