

PAGL View

Self-Confirmation or God-Confirmation

Self-confirmatory ideation is a common denominator in all human problems...⁽¹⁾

When we live without the conscious harmony of God, when we try to live as if God did not exist, then we are living in sin. If we define sin in this manner (sine Deo), then sin is synonymous with ignorance. Ignorance is the ignoring of that which is available to be known. And this could be considered the “original sin.”⁽²⁾

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What is self-confirmatory ideation?

The nagging, persistent thought that we are not the independent, autonomous individuals we appear to be, leads to existential anxiety which we then struggle to repress or seek means of overcoming. This results in self-confirmatory ideation.⁽³⁾

The basis for self-confirmatory ideation is the dread of nonbeing.

Everyone is scared of nothingness, of nonbeing, of annihilation, of being nothing, of dying, of being ignored.

This is a universal fear and is called “existential anxiety.” It is this existential anxiety which we try to combat through a process of self-confirmatory ideation. And the more scared we are, the more intense the desire to confirm ourselves in one form or another. There are a million ways in which we can reassure ourselves that we really exist, and so it is an almost inseparable aspect of the human condition.⁽⁴⁾

Essentially it means thinking about how good we are, how smart

we are, how attractive we are, how important we are, how successful we are, or how bad we are, how guilty we are, how worthless we are—always thinking about ourselves in comparison to other people and trying to be better or worse than anyone else. Then there are those who are very democratic; they want to be equal to everybody else, and they are working on that.

But whether we want to be better or worse or equal, we are still preoccupied with the idea of self; we are still ensnared in self-confirmatory ruminations about how we stack up in comparison to others.⁽¹⁾

Self-hood apart from God is an illusion

When we are ignorant of God, we judge by appearances, and as a result of that, we arrive at erroneous conclusions about the nature of existence and reality.⁽⁵⁾

Self-hood apart from God is an illusion. So if you are confirming yourself, you are nowhere. You’re in an illusion; you are an illusion, and you are not in touch with Reality.

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It is dangerous to be out of touch with Reality.⁽⁶⁾

Unenlightened Man longs to have personal mind-power with which to control others and secure his own position in life. He is tormented by the illusion that he can produce thoughts in his head.⁽⁷⁾

It is interesting to note that the concept of self-confirmatory ideation, which is so helpful to us in coping with these problems, cannot be found anywhere in the literature, neither in the East nor in the West. While the term is linguistically not very attractive, it is nevertheless worthwhile because it clarifies and pinpoints an important source of human suffering. The explanation of this omission may be found in the fact that most philosophical systems endeavor to explain the human condition and its transcendence without a forthright and explicit acknowledgment of the existence of God.⁽⁸⁾

Man lives with the assumption that he is a physical personality, naturally at home in the body. Therefore, he is subject to a mental dynamism that requires him to continually engage in self-confirmatory ideation. This self-confirmatory ideation expresses itself in a universal desire to maintain an awareness of oneself as a physical entity or ego. The ego maintains an awareness of itself through pleasure and pain. The ego man is hungering and thirsting not so much “after righteousness” as for pleasure or pain as self-confirmatory stimulation . . . These stimuli may be sensory, emotional, intellectual, pleasurable, or painful according to their intensity. For instance, a caress may be

pleasurable, while a slap is painful, yet both have the same existential meaning—namely, they affirm the cherished assumption that one is a physical ego.⁽⁹⁾

“Self-confirmation is self-destruction, and self-destruction is self-confirmation”

The first thing to learn is: “Self-confirmation is self-destruction, and self-destruction is self-confirmation.” Once you can see clearly that this is so, then you begin to lose interest in this kind of sense of self. The best way to understand this problem is to experience the pain and the consequences of self-confirmatory ideation. When you have had several, painful experiences, and you can see the connection between them and your thoughts, then you are already understanding that there is something that appears to be completely human and normal, even desirable, but it is an enemy—it is dangerous and harmful and inevitably leads us to suffering. Once we can see that there is a direct connection between our problems and this type of self-confirmatory thinking, we can ask, “Where do I go from here?” You might ask, “Is it so bad to think that I am pretty or that I am smart or that I am better than the next guy?” There are a million ways that we can entertain self-confirmatory ideas, and invariably we will run into trouble with them. Once we understand this and have seen it and experienced it, seen that it is not theory or intellectual information, once we have tasted the bitter fruits of that kind of thinking, then we can

say that entertaining self-confirmatory thoughts is not worth it. Many people, when they hit this dilemma, and realize that they are hurting, try to find another solution—through drugs or alcohol or sex or fighting, in millions of ways—avoiding the issue and getting deeper into trouble.⁽¹⁰⁾

