

NEWSLETTER of the PAGL Foundation Institute
Thomas Hora, Director

Year 15, No.2

October, 1990

Wrestling With Lawn Chairs

by Jim Neafsey

A few years ago I watched a comedy competition on a local television show. One of the routines involved a wrestling match between a comedian and a lawn chair. The comedian was dressed in athletic shoes, wrestling tights and protective head gear. His "opponent" was a collapsible, reclining lawn chair with an aluminum frame and plastic webbing. A referee was present to make sure that the rules were kept, to score the match and to declare the winner. At the sound of the referee's whistle the comedian began to circle the chair, cautiously waiting for an opening to attack. Suddenly he lunged forward and grabbed the chair. The chair "responded" by flipping over and entangling the comedian in the aluminum frame. The comedian broke free of the chair's "hold" and applied a counterhold. Then the chair folded or collapsed or twisted in some way to get the upper hand once again. And so it went for several minutes. Each move of the comedian was followed by what seemed to be a countermove by the chair until the match was over. The match was so close I can't even recall who won!

While all of this was going on the audience was laughing and cheering wildly. They apparently identified on some level with what was taking place. Perhaps they saw the comedy act as a spoof on the phoney theatrics of professional wrestling. Such matches are like wrestling with lawn chairs, dramatizations of fantasies rather than real athletic events. Or perhaps they remember actually wrestling with a lawn chair at one time or another in their own life – unsuccessfully struggling to find the right notch for adjusting the back of the chair or having the foot of the chair buckle under and collapse. At such moments it can seem that the chair has a will of its own – a personal will bent on frustrating and defeating us. But the parable of lawn chair wrestling seemed to go beyond dramatizing how we tend to "personify objects." At still another level it can be seen as a representation of how we "objectify persons."

No doubt we have all experienced domestic arguments in which absurdly trivial issues have led to interpersonal “wrestling matches.” Attacks and counter-attacks are exchanged over issues whose significance would be totally incomprehensible to an outside observer. In the heat of the battle the opponents no longer see one another as human, much less as spiritual. They turn one another into objects in a deadly serious wrestling match. According to the philosopher Martin Buber the prevalent mode in many so-called “interpersonal relationships” is precisely this kind of objectification. Buber’s point is that we have a tendency to deal with other individuals from an “I-it” perspective in which the other individual is treated as an object, rather than an “I-Thou” perspective in which the spiritual reality of the other is recognized and respected. And, as Dr. Hora notes, “If they (other human beings) are objects, like for instance a chair, they can be pushed around, turned upside down, even smashed.” (1)

Object-Relations Theory

This tendency to objectify others is encouraged by the language used in some forms of psychotherapy, particularly those based on what is called “object-relations theory.” Object-relations theory speaks about the need for infants and even adults to connect with an appropriate “love-object” who can fulfill their basic needs. From a Metapsychiatric perspective our way of speaking has an important effect on the way that we see. To describe others as “love-objects” tends to encourage the perception that others are here for our personal gratification. In other words, from the perspective of object-relations theory if we love someone we have the right to expect that individual to make us feel good. This leads to all kinds of abuse and manipulation of others. Clearly, the tendency to see others as objects was prevalent long before object-relations theory was developed. But such a theory legitimizes this universal human tendency and gives it the respectability associated with a sophisticated scientific theory. If we view life in terms of “love-objects,” we will inevitably end up “wrestling with lawn chairs.” We will confuse persons with objects and objects with persons, and we will assume that both are here to fulfill our needs. This human tendency to personify objects and objectify persons was the paradox at the heart of the comedy routine.

If the wrestler represents our belief that we must struggle to get what we need from love-objects, then who is the referee? Perhaps we could compare the referee to the therapist who holds to an object-relations or “interpersonal”

approach to therapy. Just as the referee in a wrestling match knows the rules of wrestling and is responsible for keeping the match orderly and fair, it is assumed that the therapist knows the rules of healthy and unhealthy personal relationships. The role of the therapist is to clarify these rules so that clients can learn to get what they need and want in their personal relationships without causing too much damage to themselves or others in the process. Conflict is assumed to be inevitable, so clients need to learn to “fight fair” in their relationships. In some cases therapists identify more with the coach than the referee. They see their role as teaching clients how to assert themselves or win through intimidation. In other forms of psychotherapy, such as psychoanalysis, the focus is placed on the “wrestling match” that is presumed to take place between the therapist and the client. The dynamics of transference and countertransference are the prime concern. The therapist plays the role of a surrogate parent who attempts to provide an experience of healthy, interpersonal relating to correct the patterns of unhealthy relating the client learned as a child. All these approaches to therapy assume that a real, interpersonal “wrestling match” is actually taking place, and that the health and happiness of the client is somehow dependent on the outcome.

