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EDITORIAL

This Newsletter is a double issue for February and April. It covers the International Conference of Metapsychiatry held in Costa Mesa, California and contains short reports on several of the research papers presented.

The theme of the conference was “The Mystery of Suffering.” This theme was of great interest to all who attended. Students of Metapsychiatry everywhere will find the fruits of this conference most beneficial. The first day began with a workshop on “Meditation in Metapsychiatry,” emphasizing the practice of meditation as taught by Dr. Hora. This full day of meditation added much to the spiritual climate that prevailed throughout the conference.

The main conference took place on Saturday and Sunday, February 12-13. It was characterized by a blossoming in several ways. There was a wide area of participation. There were students of Metapsychiatry from Australia, Switzerland, Belgium, and Holland. From this country, there were students from New York, Hawaii, Kansas, Ohio, Arizona and various parts of California. Broadening participation was evident in the number of students presenting papers. In addition to Dr. Hora, Jan and Ann Linthorst, Fern Rubin, Heather Brodhead, and Charles Gourgey presented papers.

The fourth and final day of the conference was held at the mountain retreat, Rancho Oro Verde in Pauma Valley, Calif. The weather was perfect for a two-hour drive through the California countryside filled with orange, lemon, and avocado orchards. A day of joyful companionship topped off this conference. One remark was heard repeatedly: “For a conference on suffering, there sure was a lot of laughter, joy, and love expressed.”

THE MYSTERY OF SUFFERING

Thomas Hora, M.D.

What is suffering? In general we can say that suffering is an unpleasant experience. It can be physical, emotional, mental, social, economic, personal, interpersonal, conscious, unconscious, acute, chronic, mild, or severe.

We can distinguish seven elements in suffering:

1. The cause of suffering.
2. The meaning of suffering.
3. The purpose of suffering.
4. The sources of suffering.
5. The essence of suffering.
6. The remedy for suffering.
7. The common denominator of all suffering.

1. The Cause of suffering.

The most primitive reaction to suffering is to ask “Why?” or “What is the cause of our suffering?” This is very simplistic. We can usually find something to explain our suffering and to blame something or someone for it. This may make us feel somewhat better, but it doesn’t really solve our problem. Cause and effect reasoning is inadequate for real understanding of the experience.

2. The Meaning of suffering.

In Metapsychiatry we go beyond cause and effect reasoning and seek to understand the meaning of our experiences. We have discovered that experiences are thoughts perceived organismically. Therefore, we approach every problem with the question, “What is the meaning of this phenomenon?” or “What is the meaning of what seems to be?”

3. The Purpose of suffering.

Having discovered that all suffering is meaningful, it is understandable that it also has a purpose. The purpose of suffering is to teach us something we must come to know about Reality and how to live in greater harmony with it. One of our principles states: “Problem are lessons designed for our edification.” (Principle No. 8)

4. The Sources of suffering.

The sources of suffering are:

- A. Five gates of hell.
- B. Four horsemen.
- C. Selfishness and unselfishness.
- D. Wanting and not wanting.
- E. What should be and what shouldn't be.
- F. Judging and not judging.
- G. Self-confirmatory ideation.

5. The Essence of suffering.

The essence of suffering can be found in the word "agony." The metapsychiatric analysis of this word reveals that it means lack of knowing. "A" is called "Alfa privativum," indicating lack or absence or being without something; the word "gony" in Latin is derived from "cognoscere," meaning claiming ignorance of God. So the essence of human suffering is the agony of unenlightened living.

6. The Remedy for suffering.

The remedy to agony or suffering is theogony, which means the true knowledge or understanding of God.

The story of Job is very instructive in this regard. Job, who was a very decent man, a religious Jew, suffered greatly. He was afflicted with boils and a variety of personal tragedies, and couldn't understand why he should have to suffer so much. He kept crying out to God: "Show me my guilt," but there was no answer to this question; neither was there any acceptable comforting explanation from his well-meaning friends, until he reached a point where he could say, "I have known Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee." In other words, his agonies yielded to the emergence of theogony.

7. The Common Denominator of all suffering.

The common denominator of all suffering is called in Metapsychiatry "Self-confirmatory ideation." This term is somewhat analogous to the theological concept of original sin.

However, we do not ascribe to it a notion of culpability. It is simply a universal tendency of an unenlightened man to be here for himself and to be mentally preoccupied with self-preservation and self-promotion, thus losing sight of his existential context, which is God.

DISCUSSION

Student: Does our suffering necessarily coincide with our degree of ignorance?

Dr. Hora: No. Our suffering increases with our progress on the spiritual path [laughter].

Jan: That's comforting!

Student: Does that mean we are suffering more, or that we are more aware of suffering?

Dr. Hora: We feel it worse! Would you like to know the metapsychiatric interpretation of the cross? The cross consists of two bars – a horizontal bar and a vertical bar. Unenlightened man, agnostic man, lives in the dimension of the horizontal. All he knows is interpersonal relationships. His thinking is horizontal. He always thinks about what other people are thinking about what he is thinking. That's all! That is his world. Religious man tries to live in two dimensions at the same time. He tries to be a nice fellow and also have good relationship with God. Religious man has it worse. During the week he is working on his relationships with people, and on Sunday he is working on his relationship with God. This is not easy! [laughter]

Metapsychiatry proposes to dismantle the cross, to remove the horizontal bar and the vertical bar. Enlightened life is non-interactive. When we dismantle the horizontal bar we find great relief. When we dismantle the vertical bar, what do we have left?

Student: The nails!! [laughter]

Dr. Hora: No. We have left what the Zen people call Sun-ya-ta. Emptiness. What is emptiness? It is a realization that "God is all in all," as the Bible says. There is nothing but God and we are part of it. We suddenly live, not in the context of relationships, but in the context of infinite Love-Intelligence.

Student: I find that I am on the spiritual path because it is more comfortable for me. I have more peace in my life, but it is self-concern that motivates me at this point. What is necessary to move from personal comfort to being here for God without looking at my

own personal peace that comes from it?

Dr. Hora: You have answered your own question by telling us that being here for God is the solution to our problems.

Student: I see this, but it seems like self-motivation, selfishness, at this point.

