

A HIERARCHY OF VALUES

Thomas Hora, M.D.

The PAGL Foundation, Inc.

New York, NY

2013

The PAGL Foundation, Inc.

Copyright © 2013 The PAGL Foundation

All rights reserved.

ISBN: 0-913105-03-1

ISBN-13: 9780913105-03-0

The PAGL Foundation, Inc.

New York, New York

CONTENT

INTRODUCTION	5
COGNITION, BEHAVIOR, EXPERIENCE	7
VALUES AND QUALITIES	8
ASCENDING	9
CONTEXT	12
SUBSTANCE AND REALITY	15
HIERARCHY OF VALUES	16
CLINICAL RELEVANCY OF VALUES	18
THERAPEUTIC IMPLICATIONS OF SPIRITUAL VALUES	19
MODES OF BEING-IN-THE-WORLD	20
THE HOSTAGE SYNDROME	21
CONVERGENCE OF PHYSICS, BRAIN-PHYSIOLOGY AND METAPSYCHIATRY	23
THE FISHMONGER	24
THE LAND OF PAGL	25
HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WE ARE SPIRITUAL? A Dialogue	28

INTRODUCTION

Thomas Hora, M.D., (1914-1995), was a psychiatrist with a passion for seeking spiritual understanding. His search led him beyond psychology to study philosophy, phenomenology, world religions and other existential and metaphysical teachings. The spiritual teachings of Jesus Christ became the cornerstone of his practice that he called Metapsychiatry.

Metapsychiatry offers a unique method of spiritual growth and understanding that manifests in healing of all kinds. It is not a religion. Dr. Hora's patients and students included followers of diverse religions, as well as non-religious individuals.

From 1983 to 1987 a group of his students* led by Jan Linthorst, D. Min., distilled the essence of this wisdom on twelve vital subjects and published them as a series of booklets, of which this is one. These, as well as books of Dr. Hora are available at www.Amazon.com. Audio recordings of classes with Dr. Hora are available through the PAGL Foundation at: www.pagl.org. PAGL is an acronym for Peace, Assurance, Gratitude, and Love. The presence of PAGL in consciousness, as taught in Metapsychiatry, is evidence of the existence of God and can be seen as a way by which to measure individual spiritual progress.

*Ann Linthorst, Joan Taylor, Joan Rubadeau and Gloria Spurgeons

COGNITION, BEHAVIOR, EXPERIENCE

As an introduction to this discourse on values, two short stories from the Zen tradition and a quote from the Bible come to mind. The first story seems to fall into the domain of cognitive psychology, the second story into the domain of behavioral psychology, and the quotation into the domain of existential psychology.

The first story says: Before I understood the study of Zen, mountains were mountains and rivers were rivers. When I was deeply involved with my Zen studies, mountains were not mountains any more and rivers were not rivers. But after I became enlightened, mountains were mountains again and rivers were rivers.

The second Zen story tells of a poor Chinese laundryman who was known in the neighborhood as a struggling, hard working laborer, always carrying a heavy load of laundry on his back. The people did not know, however, that he was a sincere student of Zen. One day he came to his teacher and said, "Master, I have become enlightened." The Master said, "All right, prove it to me. I'll ask you two questions; if you answer them correctly, I will know whether or not you are really enlightened. Tell me, what is the meaning of Zen?" In answer to this the Chinese laundryman dropped his bag of laundry in front of his teacher and straightened himself up as a man of dignity.

The Master said, "Good. Now tell me the meaning of enlightenment." In answer to this the Chinaman picked up his bag of laundry, threw it over his shoulder and walked out.

This brings to mind what Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you

A HIERARCHY OF VALUES

rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and Slowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11: 28-30).

The question may be asked: “What has Jesus in common with Zen Masters?” Is there some common ground where Christianity and Buddhism meet? And what relevancy does all this have to practical secular psychotherapy? What therapeutic benefits can we glean from the preceding three examples? Clearly, the teachings of Jesus, when understood existentially, have a common ground with Buddhism in that they help us to see life differently. They alter our mode of being-in-the-world by awakening our faculties of spiritual discernment. Furthermore, they demonstrate that cognition, behavior and the quality of experiencing are largely determined by the values we hold, whether consciously or unconsciously.

What are faculties of spiritual discernment? Spiritual discernment enables us to see and to express spiritual values and spiritual qualities. At this point one is often asked to define what is meant by values, qualities, and what the word “spiritual” means.