The First Intelligent Question

There is, however, a third possibility beyond identification with the wrestler or the referee. If we assume the point of view of a member of the audience the whole situation appears in a completely different light. From that perspective both the referee and the wrestler are seen to be captives of the same misconceptions and fantasies. Each may play a different role, but they both share the same dream. They are totally immersed in a common set of unquestioned rules and assumptions, a common understanding or misunderstanding, of what is “real.” The members of the audience, on the other hand, are aware of a larger context. It is perfectly clear to them that the whole wrestling match only seems to be. It is based on the illusion that a personal interaction is taking place between the chair and the wrestler. Much of the humor of the routine depended on how effectively the wrestler and the referee could convey the impression of being completely serious about an obviously absurd situation.

If we pursue this analogy further we can see that it has profound implications for understanding both the meaning of our personal interactions as well as the nature of effective therapy or spiritual guidance. What would it mean, for

example, to adopt the perspective of the audience rather than that of the wrestler or referee in our personal and professional lives? Is there a point of view from which the personal interactions that seem to be so central to human life are nothing but wrestling with lawn chairs? Could it be that what common sense and psychology universally assume to be “fact” is actually just a fantasy? There is a principle in Metapsychiatry which seems to indicate that this is precisely the case. The principle states: “There is no interaction anywhere, there is only omni-action everywhere.” Dr. Hora explains the principle this way:

“When we say that there is no interaction anywhere, we mean that a great deal of suffering comes from expecting love from other people and building our lives on that idea. If we are living in that context or with such a mind-set, then we are vulnerable, insecure, and easily disturbed. But if we understand love as the essence of God expressing itself through us freely as goodness, intelligence, generosity, and assurance, then love is a spiritual sea, a medium in which ‘we live, and move, and have our being.’” (Acts 17:28) (2)

In other words, interaction consists in a certain habit of thought that views the pleasures and pains, victories and defeats experienced in personal relationships as what life is all about. From within this mindset our interpersonal “wrestling matches” seem very real indeed. Our sense of self seems to depend on getting love and approval from other people. To individuals identified with such a limited perspective the statement that there is no interaction anywhere will make no sense at all. They may point to their physical or psychological “scars” or “bruises” as proof that the battles they have fought are not just “in their heads.” But just because we have experienced something doesn’t mean that it is real. If, for example, our wrestling comedian pointed to his bruises as proof that lawn chair wrestling was real, we would only smile. On one level, of course, the comedian actually was going through the motions of fighting and perhaps suffering some physical pain in the process. But in reality he was simply acting out an inner fantasy. The struggle was an illusion. The fighting was unnecessary. In such a situation the futility of analyzing the causes of the conflict or seeking ways to manage it are obvious. These approaches would only serve to reinforce the illusion that a real conflict was taking place. But if the whole situation is understood as fundamentally a fantasy, then the relevant question becomes instead, what is that fantasy? What are the underlying thought processes, ideas, beliefs and values that are manifesting as the apparent experience of

conflict or wrestling? In Metapsychiatry asking the meaning of what seems to be is known as the “first intelligent question.” When we ask the meaning of what seems to be we are inquiring into the mental equivalent of the phenomenon or symptom. We are seeking to discern the erroneous thought or fantasy underlying the apparent problem. For example, in the case of an argument we seek to know the false assumptions or expectations, the “shoulds” or “wants” that are manifesting themselves as interpersonal friction.

The Transcendent Observer

To arrive at the meaning of what seems to be one needs to develop a transcendent observer that is aware of the contents of consciousness without being totally identified with them. Some part of our awareness needs to be “out in the audience” watching the act, not just immersed in the struggle on stage. If we have developed such an inner observer we may even be able to look on our interpersonal dramas with a sense of humor. As the capacity to observe the contents of consciousness grows we may begin to understand that we do not “wrestle” with other people, but rather with our thoughts about other people. Our expectations, assumptions and demands are our real wrestling partners.

The psychiatrist Arthur Deikman gives an example from his own therapeutic practice that may help clarify the importance of developing the transcendent observer for effective therapy or spiritual guidance.

