

THE NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF METAPSYCHIATRY
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EDITORIAL

The present issue of the Newsletter contains contributions by several writers. Some of these articles deal with the study of spiritual principles for the attainment of a loving mode-of-being-in-the-world, i.e. intelligent living. This contrasts to the search for personal mind power, "self-realization," or other, more popular aims of our culture. A commentary by Ann Linthorst will appear as a regular feature, dealing with contemporary issues viewed from a Metapsychiatric perspective. As a new development, we have formed an Editorial Staff. This staff is a pool of co-workers committed to make regular contributions. We are grateful for the time and devotion they are giving to the endeavors of the NEWSLETTER. The principles of Metapsychiatry are often referred to as principles of intelligent living. We aim to document the practical and universal validity of these principles, and to advance the educational objectives of the Institute of Metapsychiatry and the PAGL Foundation.

COMPASSION

Excerpts from a recent telephone seminar with Dr. Hora (2/23/81)

Student: Ever since I took up the study of spiritual principles and am endeavoring to express them in my daily life, I find myself less and less interested in socializing for entertainment. However, at the same time I find myself without friends. This seems to be a dilemma that some others are experiencing too. Would you be so kind as to comment on this?

Dr. Hora: Gladly. When we study Metapsychiatry our values begin to change and we cannot continue socializing in the usual ways. In order to be a social butterfly one has to be either naïve or hypocritical. We cannot afford to take part in this kind of a charade. Consequently, we go through a transitional phase where we feel somewhat like fish out of the water. Eventually, however,

we learn “to be in this world and not of it.” Later we learn to participate in social situations as beneficial presences rather than just fun seekers engaged in self-confirmatory posturings. We move from seeking to have friends to the joy of being friendly.

Student: What is the meaning of being irritated when I find myself among people showing hypocritical social values?

Dr. Hora: This may indicate that you have not yet developed sufficient compassion. In Metapsychiatry we define compassion as understanding the lack of understanding. Compassion heals us of the tendency to judge and to condemn. As a result, people find it more pleasant to be in our company and, in turn, we can be at ease in most situations. However, in the initial phases of our studies, there is a certain uneasiness with the customary modes of social intercourse because we cannot conform. Neither do we wish to stand out as a sore thumb.

Student: It seems, though, that it would be helpful to avoid social situations if we know we don't have sufficient compassion.

Dr. Hora: Well, if it is hard for someone to refrain from drinking alcoholic beverages, it's better not visit any bars or cocktail lounges.

Student: This helps to clear up the confusion about whether to avoid certain situations or whether I could be helpful.

Dr. Hora: According to the Bible, Jesus companioned with malefactors. Apparently he would socialize with criminals. He attended their parties. The Pharisees were incensed about that. They would say, how can a holy man associate with sinners and wine-imbibers? To this Jesus answered: “They that are whole need no physician.” He was indicating that he went among the people who needed exposure to a beneficial presence.

Student: How do we know when to stay away and when not to, and how do we avoid the pitfall of becoming hermits?

Dr. Hora: It is not advisable to become hermits. We must become non-judgmental, compassionate, and beneficial presences to such an extent that our presence might be a blessing wherever we may be.

We will be comfortable with others and they will be comfortable with us. The discomfort people experience is engendered by hidden judgmentalism, which is present when we condemn people for their values and behavior. If we are free of the tendency to judge and condemn, we have reached a high point of spiritual integrity, and we enjoy peace, assurance, gratitude, and love.

Student: This is somewhat like the koan which says: “Before I took up the study of Zen, mountains were mountains and rivers were rivers. After I was deeply immersed in the studies, mountains were not mountains anymore and rivers were not rivers; but after I became enlightened, mountains were mountains again and rivers were rivers.”

Dr. Hora: Very good. Very good. Suddenly, this famous koan became clear to you.

THE VALUE OF STUDYING SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES

By Roberta Carasso, Ph.D.

At first we are not aware of spiritual principles, or that life has any meaning or purpose. It is like a child who first experiences clay. He has no idea of the great potential that exists in knowing the material and working with it so he pokes about and experiences some sensations. But he goes no further. What results is random, meaningless, and lacking in individuality. At a pre-conscious state the adult also goes through life blindly as events and experiences seem to occur haphazardly, and usually painfully.

But omnipotent God blesses us with growth and opportunity to learn. Like the young artist who discovers that there is potential in the raw clay, the unenlightened person has glimpses that life is good and reliable, and perhaps haphazard and unexplainable dilemmas are lessons for growth. Clay is certainly not different for the child than for the adult sculptor. Likewise, God does not offer a more fruitful life to some than to others. Life is there for all who seek to understand its meaning, and whether we know it or not, we are all participating in God's good.

At the point where we discover that life's purpose is to teach us spiritual principles, we begin to participate in life more harmoniously, and our presence becomes increasingly beneficial.