Jan: It is possible that you are still seeking God as a person – for personal comfort; even though it is a good endeavor, you have not yet confronted this issue. You may be just on a self-improvement program. The spiritual path and the peace of the spiritual path is not just comforting. It is real.

Dr. Hora: The Bible says, “We have to become unprofitable servants.” What does that mean? What is an unprofitable servant?

Student: We don’t get anything out of it?

Dr. Hora: Right! We are yearning to realize Reality. We are not seeking self-realization as psychology would encourage us to do. We are seeking the realization of Reality. Otherwise we are not really alive . . . it is not life . . . it is dreaming. So we seek to wake up to Reality and the objective is Reality rather than just personal comfort. Comfort and discomfort are the same.

Jan: Do you know the Metapsychiatric term for the unprofitable servant? “You ain’t nothin’ but a hound dog!” [laughter]

Student: What is solitude? I don’t mean loneliness, but solitude?

Dr. Hora: Solitariness means that we are completely with God. God is our companion, and we are participating in the world as beneficial presences. We are transparencies or funnels for Divine Love-Intelligence to flow through us and bless the world around us.

Student: We are seeking enlightenment and the further we go the more we suffer? Well, it is working so far. [laughter] What does the end of the path hold for us?

Jan: The end of the path is not suffering. It is liberation from suffering, but progressively, there is a keener sense of the suffering whenever we are separated from the good of God. The more awareness of the presence of God, of peace and truth, the more painful it is to have lost this, even for a moment. It becomes all the more painful when we separate

ourselves by trying to be autonomous human persons. The end is not more suffering, it is PAGL.

Student: It seems that it is not more suffering but a quicker awareness of it. I sense it quicker.

Student: Problems are lessons for our edification. Who is the designer of the problems then?

Dr. Hora: Ignorance in its endless forms.

Student: In regards to the cross and dismantling the vertical and horizontal bars, who does the dismantling? Ignorance doesn't have the sense to do it and intelligence doesn't need to.

Dr. Hora: The soul's yearning to be free.

Student: What is the relationship of the soul as the transcendent observer to our ability to turn away from our problems?

Dr. Hora: The soul draws us. It beckons us – come hither. Replace your suffering with unspeakable bliss – the peace of God which passeth all understanding. In Metapsychiatry it is spoken of as peace, assurance, gratitude and love; in short, PAGL.

Student: Who is it drawing?

Dr. Hora: Consciousness.

Student: I have a hard time understanding this. It draws itself?

Dr. Hora: Yes. How is that?

Student: Goodness is, and this is true whether we recognize it or not. The soul is the only substance. It manifests itself – drawing us to become it.

Dr. Hora: Perhaps the most helpful way to talk about it is that we are asleep. We are asleep in a material dream and the soul is nudging us, saying, "Come on, wake up, you are not living in Reality." "Awake, thou that sleepest. Arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light." (Ephesians 5:14)

SUFFERING, HORSES, AND METAPSYCHIATRIC ZAZEN

By Ann Linthorst, M.Div., California

Thus says the Lord: "Giddyap!"

In Metapsychiatry, we often begin exploring an issue by asking the question: "What?" What is suffering? One way to approach that question is with another question: "Who?" Who suffers? ME, that's who. Nothing ever suffers but ME. The suffering of others is suffering only to their MEs, unless I identify with it in such a way that it seems to be happening to my ME, and then I suffer.

Suffering, then, is entirely a subjective experience. It happens only in and to "me-sense." Me-sense is the thought of being a substantial entity, a body, a person. What is a person made of? A certain set of thoughts, which make up a mental image that I identify as myself. Me-sense is a mental sense, a state of claiming identity with certain mental contents and the forms which that mental content takes.

What makes ME suffer? Dr. Hora says, "We only suffer from what we want and what we don't want." When ME gets what it doesn't want, or wants what it doesn't get, it suffers. The dictionary's first definition of "suffer" is "to undergo something painful or unpleasant." What makes something painful or unpleasant is that ME says it is so. It says it this way: "This bad thing is happening to ME," or, "This good thing is not happening to ME."

What is suffering, then? It is a subjective judgment made by self-consciousness about what is happening or not happening in its experience. And on that basis, ME-sense tries to make things not go against ME, tries to make other people and life confirm and support and gratify ME so that ME won't suffer. ME-sense tries to eradicate suffering by eradicating what it terms "the causes" of suffering out there. But the suffering of mankind is not abated, because suffering does not lie "out there."

Zen literature gives us an interesting image to use in considering the problem of suffering. Zen scriptures speak of four kinds of horses: the excellent horse,

which moves like the wind, left or right, here or there, at the will of the rider, before it sees even the shadow of the whip; the good horse, which runs as well as the first one, just before the whip reaches its skin; the poor horse, which moves when it feels the pain of the whip on its body; and the bad horse, which moves only after the pain has sunk deep, to the marrow of its bones.

In terms of the issue of suffering, this image suggests an existential rather than a personal meaning to suffering. The ego says, "I suffer because I don't get what I want or need from life." But the horses image says, "We suffer when the Rider doesn't get what he wants from us." The story of the horses suggests the 8th Principle of Metapsychiatry: "Problems are lessons designed for our edification."

Suffering seems to have something to do with where our attention is fixed, and whether or not we are aware of and responsive to "the Rider" – that is whether or not we catch a glimpse of the fact that we are simply instruments of a Love and Intelligence which transcend us. Omniactive-Love-Intelligence doesn't "whip" anybody, because in Omniactive-Love-Intelligence, there is nobody to whip. There is only spiritual values and consciousness thereof. So there is no suffering in Reality; nobody to suffer and no place for suffering to be.

Suffering is the experiential counterpart of the illusion that an individual is an entity, a hunk of substance. That illusion seems to put us over-against Life. Out of that illusion come chronic ways of thinking which block and obstruct our consciousness of the operation and reality of Omniactive-Love-Intelligence. Life doesn't hassle us. We hassle Life, with our wants and our shoulds and our not-wants and our should-nots. And it seems to hurt. Unenlightened selfhood is a bad or a poor horse, at best. Well, what's a poor horse to do?