“A woman I had been seeing in once-a-week psychotherapy entered my office almost frantic with distress, proclaiming anxiously that she was about ‘to go to pieces.’ My usual approach would have been to listen, draw out some explanation of the precipitating circumstances, and bring into awareness the repressed emotions, wishes, or ideas that presumably were the bases for her acute symptoms... What actually happened was that I began to smile, feeling amused... Her situation seemed funny to me because I perceived her as being in no actual danger, but completely caught up in the contents of her mind, identifying with the commotion she was reporting, forgetting that *she* was reporting *it*. Speaking metaphorically, it was as if the patient were standing on a hilltop overlooking the ocean and on seeing large waves crashing far out to sea had become fearful that she would drown, forgetting where she actually was.

“The woman suddenly became aware of my facial expression, stopped, and indignantly demanded the reason for my ‘unfeeling’ smile in response to her desperation. Her question made me smile even more broadly, and I actually began to laugh. She stared at me in disbelief, and then a look of outrage took possession of her face. However, in the midst of her rising anger, despite herself, she started to smile, too. ‘Damn you!’ she exclaimed and began to laugh... The desperate air of crisis... vanished in that laughter like fog evaporating in the sun. The ‘going to pieces’ never happened.” (3)

Deikman points out that the significance of this encounter is not the discovery of a new therapeutic technique that consists in laughing at clients and their problems – though a sense of humor can often help! The important issue is the development of a special type of awareness in the therapist or guide that is able to observe symptoms and phenomena without being hypnotized into thinking that they represent what really is. Deikman was not only able to maintain his own inner observer, but he was also able to perceive the transcendent observer in his client as well. He “saw” that the woman was in no real danger in the present moment. She was simply reacting emotionally to the thoughts in her consciousness. Through his smile and laughter he was able in some degree to spontaneously communicate this transcendent perspective to the client. Suddenly she was able to disidentify from her thoughts and feelings and see them from a higher viewpoint. Deikman adds that this capacity to observe her thoughts led to lasting beneficial changes in this woman’s life and a leap forward in the healing process.

When we have developed some capacity to behold our thoughts, feelings, desires, memories and fantasies in this way, we can see the relevance of the “first intelligent question.” Asking the meaning of what seems to be shifts the focus from identification with a problem to awareness of the thoughts and beliefs which are manifesting as the problem. For example, the woman who *seemed* to be “going to pieces” now sees that it is her underlying thoughts and fantasies that are manifesting themselves as physical and emotional distress. She is beginning to understand that she is suffering from these thoughts rather than from some adverse external situation or disturbed interpersonal relationship. Of course, she may also come to see that there are actual life issues that require an intelligent, loving response on the basis of what she is coming to understand. But such a conscious response will be quite different than an unconscious reaction arising from identification with agitated thoughts and emotions.

To return for a moment to the analogy of the wrestling match, it is as if this woman moved from wrestling with her thoughts unconsciously to watching herself wrestle from the stance of the “audience” or inner observer. When she was still identified with her thoughts, she was enraged by the suggestion that her crisis only *seemed* to be. Couldn’t her psychiatrist see that she was experiencing physical agitation and deeply trouble emotions? Didn’t this “prove” that the problem was real? But when she moved to a higher perspective she couldn’t help but laugh at the intense drama in which she played a leading role. Her next step would be to understand the meaning of the “spell” she had been under, to understand the invalid, self-confirmatory nature of the particular thoughts and fantasies which she had been cherishing, fearing or hating.

The Second Intelligent Question

Understanding the meaning of what seems to be is only the first phase of the healing process. For healing to be complete there needs to be a breakthrough in consciousness to a perception of the truth. At this point what Metapsychiatry calls the “second intelligent question” will naturally arise: What is what really *is*? For example, if I come to understand that I have been held captive by a dream or fantasy of interaction, at some point I will become interested in what it means to wake up and see life as it really is. The “answer” to the “second intelligent question” will be more than just a concept. It will involve an expansion of consciousness, a change in context from interaction to Divine Omniaction. This shift will be accompanied by a sense of joy and freedom. As Dr. Hora puts it:

“Joy comes to us when we begin to see that we live and move and have our being in God, infinite Mind. When these insights dawn upon us, we begin to see ourselves in a larger context, and with that; there is a growing sense of freedom and dominion.” (4)

This truth is illustrated by the woman who felt that she was “going to pieces.” When she shifted to the larger mental context of the transcendent observer she laughed with joy. At the same time she acquired much greater inner freedom and dominion over her thought processes than she had experienced only moments previously.