Self-confirmation is self-destruction; it carries within itself the seeds of defeat. In order to understand a little better the mystery of evil and suffering, it is not enough for us to talk about God; we must also talk about the nature of his very strange creation. Human personalities which go to church and pray, and think that they are God-fearing, are committing crimes and cheating and lying and are involved in evil, discordant experiences. Humans start bragging and showing off and confirming themselves, left and right, openly and covertly. The whole human race is full of self-confirmatory ideation. People say that this is the “human experience,” but it is hard for us to remain committed to appreciating God if our experiences are constantly contradicting the goodness of God because we are constantly running into manifestations of evil.

“God centered living is the only alternative to self-confirmatory ideation.”

(“Meditation of the Lord’s Prayer”, BTD Session No. 51, “Guilt.”)

God created a spiritual universe. He did not create a "perfect world."

The "perfect world" that we observe with our senses is a misrepresentation of the real universe.

Anyone who is interested in becoming enlightened has to struggle with getting beyond "what seems to be."

Unenlightened man is always being caught up in "what seems to be."⁽¹¹⁾

"I Am"

Self-confirmatory ideation is the universal meaning of all pathology, be it mental, emotional, physical, economic, marital, political, individual, or collective.

It is a constant silent assertion going on in consciousness and consisting of two little words: "I am." We are constantly saying to ourselves, "I am." For instance, when we think of how we feel, what people think of us, what is happening to us, what we are saying, there is one pervasive theme in the back of our minds that says, "I am." This basic thought is the universal troublemaker to be found everywhere. Now, what is so troublesome about such a seemingly innocent statement? We are endeavoring to make ourselves the primary reality. What's wrong with that? There is nothing wrong with it except that it is a lie; it is not valid. If it were valid, it would be all right, but it is a lie. How can we know that? Because it is pathogenic; it causes problems. Then we can ask, "What,

then, is valid?" If we cannot say "I am," and it is not even advisable to think it, then what is the existentially valid statement? The only true and existentially valid statement that has ever been made, and is of enormous portent for the whole world, was made on Mount Sinai when Moses suddenly understood that God is the only "I AM." God was telling Moses, "I am the only 'I am.'" In the whole universe, there is no other 'I am.'" This throws an entirely different perspective on our lives. Man is not entitled to say and cannot possibly say "I am," but he constantly does it and suffers the consequences.

When man understands that God is the "I am" of everyone, then he can suddenly see that there is no existence apart from God. And he comes to know that great secret that makes it possible for him to overcome the world and escape its tribulations. He sees reality in a broader context.⁽¹²⁾

What are feelings?

People frequently say when involved in some interaction controversy, "I can't help it, that's the way I feel." Feelings are thoughts. When we believe that we are victims of feelings, this is a "cop-out," a disclaimer of responsibility for judgmental or unloving thoughts. It is a psychological trap which implies that there is nothing one can do about the situation. But if we understand that feelings are thoughts, we can take responsibility for these thoughts and shift our perspective.⁽³⁾

Interaction Thinking

The basis of all interaction thinking is self-confirmatory ideation: it is thinking of oneself in relation to another self. So when we say, there is no interaction anywhere, or when we say, stop talking about yourselves, and stop talking about others, this eliminates interaction—and at the same time it eliminates self-confirmatory ideation. And when there is neither self nor other, what is left?

There is only God. God's presence fills the whole universe. We are individual aspects of this infinite consciousness, or cosmic Mind, which is God, and there is nothing else. So we have eliminated everyone. Now what is the good of that?