That brings us to zazen. It is the Zen Buddhist form of meditation. It involves a very rigid way of sitting. And it involves a mental discipline as well – sometimes a koan. A koan is a riddle which cannot be solved by thinking. So, zazen involves putting oneself, physically and mentally, in a very tight spot. What's the point of that? Well, the body and the thinking mind are the physical and mental forms of ME-sense. What the tight spot does is tend to limit, even immobilize, the physical and mental expressions of ME. By interrupting, mentally and physically, the free operation of ME-sense, there seems to be a greater possibility of breaking the hypnotic spell which ME exerts over

individual consciousness. And when that spell is broken, the reality of Reality is realized.

Now, being in a tight spot is actually the essence of ME's suffering. The popular solution, in our culture, to the suffering of the tight spot, is to try to find as much freedom from restriction as possible. If you are hurting, take away the demands and structure as much as possible. Give yourself as much space as you can. Get a divorce, leave your kids, change jobs, move to a different location – and so on. That may be the meaning of the phenomenon called “mid-life crisis,” a particular form of suffering which is very popular right now and which often leads individuals to seek “freedom” from the “restrictions” of their lives.

The suffering of the tight spot cannot be relieved by an external loosening of the supposed restrictions. It cannot be relieved by gratifying the wants and the not-wants. The Zen Master says it can only be helped by putting oneself in an even tighter spot, by sitting in zazen. For ME is the sufferer, and the more room we give ME to operate in, the greater the suffering.

Metapsychiatry has its own form of zazen, equally rigorous but not requiring physical immobility. Our zazen consists of the Two Intelligent Questions, The Principles, The Meditations – all the formulations that Dr. Hora has given us. To “sit in zazen,” for us, means to refrain from asking the six futile questions, to identify and turn away from self-confirmatory thinking, to ask the right questions, to turn our attention to spiritual values. And this we can do anywhere – on the freeway, or on the subway!

Moreover, Metapsychiatry teaches us to think of our problems as, themselves, a discipline for our edification. It shows us how to take the tight spots which we experience, again and again, as forms of zazen, not to be escaped from, but to be utilized for the sake of breaking through the false ME-sense into God-sense.

The whip, then, in the “horse” image, is really the bamboo pole of the Zen Master, designed not to hurt, but to awaken and to encourage students.

It is important that we become less and less interested in our suffering. Students sometimes get stuck on the level of the poor horse by not realizing that there is anything beyond problems and their meaning. But if you solve

problems correctly, then you have learned something, and you move on to something higher. After the first intelligent question comes the second intelligent question: What is what really is? As we become edified, we ask the first question less and less, and we are more and more preoccupied with the second question. We ask what really is because we love to contemplate spiritual reality. As Dr. Hora's Meditation on the Lord's Prayer says, "I cherish the knowledge of Omniactive-Love-Intelligence."

In Metapsychiatry, there is a positive goal: not just to escape suffering, but to become a beneficial presence; to become a place where the good of God manifests. "Problems are lessons designed for our edification" though we are not interested in problems, per se, nor even in edification. "Thou shalt have no other interests before the good of God, which is spiritual blessedness," says the First Principle of Metapsychiatry.

In Metapsychiatry, then, we sit in zazen not just because "we hafta," but, more and more, because there is simply no other intelligent way to live. The seeming restrictions of asking the right questions, and being mindful of the Principles, and practicing the Meditations, and seeking to behold the good of God yield to us the greatest individual freedom and fulfillment. We are not here for ourselves and we are not here for others. We are here for the Rider. And the Rider says, "Giddyap!"

SUFFERING AND REALITY

By Charles S. Gourgey, New York City

"He will swallow up death in victory." (Isaiah 25:8)

The need to find meaning in a world full of suffering has forced man to confront a paradox that has haunted him for centuries. Stripped to its barest essentials, the problem is this: one would like to make three assertions concerning God and the world (1) God is good, (2) God is omnipotent, (3) Evil is a reality.

Any two of these are consistent with one another. However, all three taken together produce a contradiction. A God who is good and all-powerful could not possibly permit the existence of evil.

Most attempts to face the problem of suffering have proceeded by denying one of the three propositions. The first proposition is denied by various forms of dualism.

In Western belief, the devil is seen as a force whose power rivals that of God. But, the struggle between good and evil is never resolved; it is ultimately a position of despair.

The denial of the second proposition is perhaps the most favored, at least in our own time (it is expressed in a book by H. Kushner, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*). In this view, God either does not possess the power to control evil, or He chooses not to out of respect for man's "free will." Here we would have a God who has no power to save. If, however, God does have this influence but chooses not to exercise it, then His wisdom must be something less than divine. Even parents, who respect their children's independence, do not permit them to commit unlimited mayhem upon one another. Surely, at least, this much discretion can be expected also of God.

We are left with only the third proposition to consider. The belief that evil is real is perhaps the hardest of all beliefs to question, because of what our experience tells us.

In *The Shaking of the Foundations*, Paul Tillich asserts that "we live in two orders:" time and eternity. The first order, "The human order, is ordinarily the order of growing and dying." It is the order of the Babylonian captivity.

However, it is at the moment of deepest suffering that "The other order appears at the horizon." This is eternity, the divine order, the order of forgiveness and redemption. Despair itself testifies to the meaning of eternity; to be aware that darkness is darkness is to be grasped by the power of the Light that is not yet discernible.

Tillich speaks of the "eternal 'now.'" In the language of *A Course in Miracles* it is called "the holy instant." It is a moment of reorientation. It does not change our present circumstances, but it alters our perception of them, giving us the courage to persevere in spite of them.

Nevertheless, not everybody, and nobody all the time, is aware of this "eternal now" in the temporal "now." But sometimes it breaks powerfully into our

consciousness and gives us the certainty of the eternal.

Tillich's view possesses power and beauty. It is the view held by many people who profess a religious commitment. Tillich's "two orders" are two orders of reality. Empirical man, product of the "Enlightenment" and the scientific revolution, recognizes one order of reality, that of time and space and the laws of physical science. Religious man (and of course woman) lives in time and prays to a transcendent God, and therefore, in Tillich's words, "every moment of our life and history" belongs to two orders of reality.