VALUES AND QUALITIES

Simply stated, value is what we value. Whatever we cherish, whatever we hate, and whatever we fear, represents value to us. Qualities are values manifested as aspects of our character. For instance, in the above quote, there are two qualities mentioned which can radically change our work

A HIERARCHY OF VALUES

habits and life experiences. If we come to appreciate meekness and humility, which are spiritual qualities, these will save us from experiencing life and work as burdensome and tiresome. How is this possible? Simply because spiritual values lift us out of self-confirmatory ideation. Self-confirmatory ideation underlies all drudgery, hardships and complexities of functioning. Consider the bureaucrat who unwittingly complicates the simplest task in order to magnify the importance of his or her position on the job.

Now, what do we mean by the word “spiritual?” This word is easy to talk about but not easy to explain. Even Jesus seemed to have had some difficulty explaining it to Nicodemus, who apparently was somewhat incredulous. Jesus tried to use an analogy. He said, “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone who is born of the Spirit” (John 3:8). We do not know whether Nicodemus understood this or not. In Metapsychiatry we define spirit as non-dimensional substance.

ASCENDING

The process of understanding spiritual existence, or enlightenment for that matter, could be compared to climbing out of a valley. In the valley things appear to be plain, just as they seem to be. It all makes “sense.” As we begin climbing out of the valley up the mountainside, things begin to appear in a different light. With every step upward, new vistas open up, and things reveal themselves as not at all what we thought them to be while in the valley.

A HIERARCHY OF VALUES

We thus gain a different perspective, and we are able to comprehend things on a broader scale.

It is interesting to consider that medical science has traditionally moved from the wider context to the narrower. The microscope has helped to narrow down the focus on reality to ever smaller areas. Similarly, psychiatry tried to move from the wider to the narrower perspective, exploring ever smaller details of the brain and hoping to find answers by learning about microscopic elements. Research has moved from anatomical structures to histological structures, to molecular structures, to chemical, and finally, to the electro-physiological processes in the brain.

Scientific studies of matter move from the macroscopic to the microscopic, and beyond the microscopic into atomic and subatomic configurations. Research, including physics, has a tendency to move from larger to smaller, from wider to narrower perspectives. Physicists tell us of an area where matter disappears into waves. And the substance of these waves is believed to be pure energy. But what energy is, is not clear.

These waves supposedly behave in peculiar ways. They seem to be unpredictable and subject to influences coming from the observer, so that the observed is affected by the observer. A further fascinating aspect of these waves is that they can intermittently appear as particles, meaning materially substantial, or as waves, meaning materially insubstantial. Thus matter disappears into a mysterious energy. So then, psychology, medicine, and physics, by moving from the larger to the smaller, are like the proverbial Cheshire cat which gradually disappeared until there was

nothing left but the smile.

Metapsychiatry that is metaphysical psychiatry, does not spurn research into ever smaller elements of matter. It is, however, moving in the opposite direction, namely, from the smaller to the larger, from the narrower to the wider horizon, from the finite to the infinite — out of the valley up the mountain to limitless vistas at the summit. The aim here is ascension. In ascending into ever wider perspectives, the hope is of attaining the viewpoint of infinity. We wish to see life “*sub specie eternitatis*,” from the viewpoint of eternity. We seek to behold reality in the context of cosmic Mind.

No matter what psychotherapeutic school we may be studying, we are all studying the same phenomena, except from different levels of perception. When we have descended into the narrowest spheres, as we mentioned before, matter disappears into a mysterious undefinable something called energy. When we move up the mountain to ever higher perspectives, the same thing happens — matter disappears into an undefinable substance called Spirit, God, Mind, Love-Intelligence. At the end we come to the same place.

If we observe the students of matter, we find that those who have advanced the furthest in their understanding of physics, have become philosophers (Schroedinger, Heisenberg, Einstein, Von Braun, and others). Their philosophy has the character of metaphysics. They have moved from physics to metaphysics just as we are moving from psychiatry to metapsychiatry. In whichever direction we move, when we come to the end of the journey, we all meet. We meet in spiritual reality where things become very clear in their own particular way.

For those of us who are still in the process of the journey, it is of great value to know that the higher we rise on the upward path, the healthier we become, and life becomes less and less problematic. In contrast to that, the narrower the outlook on reality, the more troubled life seems to be. How is that possible?