Then we can be conscious of all that really is. What is "what really is?" Life really is; truth really is; love really is; intelligence really is; goodness really is; beauty really is; harmony, perfection, joy, health—these things really are, and everything else just seems to be.⁽¹³⁾

On Self-Improvement

What is the meaning of the word "identity"? If we look at the root of this word, what do we find? Identity. What does that mean? "Id" means "it." What is "it"? "It-entity"? What does that mean? It refers to an object. When we are preoccupied with our identity, we are reifying ourselves. What does it mean to reify something? In Latin *res, rei*, means "thing." If we reify ourselves, we make ourselves into a thing, an object. Being preoccupied with identity means treating our self as a thing in itself, a self-existent object, an "it." Those of you

who are familiar with the writings of Martin Buber will know that he makes a big issue of the sin of treating our fellow man as an “it” rather than a human individual.

But today we are talking about treating ourselves as an “it” and trying to work on ourselves as if we were a piece of clay, or a statue, or a tape recorder, and trying to improve ourselves, making ourselves an object of our own self-improvement program. Nowadays we hear people speak of self-enrichment programs, and it is not thought of only in financial terms, but also in terms of packaging ourselves externally and intellectually so as to improve our identity, “it-entity.” Man is forever trying to improve himself. If he thinks of himself as an it, then he makes himself the object of his attention and tries to produce a better product. And that is sometimes called education, or psychotherapy. So when we are endeavoring to psychotherapeutize ourselves, it is the same sin as when we are trying to psychotherapeutize others. We turn a divine idea into an object of our misguided solicitude in terms of trying to improve what has already been made perfect.

Who am I, Really? From Identity to Individuality

In contrast to the idea of identity, let us consider the word “individuality.” If we take apart and analyze the word “individuality,” what do we find?

Comment: That which cannot be divided.

Dr. Hora: Right. We find un-

dividedness. Now, isn't that interesting? If we juxtapose these two words, “identity” and “individuality,” we arrive at an interesting insight. “Identity” implies isolation of man as an object. “Individuality” implies undividedness, the opposite of isolation, the opposite of separation. Well, if man is an individual, it means that he is not isolated, not divided, not separated. From what? From his mother's womb? From the umbilical cord? From the family ties?

Comment: It's a oneness with yourself.

Dr. Hora: What does that mean, “oneness with yourself”?

Comment: If we are all part of the cosmos, then we are one with the totality of everything.

Dr. Hora: Then you are not saying that man is in oneness with himself!

Comment: No, that sounds redundant.

Comment: You are different, but you are not separate from other people; you are in oneness with everybody else.

Dr. Hora: Well, you will go home, and you will be separated from everyone here. So what does it mean to be undivided?

Comment: In undividedness, there is no self.

Dr. Hora: Then are we just swallowed up into the background?

Comment: I am thinking of

certain words, like “uniqueness” and “core,” and the quality that is not replaceable. When we get down to these issues, I think we are getting close to the essence of individuality.

Dr. Hora: You are talking now about the uniqueness of the individual, which is very true and very important and which makes it possible for a self to exist even while one is undivided. That's interesting, isn't it? We are undivided and yet unique. Every snowflake is unique, I understand, and among millions of leaves on maple trees, every leaf is unique. In nature we find many analogies. It is a remarkable fact that there is uniqueness connected with undividedness.

Comment: Every maple leaf is an entity to itself.

Dr. Hora: No. A maple leaf is only a leaf as long as it is connected to the tree. The moment you disconnect the leaf from the tree, it is not a leaf anymore; it is trash. But as long as a leaf is connected, undivided from the tree, it has a uniqueness and individuality. The leaves don't form relationships with one another; they jointly participate in that life that is called a maple tree or an oak tree. They have their individuality by virtue of the fact that they remain undivided, and yet they live their lives as unique selves. They do not disappear into a big, amorphous mass, into an “undifferentiated aesthetic continuum.” . . .

Now a maple leaf will only be alive as long as it remains undivided from the tree. So in order to be alive we must preserve our individuality—i.e., undividedness. For a maple leaf, the source of life is the tree. The tree gives life to the maple leaf, and when the leaf is separated from the tree, it dies; it ceases to be what it was meant to be. So it is vitally important for the leaf to remain connected with its life-giving source. But what about man? Man says, “I have my own identity, I am my own boss, I am entirely autonomous, self-reliant, self-existent; I am only connected psychologically with my friends and divided from my enemies, and I derive my life from my human relationships.”⁽¹⁾

No Escape from Self-Confirmation. The body speaks...