The Story of Great Waves

There is a Zen story about a “wrestler” known as “Great Waves” (5) that may help to clarify what is involved in the shift from interaction to omni-action, from what seems to be to what really *is*. It goes like this:

“In the early days of the Meiji era there lived a well-known wrestler called O-nami, Great Waves.

“O-nami felt he should go to a Zen master for help. Hakuju, a wandering teacher, was stopping in a little temple nearby, so O-nami went to see him and told him of his trouble.

“‘Great Waves is your name,’ the teacher advised, ‘so stay in this temple tonight. Imagine that you are those billows. You are no longer a wrestler who is afraid. You are those huge waves sweeping everything before them, swallowing all in their path. Do this and you will be the greatest wrestler in the land.’

“O-nami sat in meditation trying to imagine himself as waves. He thought of many different things. Then gradually he turned more and more to the feeling of the waves. As the night advanced the waves became larger and larger. They swept away the flowers in their vases. Even the Buddha in the shrine was inundated. Before dawn the temple was nothing but the ebb and flow of an immense sea.

“In the morning the Zen teacher found O-nami meditating, a faint smile on his face. He patted the wrestler’s shoulder. ‘Now nothing can disturb you,’ he said. ‘You are those waves. You will sweep everything before you.’

“That same day O-nami entered the wrestling contests and won. After that, no one in Japan was able to defeat him.”

O-nami comes before the Zen master with a problem. It is not a problem of a lack of physical strength or natural ability. O-nami is unbeatable when the wrestling matches are private and informal. It is only when O-nami must perform in public that he is unable to function effectively. His shyness so interferes with his ability to concentrate that even his pupils can easily defeat him. He is suffering from what we would call today a “psychological problem.”

But he does not seek a psychological solution. Instead, he seeks out a Zen master. Perhaps by contrasting the methods of psychotherapy with the method of the Zen master we can arrive at a deeper insight into both.

The Six Futile Questions

Now if O-nami were to approach a psychotherapist with his problem the therapist would very likely seek to analyze it using one or more of what Metapsychiatry calls the “six futile or dumb questions.” These are: What’s wrong? How do you feel? Why? Who is to blame? What should I do? How should do it?

Let’s take a closer look at what makes these questions futile by taking O-nami’s bashfulness as an example. If the therapist focuses on what is wrong, this will tend to reinforce the apparent reality of the problem of bashfulness by keeping attention fixed on the external symptom. The focus will be on the problem rather than the meaning of the problem. If the therapist then proceeds to ask O-nami how he feels about his bashfulness this will also narrow the perspective to O-nami’s already constricted subjective viewpoint. Sooner or later the therapist will probably get around to asking why. Why is O-nami bashful? What causes his self-consciousness in front of a group? Depending on the particular therapeutic school to which the therapist belongs the causes may be sought in childhood traumas, poor parental relationships, interrupted psycho-social development or some other factor. Often enough many causes can be identified. This, too, only serves to reinforce the original problem. With so many good reasons to be bashful O-nami may be reluctant to let go of the problem! The reasons end up being excuses for remaining as he is. Seeking the cause for a problem is often closely related to asking who is to blame. For example, O-nami’s parents might be held responsible for failing to communicate to him an adequate sense of self-esteem. Or O-nami might blame his upbringing in a particular social class or ethnic group for his sense of self-consciousness. He may even end up blaming himself. But the habit of blaming only serves to personalize the issue and increase resentment. It has no healing value. The questions of what to do or how to do it both encourage operationalism, the belief that we are self-sufficient “doers” who are in charge of our own lives. Operationalism favors a reliance on techniques over understanding. The problem with all six questions is that they limit the mental horizon of the individual to a psychological context, the context of the autonomous ego. They form a kind of mental prison which constricts

awareness of the range of possible insights and creativity relevant to the issue at hand. The questions do not take account of the existence of God, spiritual values, inspired ideas or higher states of consciousness. In other words, they do not address the transcendent context in which our lives actually unfold.

The Approach of Spiritual Guidance

Now the Zen master in the story does not engage in any of the six futile questions. He does not explore O-nami's personal background searching for causes or someone to blame. He does not focus on O-nami's feelings or on special techniques for getting rid of shyness. He approaches the problem as a spiritual guide rather than a therapist. He makes it clear that from his perspective the problem of bashfulness only seems to be. It is a case of mistaken identity. He says to O-nami, "Great Waves is your name... You are no longer a wrestler who is afraid." The master is pointing out that the real issue is that O-nami has become so preoccupied with the image of himself as an anxious wrestler that he has lost touch with his true identity. From a Metapsychiatric point of view we can clarify the meaning of O-nami's problem more precisely. O-nami is suffering from a self-confirmatory belief in interaction. He is thinking about what the fans are thinking about what he is thinking. What will they think of him if he wins? What will they think of him if he loses? He is under the illusion that his worth and identity are dependent on the approval or disapproval of the public. This mistaken belief manifests as fear and insecurity when he wrestles in front of a crowd. Apparently O-nami has become so preoccupied with this mental wrestling match that he is unable to concentrate on the actual match in which he is engaged. His opponents are easily able to exploit this lapse of concentration and win the match.