CONTEXT

In Metapsychiatry we have succeeded in identifying five areas of narrow-mindedness which constitute endless sources of suffering. They are as follows:

1. Sensualism
2. Emotionalism
3. Intellectualism
4. Materialism
5. Personalism.

All these factors are characteristic of life in the valley. But as we rise out of the valley higher and higher, we begin to see man, not in parts, but as a totality, an integrated whole, a functioning manifestation of Love-Intelligence. Then we are in Love and in Intelligence. In the valley, people think that love is an emotion and that intelligence is intellectual. But as we rise out of the valley, we see that love and intelligence are something else. They are not intrapsychic processes. They

A HIERARCHY OF VALUES

are not in man; man is in them. Love and intelligence do not come from inside us; we live and move and have our being in Love-Intelligence, somewhat like fish in the sea. We do not produce intelligence; intelligence and love govern us. We begin to see ourselves in a broader context, and that is of vital importance.

Psychoanalysis, moving from the wider to the narrower, has focused attention on intrapsychic processes and is seeking to understand man by penetrating, so to speak, into him. The more we study what is inside, the more we find that there is nothing there. In the meanwhile we discover psychodynamics, parental relationships, introjection, primal scene problems, defense mechanisms of the ego, and all sorts of other things, not unlike the atomic physicists who find electrons and protons and neutrons and mesons and quarks and seemingly endless other things until they come to the end and discover that there is really nothing but "energy." Real energy is found on the top of the mountain to be spirit, as we mentioned before. So, as we move out of the inwardness of things into beholding the context in which life manifests itself, we begin to see ourselves in a different light. Perception depends on context. The Bible says, "In him (God) we live, and move, and have our being." God is the context in which life occurs. Therefore, in order to understand life and all things in the universe, it is necessary to view things in the context of cosmic Mind, infinite Love-Intelligence.

Here the universe reveals itself as perfectly harmonious, and all things within it as beautiful, good and meaningful. There comes upon us an awareness of peace, assurance, gratitude and love, and problems vanish. Each individual

becomes a beneficial presence in the world. Without doing anything, by the mere fact of his or her perspective on reality, his or her presence becomes a focal point of harmony and healing in the world. And that is the Christ-consciousness. In this perspective all psychotherapeutic schools lose their significance, and they are seen as just transitory phases of the human struggle for understanding.

It is helpful to know that no matter what we are involved with in the valley, it is just a transitory phase in our journey, and it will disappear as we rise higher on the ascending path. It is also interesting to consider that when Jesus ascended, his physical body dissolved. In other words, matter became spirit. Just as the subatomic particles disappear into waves, and the waves turn into energy, so in ascension the substance of matter disappears; it dematerializes. We can rightfully think in terms of incarnation progressing to excarnation.

Concerning Jesus' appearance on the scene of history, the Bible says, "Spiritus caro factus est," which means, spirit became flesh (matter); and when he ascended, matter disappeared into spirit. We could take this as an indication of scientific progress. Science is already reaching the point of understanding the process of transubstantiation of matter. Physical science is reaching that point by narrowing the perspective to its ultimate point. Metapsychiatry seeks to reach that point through broadening the perspective into infinity.

SUBSTANCE AND REALITY

A HIERARCHY OF VALUES

The brain-physiologist, Karl Pribram, and the theoretical physicist, David Bohm, describe the brain as a hologram which interprets the universe as holographic. They explain that a hologram is a network of interference patterns which represents the interaction of energy frequencies, such as light waves. Pribram and Bohm speak of matter as consisting of subatomic particles, emerging from wave patterns of different frequencies. They say that the nature of the universe is more like a hologram, or the realm of frequencies and potentialities underlying an illusion of concreteness.

It is not easy to follow the mathematical reasoning of these brilliant scientists, but one thing seems clear: namely, they are seeking answers to the question, is matter material? And if not, what is its substance and how can we account for what our senses tell us, and what the instruments tell us about reality?

At the New York Institute of Metapsychiatry, we have been wrestling with these issues on an existential level, and in the process it dawned on us that there exists in human experience an evolutionary hierarchy of values which, when carefully considered, can lead to a clearer understanding of spiritual reality. These values have significant therapeutic implications by virtue of their impact on human consciousness.