Is such a view possible? Can there conceivably be two orders of reality? The "mystic" writer, St. John of the Cross states:

"The reason is that two contraries (even as philosophy teaches us) cannot coexist in one person; and that darkness, which is affection set upon the creatures, and light, which is God, are contrary to each other, and have no likeness or accord between one another, even as Saint Paul taught the Corinthians, saying: What communion can there be between light and darkness? Hence it is that the light of Divine union cannot dwell in the soul if these affections first flee not away from it."

Not only can one not simultaneously believe in two orders, but as long as his attention is centered upon the "temporal order," the light of divine union cannot dwell in the soul. Time and eternity are contrary. Eternity is love; time is suffering and death. Eternity is formless Substance; time is the physical body that painfully decays. To believe in both would appear to be irrational.

The empirical man can simply dismiss the whole issue; he can continue on his way, believing in his one internally consistent temporal order or reality. His life may suffer spiritual impoverishment, but he at least suffers no conflict. However, for the religious individual these considerations do pose a conflict.

Valle and King point out that empirical reality is characterized by the following qualities:

1. It is observable – it can be perceived through the senses.
2. It is measurable – the properties of the observed phenomena can be quantified.
3. It is consensual – it is possible for more than one observer to agree on the

existence and characteristics of what is observed.

Such a construction of reality seems quite natural; in fact, it is what in phenomenology is called the “natural attitude.” (In Metapsychiatry it is called “what seems to be”). There is a tendency to take the natural attitude for granted. This notion of reality that seems so natural is actually not natural at all, but a product of assumptions and explanations that we impose upon our experience. Among other things, it leads to a cause-and-effect model of the universe that severely limits our ability to discern the meanings of events.

In the natural attitude there is a sharp split between the observer and what is observed. This is evident particularly in the instances where the body is healed through the mind. After describing cases of psychosomatic healing, C.G. Jung writes:

“Such experiences, which are by no means rare, make it exceedingly difficult to believe that the psyche is nothing, or that an imaginary fact is unreal. It is only not there where a near-sighted mind seeks it. It is existent but not in a physical form. It is an almost ridiculous prejudice to assume that existence we know of immediately is psychic. We might well say, on the contrary, that physical existence is merely an inference, since we know of matter only insofar as we perceive psychic images transmitted by the senses.”

There is more to reality than meets the eye (or ear or nose or tongue or hand). Then how can one know what is in fact real? Jung states further:

“Religious experience is absolute. It is indisputable. You can only say that you have never had such an experience, and your opponent will say: “Sorry, I have.” And there your discussion will come to an end. No matter what the world thinks about religious experience, the one who has it possesses the great treasure of a thing that has provided him with a source of life, meaning, and beauty and that has given a new splendor to the world and to mankind. He has faith and peace. Where is the criterion by which you could say that such a life is not legitimate, that such experience is not valid and that such faith is mere illusion? Is there, as a matter of fact, any better truth about ultimate things than the one that helps you to live?”

What is real can be known, because what is real is healing. In Metapsychiatry, our experiences are seen as expressions of our values. Existential validation is

a method of discerning which values are valid (healing) and which are invalid. In his book, *Existential Metapsychiatry*, Dr. Hora writes:

“In what way does a certain idea contribute to the improvement of the quality of our lives? Does it heal us? Does it liberate us? Does it bring harmony into our lives? Does it contribute to a sense of peace, assurance? Does it fill us with a sense of gratitude? Does it inspire us with wisdom and love? Does it make it possible for us to find the answers we need to the problems of daily living? If what we are learning has this effect, then it must be existentially valid. Jesus put it very simply, he said: ‘By their fruits ye shall know them.’” (Matthew 7:20)

Existential validation is also a critterion of knowledge. It is a way of knowing what is real. Metapsychiatry considers what is real to be manifestations of God, as infinite love and intelligence. Real knowledge is accompanied by the awareness of peace, assurance, gratitude, and love. What is real is not what is observable, measurable and consensual, but what is changeless and indestructible. There is only one order of reality.

Since reality is eternal, many mystics call the “natural reality” an “illusion.” It is “what seems to be,” it is essentially thought in visible form. Our discomfort with such transcendental notions of reality may come from considering that what we are so certain we perceive, somehow “isn’t there.” Metapsychiatry is not saying our experiences are not experienced. Experiences are, indeed, observable, measurable, and consensual. However, it is saying that the entire realm of experiences is not what we take it to be. Experience and reality stand in the relationship of a dream to “normal waking life.” While the dream is being dreamt, the dreamer is convinced of its “reality.” However, after waking, he would not think of claiming that his dream was “real.” So it is with experiential “reality.” It is like a dream that conceals from our awareness “that which really is.” When we awaken from the dream, we know that we are here not for ourselves but for God, and we are healed.

There is only one reality. Reality is eternal. Therefore suffering is not real.

Suffering is essentially of the body. Pain may be physical or it may be emotional, but it is all one and the same. Emotions are psychosomatic phenomena and are always correlated with physiological activity. The belief in the reality of suffering is the belief that people are bodies, that they can be

harmed, even destroyed.

Metapsychiatry maintains that people are not bodies. They are spiritual beings. If a person knows this (discerns it not merely through intellect or emotion but with his spiritual faculty), then moments of suffering are transformed. Perhaps every individual reading this knows instances of the awareness of the light of faith within the heart of darkness. Even moments of the most intense pain can become a holy instant. It all depends upon how clearly reality is perceived.

How a person perceives reality has profound consequences for his spiritual life. If evil is seen as real, either God did not create it or He did. If He did not, then the devil is as strong as God is, and we live in a world of dualism and despair. If we believe God to be the source of evil, we would be fearful and concerned to know how to be spared the arrows of His wrath. If our prayers are fearful, even unconsciously, they lose their effectiveness for teaching spiritual awareness, since, to paraphrase St. Paul, “Fear casteth out perfect love.”