Whenever someone yields to the temptation to think in self-confirmatory ways, with any kind of issue, essentially very often there is a self-confirmatory element somewhere in the body, and a symptom arises. There is no way of knowing where it is going to hit you. But invariably self-confirmatory ideation becomes manifest in the form of a symptom, a problem, a pain, an itch, a scratch, or an accident of some sort. Now, how does the body know that the mind is involved in self-confirmatory ideation? . . . The body speaks, and a student of Metapsychiatry learns

to understand what the body is saying. And it is always saying the same thing: “You are bragging, you are bellyaching, you are bullying, you are bullshitting, you are bickering.” Right? That is what the body keeps saying, yes? “You’re a lot of baloney.” The body always tells us this. And if we learn to listen to what our body says we discover the remedy to the problem. The remedy is always this: abandon self-confirmatory ideation and turn your attention to the truth of your being. And when you become more interested in the truth of your being than in self-confirmatory ideation, you are released from the consequences of self-confirmatory ideation.

How does the body know? Well, as I said, the body is a language that can translate human thoughts into physical symptoms. It’s like a computer when you have something on the screen, and you can press a button and the printer will know what is on the screen and print it out. Yes? Suppose you have a migraine headache, how does the head know what the mind is thinking? Or if you get a charley horse in your leg, how does the leg know what you are dreaming about, what your thoughts are? So the body and the mind, the human mind, are one; it’s one phenomenon. . . .⁽⁶⁾

“Thou hast said in thy heart, I am, and none else aside me. “ (Isaiah 47:10)

The Dread of Nonbeing

How can existential anxiety be healed? How can we be liberated from this dread of nonbeing? Salvation, liberation, resurrection, healing, enlightenment have a common objective, namely, to help us to be unafraid and to live with a sense of assurance that we are not alone, that we are not separated, that we are not what we seem to be, but that “neither are we otherwise.” It is possible to know ourselves in a larger context. In proportion that we come to realize this existential fact, in that proportion the “dread of nothingness,” as Heidegger calls it, will be mitigated, or diminished, and the compulsive urge for self-confirmatory ideation will leave us, and it will be possible to live in PAGL, which is peace, assurance, gratitude, and love. . . .⁽⁴⁾

The more we assert ourselves against our fears, the more fearful we become. This, then, is not a solution. This is no different from what psychoanalysis aims at, namely, ego control, which actually means self-confirmatory self-assertion against self-confirmatory ideation. It is like Auroborus, the mythical snake, swallowing its own tail. A question then is, Is there no way out of this human dilemma? Yes, there is. Man has to come to understand that he is not a self-existent personality, cast adrift in the world as Heidegger put it with his notion of *Geworfenheit* (be-

ing thrown). This is not really so. The remedy to the problem of the self-confirmatory mode of being-in-the-world is to understand its meaning, which we have just explained as the dread of nothingness, and come to realize that we are not self-existent life forms apart from the creator. We are manifestations of a creative power, underlying all of life in the universe, all the laws of nature, the harmony, the beauty and infinite intelligence discernible all around us. This is the power which expresses itself through us. Therefore, we are not adrift in the universe all on our own, but we are sustained, supported, governed, cared for, and loved by this infinite power which we call Love-Intelligence.

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Problems as Self-confirmation

When we are faced with a problem we usually start thinking: my problem is that the cat ran away, and the other problem is how to get her back. This may be the issue, but it is not the problem. The problem is always self-confirmatory thinking, which consists of a belief in personal ownership, attachment, cherishing a possession, having a false sense of responsibility, seeking to blame, and asking what to do about it and how to do it. We must understand that God is perfect reality, so perfect that nothing can be put to it nor taken away from it. And to be on the spiritual path means learning to see the divine perfec-

tion which is present right where the troubles of the world seem to be. However, someone may ask: “Isn’t this just Pollyanna thinking, or wishful thinking?” Or someone may ask: “Isn’t it too good or too easy to be true?”

Suppose, with the case of the missing cat, we were to ask: “Who is to blame for it?”