So the master begins by identifying the invalid idea, the self-confirmatory thought, that is manifesting itself as shyness in O-nami's public wrestling matches. The Zen master does not stop there, however. He invites O-nami to meditate in the temple on his own name, Great Waves, as a way of coming to realize his transcendent spiritual identity. "You are those huge waves," he tells O-nami. The master is inviting O-nami to expand his perspective from the narrow context of interaction to the infinite context of Divine Omniaction. But it is not enough to simply tell O-nami the spiritual solution to his problem. O-nami needs to come to a direct realization of the Truth if real healing is to occur. A change of consciousness needs to take place that goes beyond intellectual concepts. The master cannot give the answer to him, nor can O-

nami get the answer by his own efforts. What is needed is receptivity to grace and inspired wisdom. O-nami needs to see something. O-nami stays in the temple that night trying to meditate. At first his efforts are not very successful. Perhaps he is trying too hard to achieve what can only be received as a gift. But eventually O-nami begins to glimpse that spiritual reality to which his own name of "Great Waves" points. He gradually becomes aware of the omniactive Divine power that the waves represent. Soon the "waves" sweep away the vase with flowers placed before the image of the Buddha, and even the statue of the Buddha itself. Symbolically this is pointing to the fact that O-nami's realization has transcended religious beliefs and devotional rituals. He has realized at-one-ment with the Buddha consciousness, and therefore no longer needs to revere an external image with ritual gestures. O-nami has come to see that his spiritual identity is as inseparable from Divine Reality as a wave is from the ocean. By dawn he is aware of nothing else but the ebb and flow of the sea itself. O-nami's consciousness has expanded from the narrow context of interaction to the infinite context of Divine Omniaction. He now lives and moves and has his being in the Ocean of Divine Love- Intelligence. O-nami's true identity is simply that of a Great Wave upon the sea of Divine Reality.

When the Zen master finds O-nami the next morning it is clear that O-nami has undergone a radical change in consciousness. He sits serenely in meditation with a faint smile on his face. The "anxious wrestler" has totally disappeared and only Great Waves remains. O-nami's spiritual realization is existentially validated by the quality of joy and peace which he now enjoys as well as by the healing of his shyness. He is filled with the strength and assurance that comes from knowing the Truth. His natural talents and abilities as a wrestler can now come to full fruition.

The story of O-nami and the Zen master reveals that the essential difference between psychotherapy and spiritual guidance is one of perspective or context. The context of most forms of psychotherapy is that of interpersonal interaction. From this perspective we are individual egos who live and move and have our being in relationship to other egos. In this constricted, horizontal context we inevitably end up wrestling with others for what we think we need and want. As we have already seen, the "six futile questions" utilized by most forms of psychotherapy are both an expression of this limited context as well as a reinforcement of it.

Metapsychiatric spiritual guidance, on the other hand, takes place within the context of Divine Omniaction. From this transcendent perspective we are not autonomous egos struggling with one another, but spiritual beings who jointly participate in Divine Love-Intelligence, the harmonizing principle of the universe. Joy, harmony, peace, love, assurance, gratitude, wisdom and creativity are the spontaneous manifestations of our at-one-ment with Divine Reality. The “two intelligent questions” are the gateway into the realization of that Divine Reality. They allow us to distinguish interaction from Omniaction, what seems to be from what really *is*.

Notes:

(1) Thomas Hora, *Beyond the Dream*, (Orange, California: PAGL Press, 1986), P. 188.

(2) *Ibid.*, p. 100.

(3) Arthur J. Deikman, *The Observing Self: Mysticism and Psychotherapy*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1982, pp. 108-109.

(4) *Beyond the Dream*, p. 126.

(5) Paul Reps, *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones: A Collection of Zen and pre-Zen Writings*, (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1957), pp. 25-26.