In Metapsychiatry, prayer is spoken of as realization. The deepest prayer is the beholding of reality. It is an awareness of God as infinite Love-Intelligence, Who can have no interest in, nor even knowledge of, evil and suffering. **God** is “of eyes too pure to behold evil.” (Habakkuk 1:13) Prayer is an awareness that is verified by the presence of peace, assurance, gratitude, and love. If God does not know suffering, then suffering cannot make us more worthy in His eyes. It cannot be used to confirm our selfhood.

It is possible that one may resent, not so much the notion that one’s suffering is a misperception as the suggestion that it might not be important. It is often maintained that a “mystical” philosophy does not take suffering seriously enough.

Suffering must be taken seriously because it is a mask that conceals the face of love. Its presence in experience means that we are not clearly perceiving reality. Nevertheless, to dismiss the sufferer with complacent indifference because his suffering is not real would not be an act of love; it would only create more suffering, and strengthen the illusion’s hold. It is more helpful to stand with the sufferer as a beneficial presence – that is as one who acknowledges and respects pain but who knows that, while suffering is

physical, reality is spiritual. Suffering cannot, however, tell us about God or about reality. Just as light cannot be known by gazing at darkness, reality cannot be known through a preoccupation with suffering. “And the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.” (John 1:5)

Suffering may not be real, but it is a phenomenon, and as such it must have a meaning. Its meaning is that we are estranged from our knowledge of what is real, reality.

We may believe that God is a reality, but whenever we are not totally peaceful, we betray that that is not all that we believe. If we believe in love but experience fear, then we believe also in fear.

The two beliefs can be examined together, the darkness of fear and resentment confronted by the light of reality. This process produces healing, because, while fear can be understood intellectually or emotionally, reality can only be known spiritually. A different function of the mind is involved, which Dr. Hora calls “spiritual discernment.” In Metapsychiatry this “holy meeting place” takes the form of the “two intelligent questions” – “What is the meaning of what seems to be?” and “What is what really is?”

The healing of dissociation produces an understanding of love as a mode of cognition. Love is not simply a feeling; it is a way of understanding the world. To know love is not only to believe that all people are created as the image and likeness of God, it is to perceive them that way. To attempt to heal dissociation while believing in the reality of evil produces an insoluble paradox, in which sufferers are cruelly told that their suffering is the “will of God.” The Course in Miracles states:

“Here is the paradox that underlies the making of the world. This world is not the Will of God, and so it is not real. Yet those who think it real must still believe there is another will, and one that leads to opposite effects from those He wills. Impossible indeed; but every mind that looks upon the world and judges it as certain, solid, trustworthy and true believes in two creators; or in one, himself alone. But never in one God.”

Metapsychiatry subscribes to a different view of the world: that in spite of the appearance of fear and attack, every temporal happening is ultimately an expression of love or a call for love.

It is in this respect that Metapsychiatry differs from religion. Religion tends to place great value on belief. As a result, religious traditions often appear to be in conflict with one another. In Metapsychiatry religion is transcended. Belief is inconsequential, since spiritual values can no more be realized through believing in religious doctrines than can breathing be learned by believing in the principles of respiration-oxidation. What is required is a redefinition of values and a reorientation of consciousness. The restructuring of consciousness has been a goal of psychotherapy ever since Freud. Metapsychiatry and all spiritual psychotherapies reach out a hand to Freud and say, "Come, let us walk a little further."

(This is an edited version. A copy of the original paper is included in the conference package.)

DISCUSSION

Jan: Thank you very much, Charles. We have a few moments for questions and **discussion**, and Dr. Hora will share in this discussion period.

Student: I appreciate your paper very much. You were very careful and thorough. It really caught my ear that everything we see is either an expression of love or a call for love.

Charles: That is what is usually going on when we think that people are attacking us. What they are really asking for is love, but in a very inefficient way.

Student: I have a question – in the New Testament there is listed the fruits of the Spirit and long-suffering is in that group. Could one of you explain that?

Charles: Let me try to understand your question. Long-suffering sounds like patience. Long-suffering is the cessation of the struggle against suffering. It's patience with experience in order to listen for the meaning underneath it, rather than to fight against it in a spirit of non-acceptance and in the spirit of what you want and what you feel should be. It's listening for the meaning that will reveal to you the spiritual values that would transcend your suffering.

Student: Would you define long-suffering?

Charles: I wouldn't be presumptuous to define it, but I think that is one way you can look at it. As Dr. Hora says, suffering in itself is not a value, but what is constructive about suffering is that it drives us to inquire and to try to understand and to try to educate ourselves in spiritual discernment and that is usually the first means by which we come to ask about what really is – but suffering is not what really is.

Dr. Hora: Usually when we experience suffering, we get very impatient. We want fast, fast relief! We reach for the Anacin tablet to get rid of the suffering. Consequently, we do not learn much from it. It is our recommendation that we don't rush to get rid of suffering. We must be patient with it and ask, first, the question: "What is the meaning of this?" Instead of seeking fast relief, we patiently confront the experience and, if we are sincere, we may learn something.

Student: Suffering is self-confirmatory. How long do you long-suffer? When is it self-confirmatory and when is it a value?

Charles: Suffering can be self-confirmatory if we try to use it to earn brownie points in heaven. We may have the idea if we suffer long enough, then we are entitled by rights to have something good happen to us. We are really looking at suffering to build a reputation for ourselves, a notion that we are worthy because we suffer. Suffering is a lesson for our edification. It drives us to learn something and it teaches us.

Dr. Hora: Sometimes we suffer, not only for brownie points in heaven, but to impress someone or manipulate someone emotionally, so that they might be more kindly disposed towards us and perhaps get us what we want. So suffering can be a means of influencing people or influencing God. Some people, without realizing it, may be seeking a handle on God through suffering.

Student: What are we seeking to validate?

Charles: There are two ways we can know things. We can know things through the senses, which is the way scientific man tries to do it and the way academic systems try to do it. Metapsychiatry offers another criterion which is called existential validation. We can know what is real because the Real has a healing effect. There is really no rational reason to think something is real

just because we can perceive it with our senses. What better criterion is there than the one that helps us to live? We can know that spiritual values and truth are Real if they produce healing. The principle of existential validation is the one thing that we can accept as offering us our understanding of Reality; and everything else in Metapsychiatry develops from that.