HIERARCHY OF VALUES

Looking at values from an evolutionary standpoint, we can distinguish six categories of values:

A HIERARCHY OF VALUES

1. On the lowest level of development, we notice natural values. These values are prevalent in nature and in the animal kingdom; they essentially revolve around the Darwinian theme of the “survival of the fittest.”

2. On the second level we find hedonistic values. These could be characterized by the statement, “Whatever makes me feel good is good, and is right.” Not long ago there was a weekly television show where the star of the show closed her performance every week with the following statement: “Remember folks, if you feel like doing it, do it!” Forty million people were being educated by this lady every week to believe in the validity of hedonistic values.

3. On the third level we find materialistic values. Here the important issue is having. Having things, having money, having a good mind, having knowledge, having prestige, having qualifications having friends, having fame, etc.

4. On the fourth level we find humanistic values. These can also be spoken of as psychosocial and socio-political values. They are characterized by the thought, “Whatever makes me popular, well-liked and influential is good.” Here we have as an example the famous best-selling book by Dale Carnegie, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*.

5. On the fifth level are religious values. These could be expressed by the thought, “Whatever brings me closer to God and my fellow man is good. Moral behavior is good; the Ten Commandments are good; obedience is important;

believing is important, etc.”

6. On the sixth level we come to spiritual values. Here the underlying concern is to become more and more enlightened, to come into harmony with the Fundamental Order of Existence — to become a “beneficial presence” in the world. We speak of spiritual values as existential because they cannot be willed, mastered or performed; they cannot be done, invented or pretended. They are qualities of being emerging in consciousness whenever sufficient attention has led to the realization of their absolute reality. We say spiritual values come to us through grace and receptivity.

Of course, just as phylogenesis is found in ontogenesis, so all these values can be found in more or less rudimentary form in all of us. However, the values which prevail in our thinking invariably determine our “mode of being-in-the-world.”

CLINICAL RELEVANCY OF VALUES

Before we come to consider the therapeutic significance of spiritual values, let us consider the clinical relevancy of values in general. What are the pathognomonic phenomena inherent in these values?

If we come to consider man with his natural values, we find that his prime characteristics are existential anxiety, power-madness, violence, tyrannical tendencies,

A HIERARCHY OF VALUES

personalism, despotism and hypnotism (Hitler would be a prime example of such a man.) The Bible speaks of natural man in the following way: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14). The great significance of this statement lies in the fact that here the apostle Paul postulates the existence of a special faculty of spiritual discernment. In natural man this faculty seems to be absent, or undeveloped or in a state of dormancy.

Perhaps it would be helpful to remind ourselves that we can distinguish between perception which is sensory, cognition which is conceptual, and discernment which is spiritual. It implies a capacity to distinguish spiritual values and qualities from all other values and qualities.

If we consider hedonism as a prevailing value in man, we find narcissism, egotism, parasitism, pharmacothymia, and hypochondriasis as the main features of this mode of being-in-the-world.

Among the materialists we find greed, possessiveness, fraudulency, contentiousness, rivalry, hubris, and covetousness.

In the humanistic value system we find hypocrisy, manipulativeness, envy, malice, treachery, deceitfulness, mendaciousness, etc.

Among the religious we find altruism, fear, guilt, ritualism, concerns with methods of worshipping modes of conduct, moralism, a desire to be a "beneficent person." It may be useful to mention here the phenomena of pathological religiosity. These are conditions where religious values are perverted and put into the service of humanistic

values with their prevalently self-confirmatory aims.

In Metapsychiatry we have come to understand that self-confirmatory ideation is a common denominator in all forms of psychopathology.

At the level of spiritual values we find concern with qualities of consciousness and the capacity to see reality from a perspective of selfless love, peace, assurance, gratitude, aesthetic appreciation, and creativity.

THERAPEUTIC IMPLICATIONS OF SPIRITUAL VALUES

As you have by now surmised, the therapeutic implications of what has been said until now lie in the self-evident fact that the higher we ascend on the ladder of values, the healthier we become and the closer we get to the “realized” man.

MODES OF BEING-IN-THE-WORLD

In existential Metapsychiatry we diagnose and treat “modes of being-in-the-world.” There are many varieties of modes of being-in-the-world, but in general we can distinguish three main modes. These are:

1. Being here for oneself.
2. Being here for others.

3. Being here for God.

Being here for oneself is the narcissistic self-indulgent, essentially egotistical and Godless mode of being-in-the-world.