We delight in the unfoldment of good, in spite of what might appear to be setbacks. Growth is frequently accompanied by struggle as we give up old viewpoints and reach out for new ones. I am currently in the throes of a problem. Several weeks ago it seemed insurmountable and clearly painful. It seemed to be insoluble, so I meditated on the koan, “things are not what they seem to be, but neither are they otherwise.”

Suddenly a great joy came over me and I closed my eyes in gratitude. The gratitude was not for the solution, because that was still not clear; it was for the joy that told me the solution would come and that God is good. At that point the healing began. The next day I realized that a physical problem which plagued me since childhood had healed spontaneously.

Studying spiritual principles is our birthright, and at some point we become insatiable learners. We move from seeing nothing to thirsting to see everything, like the young artist who knows nothing about clay and discovers that the possibilities are greater than his appetite. So we find that life offers more than we had imagined and we delight in the study and the search.

COMPANIONSHIP

By Marjorie Barker, M.A.

One of the first ideas I worked with, as I became interested in a spiritual perspective, was that all good belongs to God. About six years ago I purchased a house and felt the house was mine and I was in charge. I had much difficulty getting the house to become what I thought it should be. Later I discovered that the house didn't belong to me or to anyone else, but simply to God, and I became grateful for the peace, harmony, and beauty manifested in the home.

However, even though I was now aware that the house didn't belong to me, I still thought I was in charge of the plants and the animals, four cats and a dog. I thought of these things as personal possessions; if I didn't care for them properly the plants would die and the animals would get sick. Well, the plants did die and the animals got sick, and I kept on worrying and being possessive. Then the cats died, and I suffered a great deal, thinking I was to blame. If I had done this or that, I could have saved them.

Gradually, however, a new idea came to mind. I knew intellectually that the cats didn't belong to me, but this idea made me understand it. What I discovered was that the cats, dog, plants, and house were companions. The word "companion" is originally from the Latin word "*com*," meaning "with," and "*panis*," meaning "bread."

Bread has always been a symbol of man's source of life and sustenance. I realized that companionship means "to be with Life." I could sit in my backyard and discover companionship with the trees, plants, animals, and all the manifestations of life and be one with Life, God.

This discovery led to another, namely reverence for life's manifestations. So now I water the plants when needed, out of reverence, and do not hover over them. If a plant seems to be sick, I seek to know the truth that all goodness belongs to God, and to know that the plants' health is not my business but God's.

Now there are four cats in the home again and they are clear manifestations of health. As soon as I act possessively towards the animals, there is resistance from them. I am learning that responding reverently to Life in all its aspects is to see it as an expression of Omniactive Love-Intelligence.

A STUDY IN RIGHT SEEING

By Fern Rubin, M.A.

One of Dr. Hora's papers "The Epistemology of Love" introduces the idea that love is a way of seeing. Researching further the ideas and notions which commonly occur about love, we can reach an understanding of love that can transform our mode-of-being-in-the-world. Love may reveal both the truth of what we are and the directions in which we are going. Learning the viewpoint of love, we become transformed into transparencies of love.

There is a popular notion which says we cannot love unless we love ourselves as persons. This idea sees us as "operators" of love. It suggests that we could love ourselves as persons and it ignores the fact that persons are only the pretense or disguise which covers the real individual. As persons, we are only what we pretend to be at any given moment. When love is put into the confines of personal or interpersonal existence, one will experience

frustration and a lack of love. Love has a divine source and as individuals we are the reflections of divine love. By understanding or “seeing” who and what and where we are, we are being transformed into transparencies of divine love. We become more gentle, more genuine, more loving. We are transformed by knowing love. “He that dwelleth in love (consciously) dwelleth in God, and God in him.” (I John 4:16)

There are certain notions in the popular understanding of love which need to be corrected.

Love is not romantic (beginning with the Webster definition). Romance has no basis in fact. It is the fictitious fantasy of imagination, excitement, and falsehood, hence not real.

Love is not “falling in love with each other.” This is infatuation. Here, the focus is on the person and not on love.

Love is not possessive. To possess is to gain an influence or control over, dominate, own or to have, fostering jealousy and ideas of ownership, impose one’s own values on or overprotect. Making an object of a loved one is not love.

Love is not an interpersonal exchange, a barter, or a reciprocal event. Love cannot be given or taken like a commodity. We cannot honestly say “I love you” without also saying “you better remember that and love me back.”

Love cannot be manipulated, handled, or managed. Surprisingly, neither do we have control over who we love. These forms of influence are mistaken as evidence of our “specialness” to another. They are an attempt to affect the actions and characters of others; they are trespassing.

Love cannot be performed or achieved in intimacy, sex, or sacrifices. Yet love is the invisible aspect in all activity. “Walk in love.” (Ephesians 5:2) Love is the atmosphere in which we live.

Love does not keep us up at night, drive us crazy, engender great longing, or foster pain, loss, or loneliness. These are evidence of intense attachment, or addiction to the idea that “this person” is our only chance to know love. A mistaken idea about the source of love invites dependency.

Love does not make demands or have conditions. We have no authority over love, and no claims or requirements we can insist on. After all, people are not here for us. They are here for God. Our love can become non-conditional, as we are willing to put conditions aside. God's love is unconditional.