MISERY IS OPTIONAL

By Heather Brodhead, Honolulu, Hawaii

“Whenever we want something, we are going to suffer.”

I had heard this many times in Metapsychiatry, but this is the first time I really heard it. “Whenever we want something we are going to suffer.” The dictionary reminds us that to want not only means to desire something but also to lack something that is desired. I looked at what I wanted. “If I could just have what I want,” I thought, “I would be happy.” And what I want, and have always wanted, is found within what we call “the five gates of hell”: sensualism, materialism, intellectualism, personalism, and emotionalism. Why do we say that they are gates to hell? Because they entice us with the offer of pleasurable answers to our wants, and even if we do receive the pleasure, we nevertheless are led straight into a hellish existence. If we get what we want, we want more. If we don’t get it, we suffer pain, dissatisfaction, and lack of fulfillment. Yet, many of us continue to wander in and out of these gates for a long time, not realizing that pleasure and pain are two sides of the same coin and inseparable.

We think we are only interested in having pleasure and getting rid of pain. But the truth is, we are interested in pain as well. This is not just the special territory of those labelled martyr and masochist. No, most of us share this interest to some degree. It is difficult to let this truth be heard in consciousness, especially in the midst of suffering; for suffering is really the ego’s last stand in its fight for existence.

What is the ego? “In psychology, the ego is the executive organ of adaptation, control, and preservation. The purpose of psychology is to study the functions of the ego . . . Metapsychiatry studies the notion of the ego. Metapsychiatry asks, is there really such a thing as an ego? The answer is: the ego is merely conceptual, consisting of assumptions.” (Introduction to Metapsychiatry course lecture.)

The ego, therefore, is not substantial; it is not real, and yet it is constantly saying, “I am.” It is self-confirmatory ideation. Simply stated, the ego is, “I want” and “I don’t want.” Nothing more.

The ego has its shenanigans; it must constantly advertise itself to keep its operation going! Otherwise, it deflates into nothing.

It sets up the premises of “what should be” and “what should not be” if we are to be happy. Then the ego proceeds to constantly monitor everything by the senses: “I like this; I don’t like that; I want this; I don’t want that.” The ego is concerned only with itself: getting what it wants and avoiding what it doesn’t want. Absolutely no thing and no one has any importance to the ego other than the gratification offered to its wants.

The ego cannot love. It cannot understand what love is, and it cannot comprehend true good, the good of God, which is spiritual. It also tries to persuade us that “we” are one and the same as our egos, which we are not. When “we” get what “we” want (actually what the ego wants) – pleasure, admiration, control, etc., “we” feel good. The ego is inflated.

The ego also inflates when we feel the pains of injury, disappointment, and frustration. Once we experience pain, we tend to hold on to it and, in a way, savor it. This is suffering. Suffering is the ego’s preoccupation with pain. It is making a federal case out of pain. Here the ego would have us believe that pain and suffering are real and substantial; for if they exist, then the ego exists too. However, what we feel through the senses and what is real are not synonymous. This is how we can know that pain is not real.

When we experience pain, we can be grateful, for it indicates an error in perception; but we do not need to indulge in suffering. Misery is optional, as the saying goes. Another meaning for the verb “to suffer” is “to allow.” So, the alternative to suffering is to recall the 8th Principle of Metapsychiatry: “Problems are lessons designed for our edification.” We can ask ourselves the “Two Intelligent Questions”: “What is the meaning of this problem – of what seems to be?” and “What is what really is?” We will find that the meaning of the problem always has its roots in a want. Some wants are socially acceptable and obvious; other wants may be hidden secret thoughts – secret even from our own awareness. These are the ego’s “cherished assumptions,” as Dr. Hora calls them. St. Paul refers to them as the “strongholds.” (2 Corinthians 10:4)

In the beginning of our growth, we are driven by our suffering to seek a better way. Instead of asking the “six futile questions” (Dialogues, p. 9), we learn to seek the meaning of our problems. As we grow in our appreciation of spiritual

reality, we become more and more willing to see our mistakes. We need not worry that any secret thought hindering our growth and God's blessings will be kept hidden, for, as Daniel expressed in the Bible, "Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his . . . he revealeth the deep and secret things . . ." (Daniel 2:20, 22)

How can any of us stop wanting? How can we claim our dominion over our thoughts? Is it wrong for us to want health, to want happy, harmonious and fulfilled lives in clean, comfortable surroundings . . . with compatible companionship? No. It is not wrong; it is unnecessary. Wanting these can even impede their manifestation in our lives.

We must look closely at who exactly is doing the wanting. It is the ego, wanting its interpretation of these blessings. The ego is not capable of wanting anything other than experiences. It cannot discern or appreciate spiritual qualities or values . . . that which is real. Are we our egos? Is this our true identity? No! In answer to the question "Who am I?", the Bible and Metapsychiatry say: "I am an image and likeness of God, a manifestation of Love-Intelligence." The ego says, "I am, and none else beside me," (Isaiah 47:10), but, in truth, God is the only I AM.

Instead of seeing life through our egos, we can see everything as it really is in the divine context. As emanations of the Source of all that really is, we can see that there is no need for us to want anything! Metapsychiatry takes Jesus's admonition and turns it into the 2nd Principle: "Take no thought for what should be or what should not be; seek ye first to know the good of God which already is." Divine reality is expressed in perfect harmony and the meeting of whatever needs are manifest. The ego, its wants and sufferings, is revealed to be a pathetic pretense, an illusion imprisoning most of humanity. In understanding the nature of God and our true identity, we are liberated from wanting anything and are freed from lack and suffering. We can claim our divinely endowed dominion over our thoughts. The Psalmist said: "The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want," (Psalms 23:1), and Jesus said: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)

THE SUFFERING OF THE SEEKER

By Jan Linthorst, D.Min., California

In Dialogues in Metapsychiatry, Dr. Hora tells about a man who one day was sitting in a cocktail lounge, feeling very depressed. He was only drinking coffee, but he was sorely tempted to take a drink of liquor, except that he was on the spiritual path and knew better. As he looked around at other people who seemed to be having a good time imbibing alcohol, he asked himself, "Is this struggle worth it? Do I have to be on the spiritual path and be miserable, when only one drink would solve the whole problem?" These are agonizing questions, often asked in frustration. These are the "murmurings of the children of Israel." (Exodus 16:2)

The question may even arise whether those blessed with being students on the path may perhaps suffer more than others? It sometimes would seem that way. We will study the suffering of the seeker on the path more closely.