Being here for others would correspond to the religious, altruistic mode of being- in-the-world, the ideal of which is the “beneficent person.”

Being here for God is radically different-from all other modes, for it is contingent on a higher level of realized consciousness which is largely ego-less. Here the ideal is being a beneficial presence in the world.

Now as to therapy, Metapsychiatry states: “Problems are psychological, but solutions are spiritual,” which means that learning about values is not the same as realizing values. Learning about values is an intellectual process; it is essentially just information. Realizing values is existential and leads to transformation of character, or as we say, a change of mode of being-in-the-world.

THE HOSTAGE SYNDROME

In order to illustrate the therapeutic implications of spiritual values, I would like to say a few words about an important psychodynamic problem which we can rightly call the “hostage syndrome.” The “hostage syndrome” is a peculiar phenomenon consisting of the observed paradox that if a prisoner or a child is badly abused, tyrannized and intimidated, he may develop a compulsive “love” for his tormenter or his values. This is also spoken of as identifica-

tion with the aggressor. At times, this takes on the clinical picture of compulsive homosexuality or transsexualism if the tyrant happens to be of the opposite sex. If the tyrant is an ideologue, we may have a case of "brainwashing." Since all ideologies encompass certain value systems, the victim may appear to have undergone a "conversion" which may be political, philosophical, or religious. The salient features of such conversion are always the obsessive quality of the beliefs held, and the underlying anxiety threatening to surface in one form or another.

At times we see patients or students in psychotherapy becoming strangely enthusiastic about certain schools of thought and vehemently arguing the validity of their newly acquired idea, often making a nuisance of themselves.

In politics and religion this is so frequent that it is almost considered inevitable. As a result of this, if one hears a Bible quotation, there is often a sense of uneasiness about it. One is, so to speak, afraid of being preached at. It seems that more of us suffer from the "hostage syndrome" than one would suspect. Essentially, the victim is always in a double bind. If he loves his tormenter, he is practically insane; if he allows himself to be angry, he is in danger of destroying himself with the intensity of his rage. This condition may at times culminate in some serious physical disease as a third alternative.

One young woman paralyzed from the waist down after an automobile accident said, "I have never been happier in my life. Now all my problems are solved. I don't have to hate anyone anymore." This could be considered an attempt to escape from the double bind through partial suicide. Sometimes the way out is sought in alcoholic or drug-

induced oblivion.

I knew a priest who was trapped in a dualism of obedience and disobedience since childhood. He obeyed his mother's wish and became a priest. Then he obeyed the demands of the church; then he obeyed the wishes of his bishop; he obeyed his friends, and he obeyed his psychiatrist. Whenever he was obedient, he was filled with a mounting sense of resentfulness. This, in turn, led him to disobey. When he disobeyed, he was guilt-ridden and sank into depressions. The only respite was found in alcohol. Prayer meant little to him because God was just another person whom he was required to obey. Here we see an example which says, "Man is what he thinks, having become what others thought."

Our patients are gradually helped to expand their mental horizons to encompass an awareness of spiritual values that constitute spiritual reality. Learning to see reality from the perspective of spiritual values enables one to rise above problems and transcend them. As one patient put it, "It has helped me to get out of the dreadful cinema."

The enlightened consciousness is a consciousness imbued with spiritual values. It sees life in the context of infinite Love-Intelligence, creativity, divine compassion, omnipotent and omniscient cosmic Mind, beauty, harmony, peace, assurance, gratitude, forgiveness, freedom, joy.

Through a spiritualized consciousness, we find a new identity derived from a sense of divine sonship. An individual with a spiritualized consciousness is a new man: "Old things are passed away and all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17). Instead of a tormented person or a compulsive personality, trapped in interaction dynamics, he becomes a

“beneficial presence” in the world.

CONVERGENCE OF PHYSICS, BRAIN- PHYSIOLOGY AND METAPSYCHIATRY

Perhaps it may seem presumptuous to draw any parallel between metapsychiatric research and the very highly respected scientific studies in brain-physiology and theoretical physics. But then we hear David Bohm describe the practical implications of his studies the following way:

The dissolution of the thinker is the highest priority the seeker for truth can undertake. The analogy of the atom with thought and with an alleged thinker who authors thought is crucial. The thinker is like the atom, cohering in time through its binding energy. When the binding energy of the physical atom is released in an accelerator, the resultant energy, which is staggeringly huge, becomes freed.