Comment: But that’s an invalid question.

Dr. Hora: Do you really understand that? What makes it invalid is that as long as we entertain this question in thought, our prayers are futile, ineffective.

Do you all know the story of the blind boy whom Jesus healed? People were asking him: “Who is to blame for that boy’s condition?” And he said: “No one is to blame. This is an opportunity to discern the glory, power, and love of God.” Similarly, the owner of this cat needs to learn how to overcome self-confirmatory ideation. And this is the secret lesson which is built into the problem.⁽¹⁵⁾

Fear and Pain as Self-confirmation

“What is fear?” Fear is self-confirmatory mental preoccupation; it says: “I am” afraid. What is pain?

Pain says: “I am” suffering.

We are always running into trouble when we ask wrong questions. If we ask the right question there is always an answer

and — the answer can be helpful. The question now is: “How can we be healed of self-confirmatory ideation?” Every form of self-confirmatory ideation is a false claim which says

“I am,” and there is no such thing. The Bible says God is the only “I am.” This was the first lesson God taught Moses: “I am the only I am, beside me there is none else.” Therefore, it is a mistake for anyone to entertain thoughts starting with “I am.” Man is a manifestation of God’s being; he does not have an “I am” of his own — it just seems that way. Once we understand that, then there is no fear, fear is not possible; God is never afraid.

Comment: These things become clearer to us when we learn to replace self-confirmatory ideation with God-confirmatory ideation. Thursday I came in here with a great sense of fear about what seemed to be a medical problem. But very quickly it became clear that “I am” was the only issue. Oddly enough, we didn’t dwell much on the symptoms, or what was going to be done about it. We just tried to see that this “I am” was false and that the remedy was God-confirmatory ideation. By focusing on existentially valid issues, my fear was dispelled, and my problem turned out to be trivial. . . .⁽¹⁵⁾

Self-esteem

Well, let us take as an example a lady who gets a mink

coat; does that contribute to her self-esteem?

No. It is just a self-confirmatory act, an endeavor to bolster the sense of self-esteem through artificial means. Another form of seeking to repair damaged self-esteem is ambition. A successful individual was driven to achieve success by a desire to improve his self-esteem. The damaged self-esteem is never really repaired.

These are just misdirected efforts at repair. Fame has been achieved, fortunes have been made, but peace and assurance and love have not been found. This reminds us of a story of a man who came to a psychiatrist and said: "If I had two million dollars, I wouldn't need you." When the psychiatrist asked him why exactly two million, he said: "Because one million I got, but it don't do me no good!" He was talking about money, but the real issue was self-esteem.

Self-esteem is a psychological problem that we all face. It has only a spiritual solution; if we don't understand this, we can spend many, many years-perhaps all of our lives-trying to heal this psychological problem through psychological means. But this is not possible, for it can only be healed spiritually. . . .

Self-confirmatory thinking is not synonymous with the striving to improve one's self-esteem. The solution is, of course, spiritual. You may already sus-

pect that all problems are psychological; but all solutions are spiritual.

Question: When you say that all problems are psychological, do you mean that they are just fantasy?

Dr. Hora: Yes, you could say that. They are thoughts. The concept of the "right man" exemplifies the solution to the problem of self-esteem and to the problem of self-confirmatory ideation. The right man is a spiritual presence manifesting wisdom and love derived from God, the all-knowing Mind. When we discover who we are and what we are, then all these problems disappear, and self-esteem becomes a right appreciation of the Truth of Being.⁽¹⁶⁾

Pleasure AND FULFILLMENT

The spiritual life is not devoid of pleasure, but this pleasure is qualitatively different because it is not self-confirmatory. It is confirmatory of the basic goodness of Reality. Reality is all good, perfect, wholesome, and without complications. When we understand what Reality is, we are not losing anything that is good. We are only discovering what is really good and not what is good and evil. Ignorant man is crucified between good and evil, pleasure and pain, yes and no. Enlightened man knows the good which has no opposite. He knows the nondual realm of

Reality.⁽¹⁷⁾

Real fulfillment cannot be found through self-confirmatory means.

Only the awareness of one's spiritual status as an inseparable aspect of divine Love can lead to PAGL.