The seeker may find himself in a phase of bitter suffering. At times he is aware of the presence of God, and he has glimpses of divine Love and PAGL as never before. He is already free of much of sensualism and interpersonal thinking, yet there are still self-confirmatory tendencies. They are now more painful than anything he has ever suffered. These two aspects in the seeker's experience are described by Augustine in his Confessions, which is somewhat of a journal of the seeker: "What is this which gleams through me and smites my heart without wounding it? I am both a-shudder and a-glow. A-shudder insofar as I am unlike it, a-glow insofar as I am like it." (Confessions 11:9:11)

The Meaning of the Suffering of the Seeker

The meaning of the suffering of the seeker at this stage is that he is seeking God as a human person. His search is self-confirmatory. He seeks God to improve himself, and he seeks from God an improved life as a human person. Enlightenment is not the ultimate self-improvement and Metapsychiatry is not a self-improvement program. Finding this out, after many years of studying Metapsychiatry, may come as a shock. At this point, we come face-to-face with the whole meaning of suffering. So far the seeker has moved beyond his ego-structure in terms of sensual pleasures and in terms of interpersonal relationships. However, giving up self-confirmatory ideation still leaves him with one great desire in mind, that ultimately he would come out "smelling like a rose." Finally, we discover that after all that work, we are still not "smelling like a rose." We are not getting anywhere. As the man in the cocktail lounge, we have given up wine, maybe even sex and a desire for relationships,

but what good did it do? At the core of this experience is a profound despair. The seeker no longer knows which way to turn. Dr. Hora calls this the “Red Sea Experience.” The Israelites were confronted with the Red Sea when they left Egypt; they could not go forward because there was the sea, and they could not go backward because there was the Egyptian army. The seeker feels hopeless and utterly stymied. The student experiences this as his own bankruptcy. (Angyal, *Neurosis and Treatment*, New York, 1965)

The religiously educated person may even feel rejected by God. He may feel unworthy of enlightenment. This is the other side of the same coin. Seeking to please God as a human person results in feeling unworthy. Seekers through the ages have identified themselves here with Jesus on the Cross when he exclaimed: “Why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46) Even though scholars are saying that this is a wrong translation of what Jesus actually said, it still expresses the feeling one may have at this stage. This crisis is dealt with in books like Dante’s *Inferno* or St. John’s *Book of Revelation*.

From what we have said so far, we may understand that the essence of Hell is a misguided mode of being-in-the-world and an invalid system of values. Jesus’ word for Hell was Gehenna, and Gehenna was a ravine outside of Jerusalem where garbage was dumped. Hell is understood to be a place of destruction of waste. From a Metapsychiatric viewpoint, Hell is a crisis in which misguided modes of being are cast. It helps to see it in the light of the biblical passage which says: “Behold, the former things are passed away, behold I make all things new.” (Revelation 21:4, 5)

Does the God of Love-Intelligence inflict suffering on his creation or on his beloved, sincere seekers? In an existential crisis, the seeker may discover that God never made him a human person. Human personhood is only what he seems to be or pretends to be in the context of the world. The seeker despairs as long as he tries to become a better person. We may come to understand that we need no longer continue the futile endeavors to improve ourselves as human persons. We understand that we are perfect spiritual beings because God is a perfect creator. Problems are our lessons informing us that we are trying to live as human beings, as physical bodies, as persons among other persons, and so forth.

As long as we endeavor to live as autonomous human persons, there is suffering, but when we move our sights beyond the human scene and put our

attention on God, Love-Intelligence, we realize the truth of the passage: “In this world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

DISCUSSION

Student: I am concerned both with being a better person and a better spiritual student.

Jan: We all start our studies trying to become better persons, even if we don’t think this is so. We are not persons, so we don’t have to strive to be better persons. At some point we wake up to reality – the reality that God is the truth of our being. Being aware of this makes us a blessing in the world. We then become aware that we are places where God is manifested.

Dr. Hora: Desiring to be better persons means we desire to find an improved way of pretending. Our definition of person is that it is what we pretend to be. That will get us nowhere. Now, being a better student is learning how to learn better. But you are still just a person who has certain strivings and tries to confirm himself in this manner: “I am a better person, and I am an improved student.” Metapsychiatry is not interested in personhood. The Bible says, “God is no respecter of persons.” (Acts 10:34) The objective is individual redemption. What do we mean by redemption?

Comments: Turning into something different? Freedom from being a person? Saved? Born again?

Dr. Hora: These are all very good ideas, but they don’t explain the word redemption.

Charles: Redemption literally means to buy back something, to reacquire it, so in this case it would mean to know that we are what we always were – rather than the person that we think we are, which we never were to begin with.

Dr. Hora: To redeem also means to reassess the value of something.

CONSCIOUSNESS (Part I of a four-part series)

By Claudette Maddox, California

What is Consciousness? It is another word for infinite Divine Mind. It is a faculty of being aware of thoughts and ideas. It is infinite and has no shape. It is beyond form and formlessness.

Man is made in the image and likeness of this Divine Consciousness and radiates from it. The purpose of experiential life is to come to know – to attain – this Reality, that life is Divine Consciousness.

In the beginning, however, man does not know that he is a part of this Divine Consciousness. Just as a baby is not aware that it will grow into adulthood – that the physical body grows and develops – so does man evolve in consciousness. He evolves from the lowest level of awareness, the animal consciousness, to human consciousness, to Cosmic Consciousness where he views life in the spiritual dimension. He attains the Christ Consciousness where he becomes a beholder. As a beholder he sees that life is God. The awareness of Truth in consciousness makes him a beneficial presence. Wherever he goes he becomes a spontaneous healer and a blessing in the world. Only then does he fulfill the purpose for which he was created.