Analogously, huge amounts of binding energy are needed to create and to sustain the “thinker” and to maintain the illusion that he is a stable entity. The dismantling of the thinker yields energy that is qualitatively charged. It is not neutral or value-free; it is energy characterized by wholeness and the force of compassion. Physics and ethics become one in this process. The energy of the whole somehow is bound up with what we call holiness.

In short, love is energy. The psychological “atom smasher” thus coincides with the saint. Consciousness becomes aligned with the energy of the universe, and such a human being radiates clarity, intelligence, order and love by his mere presence.

This insight is indeed remarkably convergent with the metapsychiatric concept of the realized man as a “beneficial presence in the world.”

THE FISHMONGER

One of my favorite Zen stories tells of a poor and raggedy-looking fishmonger who was a student of Zen. One day rumor had it in the market place that he had become enlightened. One of his friends approached him and said, “They say that you became enlightened, but I see no difference. You are still poor, your clothes are still ragged, and you smell of fish as always. In what way are you enlightened?” The fishmonger said, “To tell you the truth, I don’t know myself. Except one thing I have noticed — wherever I go, even the dead trees come alive.”

Here, we have an individual who became Christ-like, but not on an ideological or emotional basis, but on a cognitive-existential basis. He has no need to convince anyone; he simply is in the world as a blessing.

THE LAND OF PAGL

Living by spiritual values, we gain entrance into a strange land, the Land of PAGL. Buddhists have a concept of Pure Land. Looking at it through metapsychiatric eyes, it may very well be that what they mean is a state of consciousness that has achieved such purity that the ego doesn’t throw any monkey wrenches into experience. It is possible that the Buddhists’ concept of the Pure Land is their

way of speaking about the Land of PAGL. What is this Land of PAGL? It is a state of consciousness which is free from certain tendencies to be preoccupied with evil and with the errors of life.

We have to be interested in spiritual blessedness. In the Land of PAGL everyone lives in a state of spiritual blessedness. It is a situation where all things work together for good in surprising ways. Everyone is friendly; everything is in time. All the things that are needed appear. It is a conflict-free zone of experience. If we have lost interest in self-confirmatory ideation and in the “four horsemen,” if we have learned to abandon interaction thinking and if we have learned not to ask the six dumb questions, we find that the world has changed. Everyone has become happier, friendlier; life has become more efficient, effective and effortless. This is the pure land — the Land of PAGL — where consciousness is liberated from fantasies and hardships, difficulties, frictions and competitive ideation. All these things are washed away through the process of prayer and meditation, which has purified our consciousness.

Thus, we become interested in living in the Land of PAGL where we are aware that a benevolent intelligence is evidently active in our lives, and things go well with us. Everything is peaceful and harmonious. The more interested we are in this kind of life, in this mode of being-in-the-world, the more we are going to see the Land of PAGL, because we can only see what we are interested in. “Where a man’s treasure is, there shall his attention be also.” It is possible to be so wholeheartedly interested in the Land of PAGL that we will actually live in this “fool’s paradise.”

It is a fool’s paradise, according to the thinking of

unenlightened man, because nothing good can possibly be real. The world is a lousy place, and we just have to muddle through, and anyone who happens to be happy and peaceful and grateful must be living in fool's paradise. There are people who are living in fool's paradise. These are called hypomanic people. What is hypomania? It is a mental disturbance. How can we tell the difference between living in the Land of PAGL and living in fool's paradise? The fool's paradise is full of excitement and restlessness — full of self-confirmatory ideation and activity and behavior that is continuously in conflict with the world. There is no harmony, there is no peace; there is no assurance; there is no gratitude; there is no love. There is just bragging and excitement and flight of ideas. Hypomania is the technical term in psychiatry describing the mental condition of such an individual. He cannot pay attention to anything, but jumps from one thing to another.

What kind of joy is the joy of the Land of PAGL and how is it different from the excitement in fool's paradise? Essentially, it is defined in the acronym, PAGL. Our idea of happiness is peace, assurance, gratitude and love, freedom, wisdom, joy, beauty, harmony, health. Whatever idea of happiness we cherish will either make us or break us. Now, if we were to ask someone who has never studied spiritual values, "What's your idea of happiness?", what would he say? Feeling good, good food, good sex, money, fame — all very exciting things. Essentially, the assumption is that excitement is happiness. We have to know what an existentially valid condition of happiness really is. If we don't know it, we will never discover it.