**PAGL Foundation Board Of Directors Meeting
Arrowwood Conference Center
May 4, 1990**

**Introductory Remarks
by Dr. Thomas Hora**

We are happy and grateful to meet once again in this beautiful place. On this occasion I would like to say a few words about what was going on in our thoughts during the year. We were wrestling with the idea of becoming a bi-coastal Foundation (California and New York). We had to hire lawyers to arrange our acceptability in New York State so that we could legally function here.

In the course of this experience certain questions kept cropping up: What is the justification for being a Foundation at all? In what way do we deserve the

privilege of tax exemption from the Federal Government and from the States of California and New York? What is the redeeming feature of our work?

The lawyers would ask: "What is this Metapsychiatry thing?" It was somewhat difficult to explain. Even today if some interested individual were to ask us to explain what it is that we do and how we do it, we respond with care because it is easy to misunderstand. At times we remain silent.

In the past we came to the conclusion that the best way to preach Metapsychiatry was nonverbally. This is still a very good idea. It is particularly good for the one who has to do the explaining because what we cannot express outwardly, we have to internalize. And if we internalize the truths of Metapsychiatry we become transformed. But we have still not found a way of quieting the misgivings of the inquiring public. So we do talk, albeit, as little as possible, because the more we would try to explain, the more we would get embroiled in misunderstandings.

If we talk to lay people they may say: "Well, I don't understand it, it must be one of those cults that are found throughout the country. It is some 'New Age psycho-babble.'" If we try to explain it to a professional in the medical field or psychology and psychiatry, what happens is that we often see them pouring "new wine into old bottles." Whatever we say about Metapsychiatry is at times being reinterpreted in terms of psychology, psychiatry, or psychosomatic medicine. The medical establishment accepts the fact that emotional reactions can bring about functional symptoms, like for instance, hysterical paralysis, or fainting spells, or vomiting, or excitement of some kind. So they may say: "Yes, emotional factors can have an effect on the functioning of people." But that is as far as it goes. It is harder to see that organismic changes could occur as a result of thought processes. This is scientifically unacceptable and often radically rejected. Now, we don't worry about what is rejected or accepted, what we need is our own clarity. When we say the physical is mental, we have to understand what we are talking about.

We can try to explain things this way: Imagine that a blind man is given a fish and is told: "Examine this fish carefully and tell us what the ocean is." Can anyone see the ocean by examining a fish? The fish cannot exist without the ocean. The ocean gives rise to the multitude and variety of fishes and other marine life and fauna, but from examining all the fishes we cannot get an idea about what the ocean is.

Furthermore, if we consider the fishes in the ocean we can observe that the fishes only see other fishes and they are only aware of their “relationship” to each other, more or less. This reminds us of ourselves before we develop a capacity for transcendence. We are not aware of the existence of God. In Metapsychiatry we speak of Divine Reality as the “Ocean of Love-Intelligence,” where we live and move and have our being.

Similarly, we don’t know what our purpose in the PAGL Foundation is unless we face the fact that the supreme issue is learning to know God. The general assumption is that religion can help us see God; unfortunately religion cannot help us see God. We can see rituals, ceremonies, and beliefs about God, but just as we cannot see the ocean by studying fish, we cannot see God by studying man.

How can Metapsychiatry accomplish this requirement? If we can see this, then we have a justification for existing. All of us have to keep in mind that we are blind until we have caught a glimpse of God, the Creative Mind of the Universe. God determines man. Man does not determine God. As our vision expands and we can see Creative Mind more and more clearly, healings happen because it is God that heals. The Bible says: “I am the Lord that healeth thee.” (Exodus 15:26) Now think of all the various systems which have been devised to try to help people and to heal them. They are, more or less, hit or miss propositions, more or less frustrating and inauthentic. The healing efforts which do not begin with seeing man in the context of God are rather frustrating and futile.

As we are moving closer to understanding what the PAGL Foundation’s contribution to the world is, we see that we have to work on finding a way of seeing God and man in *at-one-ment*. This task is neither philosophical nor religious, but epistemological - transcendent.

The Dream
by Steve Thomson

Oh, Beloved.
We have reversed the intention.
Humankind has fallen asleep in the
myth of separation.
We are like fish who swim,
in the waters in which we all move and have our being
and yet we know it not.
We have danced on a false leg that whispers
in our ear that we create and express out
of the island of ourselves.
I tell you truly that it is not so.
To come to understand the unity of it all.
To find the path on which we are like
sparks of a single flame and source,
Is to draw the gold lines of thread
along the pathways of the spider's web.
And I shall lay my ear upon your heart
and listen to the music that quickens my soul.