These spiritual qualities derived from Love-Intelligence, together with joy, harmony and freedom, are the constituent elements of divine Reality. They are also the standard by which progress on the spiritual path can be measured. When through consistent study and meditation we reach PAGL (a state of harmony), at that moment fear and anxiety disappear and we gain a realization that God indeed exists and is a governing, guiding, harmonizing presence in our lives. This realization does not happen all at once, and once and for all. It is a continuous process, and we must be alert not to allow ourselves to slide back into the "sea of mental garbage."

A human being can never find fulfillment in life; he can only seek it as a spiritual being. The human condition is a dream, and fulfillment requires us to wake up to the realization that we are spiritual beings, living Souls. Through conscious at-one-ment with omniactive Love-Intelligence, we find fulfillment.⁽³⁾

Return to the Basics

There is a universal inclination in man toward self-confirmatory ideation.

The remedy to self-confirmatory ideation is transcendence of the ego and commitment to God-confirmatory living. This is the other cheek. In practice this means being issue-oriented in our responses. When we are personally slighted, tempted, provoked, or intimidated, we turn an “other cheek” and deal with the issues at hand. In order for this to come about there must be a willingness to be embarrassed about secret self-confirmatory desires. The heat of embarrassment is the consuming fire of “hell” in which the ego is annihilated.

The pilgrimage on the spiritual path is in the direction of realizing that we are not what we seem to be. We are not autonomous persons in interaction with other persons. We are individual spiritual beings, emanations of divine consciousness capable of nonpersonal intelligent responsiveness to situations and issues.

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Now we may ask ourselves, Do we know where we came from and do we know where we are going? Certainly. Those of us on the spiritual path know full well that we came from the land of suffering, which we have identified as based on self-confirmatory ideation; and we move toward the land of peace, assurance, gratitude, and love, which we have found to be the “God-confirmatory” enlightened consciousness. It is the promised land of conscious awareness of omniactive Mind, the harmonizing principle of the universe.

So the answer to the skeptics consists of explaining the process of transformation of human consciousness and its beneficial consequences. It is no mystery. It is not a superstitious belief. It is a verifiable truth, available to any sincere seeker. With increasing understanding there is growing commitment. With growing commitment there is increasing understanding. This is a process of unfoldment rather than willed deciding.⁽¹⁸⁾

Man is an enlightened unit of awareness

Enlightened man has discovered that he is aware of thoughts which obtain in consciousness. Man is an individualized unit of awareness. The question is, Can awareness be done? No. Then who is it that is aware? And where is awareness located?

Man is a Living Soul. . . It is the soul that has the faculty of spiritual awareness and discernment. Man is a spiritual being. He is an individualized aspect of infinite divine Mind, the creative intelligence underlying all non-dimensional reality.

Metapsychiatry speaks of man as a non-dimensional unit of awareness. The center of all power, perception, comprehension, creative intelligence, is the divine Mind . . . The soul is responsive to the intentionality of creation. When we have learned to be what God has meant us to be, then our lives are most harmonious, efficient, effortless, and effective. ⁽⁷⁾ ■

The text above was compiled from the following publications:

(1)EM(Existential Metapsychiatry)32: *Identity and Individuality*; (2)BTD(Beyond the Dream)44: *the other cheek*; (3)(11)What Does God Want?; (4)(13)BTD 8: *Prepare Ye The Way*; (5)(3)BTD 52 :*Evil*; (6)(4)EwW4(*Encounters with Wisdom4*), *Self-confirmatory Ideation*; (7)(5)Can Meditation be Done?; (8)(6)BTD 32 *Approbation*; (9)(7)EM 17: *The Healing of Violence*; (10)(8)OM(One Mind)39: *overcoming self-confirmation*; (11)(9)OM 36: *the mystery of evil*; (12)(10)EM 36: *The Divine Marriage*; (13)(12)OM 10: *Glowing*; (14)(14)BTD 54: *Is There Nothingness?*; (15)(15)Dialogues 36: *self-confirmatory ideation*; (16)(16)Dialogues 42: *Self-Esteem*; (17)(17)BTD 20: *sex education*; (18)(18)BTD 50: *Decision or Commitment?*

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