Suppose we want to go to San Diego. We have to know

there is a San Diego, and we have to know that there is a highway called 405, and after we have studied it on the map, we may actually discover that it is so. Similarly, with happiness, we have to be informed about it first. We have to hear about it. We have to hear the word of the Lord before it becomes a reality. It cannot just happen out of nothing. First comes information, then comes knowledge of the information, then comes interest in realizing this knowledge, then comes the love of this knowledge, the yearning to find out that it is really so. It is a process of discovery and realization. When we pray, meditate and study, the intellect is in a transitional process, like learning to play the piano. First, we have to learn to play the piano, and then we may play music. Suddenly music will become meaningful. Similarly, we have to hear that there is a Land of PAGL, an invisible Land of PAGL. We study about it, meditate, look for it everywhere and then we find it.

HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WE ARE SPIRITUAL? A Dialogue

Dr. Hora: How can we know that we are spiritual? And how can we know that God has created us? How can these things be known? You cannot take somebody's word for it.

Student: By the fruits of this truth. That's why we study...

Dr. Hora: How do you know what to study?

Student: Through trial and error.

Dr. Hora: You could study anthropology or something else.

A HIERARCHY OF VALUES

Student: You don't see the same manifestations when you study anthropology.

Dr. Hora: Well, let's start with a simple question: How do we know that we are spiritual? Somebody may say that's just a claim. Some religious nut has come up with the idea that man is a spiritual being. What proof is there? Believing isn't going to help. There must be a way of knowing this. First we want to know what it means, and second, that it really is so.

Student: We could come to it in a negative way. First, try everything else and then arrive at it.

Dr. Hora: You can spend several lifetimes trying everything and you will never reach that conclusion.

Student: Perhaps we have to realize that we are not bodies.

Dr. Hora: How can you realize that?

Student: You said something a while ago that if you lose an arm, you are still the same whole human being.

Dr. Hora: Yes, but if you lose two arms, legs and a head what then?

Student: I don't know. I only got up to the arm.
(laughter)

Dr. Hora: This is the process of elimination.

Student: It must have something to do with qualities and values. We come to realize over a period of time that these are very important and that they are not material.

Dr. Hora: Not everybody realizes that these are important. We would like to have proof positive that the claim of spiritual being is justifiable and provable — that we don't have to take someone's word for it — not even Jesus Christ's. We aren't believers. We don't even believe in

A HIERARCHY OF VALUES

believing. We are... what do they call it?

Student: We're from Missouri, show me!

Dr. Hora: Right Show me!

Student: It sure is hard to get out of Missouri.

Student: God is spirit. Is God spirit?

Dr. Hora: How are you going to prove that? We are seeking, first, to prove that man is a spiritual being. What right do we have to make that statement? What does that mean?

Student: It means that the nature of a man's life is determined by the quality of his thought, as opposed to by his body or activities.

Dr. Hora: That is phenomenology — that's not spirituality.

Student: There are times that I have awakened and I remember the dream. Maybe it was a new dream replacing an old dream...

Dr. Hora: Maybe you are a butterfly? It doesn't prove that we are spiritual beings.

Student: But all of us respond to love. That is something formed within.

Dr. Hora: An animal will also respond to love but we cannot say animals are spiritual beings...

Student: Is the word consciousness a key here?

Dr. Hora: You can be conscious of all sorts of things!

Students in Chorus: We give up!

Dr. Hora: I won't let you give up so fast (laughter). You have to sweat it out! Otherwise, you will say, "You told me." You see, unless you come to a realization, it will just be information and not realization. What makes you think you

A HIERARCHY OF VALUES

are a spiritual being?

Student: The only thing I can think of is that, in meditation, I am trying to awaken the spiritual senses. Sometimes I am aware of a little assurance, I see a glimmer of spiritual reality.

Dr. Hora: You are talking about something we can move towards, but you are not proving that you are a spiritual being yet.

Student: Would it have anything to do with the fact that we are able to think about our thoughts?

Dr. Hora: Well, that would indicate that there is consciousness, but it still does not prove that we are spiritual beings. What sets us apart from all other life forms?