Love is not self-gratification. Nor is it self-denial. It is self-less. Love is neither a matter of pleasing nor a fear of displeasing. It does not build egos. Healthy love does not meet "ego wants" or neurotic needs. Love is the expression of at-one-ment with God.

We can become aware of the fact that we live in a loving universe and that our love is limitless. "God is love." (1 John 4:16) God is not somebody who loves. We too can learn the far-reaching implications of this idea: we don't love anybody but rather we love to be loving. When applied to our loved ones and family members, even to all of mankind, this leads to what Dr. Hora recently called the "meditation of right seeing." It is the prayer of beholding Omniaction Love-Intelligence and seeing that everyone and everything is here for God, whether they know it or not. (on tape of Advanced Telephone Seminar of 5-15-81)

BIRDS OF PARADISE

By Bill Rubin

One morning my wife and I were in the kitchen when we noticed out on our patio a beautiful dove that had made a nest in a flowerpot. We watched through the window so as not to scare her.

The male bird returned with some food, and when the female stood up to eat, we saw two eggs. Every morning and night we would watch her sitting on her eggs. We noticed how much patience she had sitting there hour after hour and day after day waiting for the male bird to bring food. They seemed to be working so hard, and to add to that they were nervous about our watching them. That's when we decided to butt in. We thought it would be a good idea to get a bird feeder so they wouldn't have to work so hard. We thought we could make it easier for them. We got the bird feeder and some seed, and we watched them eat. We felt we had helped. The next morning, the female bird was furiously darting in and out of the patio hopelessly looking for her eggs.

They were gone. My wife and I looked at each other. We felt disappointed and, like the bird, could not understand where the eggs were. It turned out that other birds coming to the bird feeder had stolen the eggs.

Then it came to us. We had been watching the birds from a personal viewpoint and imagined that they were “working too hard” and that we could fix things for them. A personal perspective leads to operational thinking. But Jesus said “Observe the ravens; for they do not sow or reap . . . yet God feeds them.” We looked at each other in dismay and we realized that we had just had a lesson in “letting be.”

POEM

effortlessly effortlessly the light shines
effortlessly effortlessly the breeze blows
effortlessly effortlessly a wave grows
effortlessly effortlessly the moon glows
effortlessly effortlessly the heart beats
effortlessly the eyes see
effortlessly effortlessly be we

--Remi Smith (high school student)

ISSUES IN PERSPECTIVE

By Ann Linthorst, M. Div.

In this commentary we will be addressing current issues – individual, social, political, or philosophical – from the perspective of an existential context. Readers are invited to suggest concerns which they would like to have discussed in this column.

LOVE AND LOVELINESS

Sometimes learning is blocked by one’s tendency to hear statements of truth in the context of old ideas. For example, students sometimes don’t understand what is meant by the statement “to love God means to love being loving.” Upon hearing this, people may think that they have been told that they “should” feel a certain way and do certain things.

In our culture, love is usually thought of as either an emotion or as something we do to and for other people. This leads some individuals to believe that they are already loving, perhaps too loving, and that others take advantage of them because of it. Homemakers, whose primary activities revolve around the needs of husbands and children, are particularly susceptible to this idea, and consequently feel unrewarded for “being loving.” What they do is little seen and appreciated and rarely results in others “being equally loving” to them. And so people sometimes find themselves feeling angry and resentful, even hateful, as a consequence of what they mistakenly call “being loving.”

When love is defined as an emotion, it is equally troublesome. People then may find themselves unable to “come up with it” when they “should.” Someone may say, “I would like to love being loving, but I just don’t feel loving toward so-and-so, so what can I do?”

Here we have a problem in translation which can be resolved by remembering that the existential issue is never doing something or feeling something; the existential issue is always being interested in order to see something. To put it in shorthand: not doing/feeling but interest/seeing.

When we apply this to the issue of Love, we find that to love being loving means to be interested in being loving. And since we know that what we be is a manifestation of what we see (“As thou seest, so thou beest,”), we be loving by seeing Love. So, we end up with a reminder that to love God really means to be interested in seeing Love. How does Love show itself? In loveliness. In everything good and beautiful and true. In lovely thoughts as well as lovely sights.

The Bible says, “He who says he loves God and hates his brother is a liar. (1 John 4:20) Likewise, we can say, “He who says he loves God and is interested in horror, disaster, self-pity, blaming, discord, etc., is a liar.” To love God is to be interested in good; to love Love is to be interested in loveliness. I have found it helpful, when in the throes of savoring some personal misery, to ask myself: “But don’t you love Love? Wouldn’t you rather think about wholeness, harmony, and loveliness – even if you can’t clearly see them right now?” It never fails to make me embarrassed at the pettiness and ingratitude of my mental wallowing.

In our true being, all of us love spiritual good: it is the source of our being and we are here for its sake. The problem is just that we get distracted. And when we are distracted, we can break the power of that distraction with a simple reminder: “O taste and see that the Lord (Reality) is good . . .” (Psalms 34:8)