Student: We have the ability to be aware.

Dr. Hora: But that's consciousness.

Student: Isn't it spirit? Spirit would discern spirit. The person would never know God...

Dr. Hora: We haven't proven yet that there is a God. First, we have to prove that man is a spiritual being.

Student: It is a quality we can realize...

Dr. Hora: So, we are spiritual beings because we have a faculty which no other living creature has.

Student: Spiritual discernment!

Dr. Hora: What is spiritual discernment?

Student: We have the ability to realize that we are alive. I don't think any animal or flower is aware of that.

Dr. Hora: Well, I don't know about flowers. According to some research, even flowers have some awareness of life. But that's not it. What is spiritual discernment? Certainly, a dog has no spiritual discernment or a snake or a cow, not even a dolphin, and he is the

A HIERARCHY OF VALUES

smartest of all animals, possibly. What does it mean to have spiritual discernment?

Student: To be able to see spiritual qualities.

Dr. Hora: Right. Man has the faculty of recognizing spiritual values, qualities and ideas. What are these? Can we enumerate some?

Student: You keep using spiritual to define the fact that we are spiritual, but what does spiritual mean?

Dr. Hora: Spiritual means non-dimensional substance. Does that help you? We are able to be cognizant of spiritual values, spiritual qualities, spiritual ideas, as non-dimensional actualities. Let's enumerate some of these non-dimensional qualities that no other life form, so far as we know it, is capable of knowing.

Student: Truth.

Dr. Hora: Peace, beauty, assurance, love, gratitude, harmony, freedom, PAGL. Only human beings are able to discern these qualities and realities, which we call non-dimensional. What do we mean by non-dimensional?

Student: It can't be seen.

Dr. Hora: We can't draw a picture of it. We cannot, imagine it. We cannot touch it, we cannot taste it. We cannot see it with our eyes. We see it with our faculty of spiritual discernment.

And this is proof positive that we have something radically different from anything that is to be found, at least on the planet earth. Therefore, it is possible to know for sure that we are spiritual beings. Now, where did this gift come from? How did it happen that we turned out to be so different from all other life forms? What meaning is there in that?

A HIERARCHY OF VALUES

Student: What about other thoughts, for instance, jealousy.

Dr. Hora: Those are animal qualities. Those are not spiritual qualities. The Bible says: “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are offsprings of God” (Romans 8:16). We have established the fact that, indeed, we are spiritual beings. Suddenly, we see that we are more than human and what would that be? It can only be divine.

Student: What makes those qualities not human qualities?

Dr. Hora: Because we have to rise above our humanity in order to express spirituality. So, now suddenly we discover that there must be another element in the universe besides the life forms which are physical and which are dimensional. We come to the realization that there is a non-dimensional reality with nondimensional qualities and non-dimensional existence. We discover this in contrast to everything human, animal and material, because these all have dimensions. So we discover a new realm which is the realm of spiritual reality. That’s where God lives, the creative Intelligence of the Universe, Infinite Mind. We are aspects of that non-dimensional Reality. Now we understand the biblical statement mentioned earlier: “The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God” (Romans 8:16). Thus, we come to realize we are manifestations of divine Reality and this realization gives us a sense of spiritual self-esteem with a great sense of gratitude and humility. If there are spiritual beings in the universe there must be a Creator, which is spiritual, right? So, now we realize that there is a God, and we also know that the substance of this God is Spirit, Life, Truth, Love

A HIERARCHY OF VALUES

Intelligence, and that's where we really belong, and that's what we really are and that's what we are all about!

**This booklet is one of a series of twelve essays
by Thomas Hora, M.D.**

Healing Through Spiritual Understanding

A Hierarchy of Values

Forgiveness

The Soundless Music of Life

Can Meditation be Done?

Compassion

Marriage and Family Life

God in Psychiatry

What Does God Want?

Self-Transcendence

Right Usefulness

A HIERARCHY OF VALUES

Commentaries on Scripture

Other books by Thomas Hora, M.D.

Encounters with Wisdom (Multi-Volume Series)

One Mind

Beyond the Dream

Dialogues in Metapsychiatry

Existential Metapsychiatry

In Quest of Wholeness

For more information about Metapsychiatry visit:

www.PAGL.org

or contact

The PAGL Foundation

21 Talcott Road

Rye Brook, New York 10573