When we look at man all we see is a person and, if we judge according to appearances, the essence of man is flesh and blood and bones, and organs. So we can say that we do not have the physical body in common with God. God does not have a physical body. What is it that we have in common with God? It is consciousness. God is Cosmic Consciousness and man is an individual reflection, manifestation, representation, and misrepresentation of that Divine Consciousness. Just as the sunbeam is a radiation from the sun, so man is an emanation of Divine Consciousness.

As we study man, we become more and more impressed by the absolute supremacy of consciousness up to the point where we come to realize that consciousness is all that really matters. Life is consciousness. We are not the form we seem to be. Man is not a person. Personhood is an illusion. St. Paul said, “. . . every man [is] a liar.” (Romans 3:4) And Jesus, speaking of the human race, said, “He is a liar and the father of it.” (John 8:44) Life is Consciousness and whatever is visible and tangible is just appearance.

Man is a certain invisible, mysterious consciousness which is capable of

beholding the presence and activity of Divine Mind. However, he is also capable of being aware of illusion – that which is not true. Man even has the illusion that he thinks his own thoughts. Man is not a thinker. It may come as a surprise that the brain cannot produce an intelligent idea. Just as the physical body is an illusion, so also is the belief that man is a thinker, that man produces his own ideas. Consciousness does not produce ideas, just as a radio does not produce music; it receives the music. Man receives ideas. The flower receives the sunbeam directly from the sun. The sun is the source of the vital energy which makes the flower blossom. There is a direct connection between God and that consciousness which man is. Man cannot reach up to God. Man is connected with God and is inseparable from God as consciousness.

If man doesn't produce his own ideas and is really incapable of thinking, where do thoughts come from? Thoughts obtain in consciousness from two sources. Invalid ideas come from the sea of mental garbage. Only the invalid content of consciousness takes form. Valid thoughts come from the Divine Mind.

Just as when we turn on the TV, we turn to something we are interested in – whatever we turn to we will pick up whatever is on that frequency. In like manner, whatever we are interested in, wherever we turn our attention – whether to something cherished, hated, or feared – we will pick up thoughts or vibrations on that same level. It doesn't matter whether we like or don't like what we are turning our attention to. The thought indulged in will hypnotize us into that belief.

As a consciousness, we can only reflect what we turn our attention to. Whatever is holding our attention in consciousness, whatever values we entertain will determine what our experiences are in the phenomenal world. It is the thoughts entertained in consciousness that manifest in experience. "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." (Proverbs 23:7)

Consciousness could also be likened to a clean window pane that allows the light to flow through it, to shine through. Ignorant ideas, beliefs, could be likened to smudges on the window pane that prevent the light from shining through. We grow up to believe that we are the smudge! The smudges, however, are not real. They are beliefs – a false belief – like two and two is five. These beliefs create believers and keep us hypnotized from the truth. We are not the smudge. We are not two and two is five. Personhood is a lie –

whether good personhood or bad personhood. We are a Divine Consciousness.

Consciousness is an empty screen, and it is either filled with garbage – smudges – and then we have the illusion that we are thinking – or we can disengage our attention from the garbage and refocus our interest on God and then the garbage disappears, and intelligent ideas begin gently to engage our attention. Whatever is committed to in consciousness will be reflected. When we turn our attention to something true, to God, and seek to be aware of God, we completely lose sight of the movie and become aware of Love-Intelligence right there with us. And as we sincerely and gratefully contemplate the presence of God instead of the movie, what happens when God takes control of our being, of our consciousness? All of those things disappear and the movie fades out of our awareness and we are filled with a sense of peace and assurance, of gratitude, and love.

We are safe and God is in control of our lives. “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” (Psalm 91)

So God, Cosmic Consciousness, controls our thoughts if we let it; and how do we let it? “Commit thy works unto the Lord and thy thoughts shall be established.” (Proverbs 16) We could say that when we commit all that we do and are to the Truth of being – the Law of spiritual existence – our thoughts obtain from the one loving, divine source.

(Paper prepared from Dialogues by Thomas Hora, M.D. and Cosmic Consciousness by Richard Bucke. Additional material from Tape Transcripts from Dr. Hora’s lectures.)

THERE ARE NO DRIVERS ANYWHERE . . .

During the blizzard that hit the East coast in February, I found myself facing the prospect of a long drive home from work in New York City. Although the time was still mid-afternoon when I left, many people were leaving work early as the weather forecasts for heavy snow seemed to be materializing. Roadways where traffic normally flows freely became clogged with bumper-to-bumper cars. Visibility was poor, roads were slushy and slippery, as the snow began to accumulate, and occasionally vehicles were stalled, creating a massive traffic jam. The Hora principle of safe driving: “There are no drivers

anywhere; there is only the harmonious flow of traffic under the coordinated control of Divine Mind” came to mind, and I remained steadfastly aware of it, thankful for a means of turning my attention from the chaotic scene that appeared to be – to peacefulness and reassurance.

Eventually the traffic eased, but on the second leg of the trip, driving conditions became increasingly hazardous, as night fell and heavy snows and strong winds created drifting and slippery roads. Some cars were skidding, some were stuck in snow. Although some of these vehicles having problems were substantially heavier than the car I drive, my compact car was able to continue on without difficulty. The trip took much longer than usual, but finally I arrived home, and even got up a hilly driveway which several other cars could not maneuver, and into a parking spot. According to later news reports, many motorists spent the night and part of the following day in cars stuck on various roads and highways, or abandoned their cars and walked to shelter.

There could be no doubt that attention to the principle of safe driving, sustained prayer, and the realization that Love-Intelligence was driving the car – that this consciousness alone had been my protection and had enabled me to reach home safely. At no time during the trip was there any sense of having an “experience.” Despite the obvious hazards, there was neither fear nor anxiety. There was no sense of “person” driving the car, no “wanting” to reach home, no desire to “master” the weather, all attitudes observed in drivers. There was alertness, responsiveness to what was needed from moment to moment, and, in the end, extreme gratitude for having reached home safely, coupled with a great sense of appreciation for the blessings and wonders of spiritual consciousness.

PAGL FOUNDATION NEWS

At a meeting held during the recent conference, the PAGL Foundation Board reaffirmed the educational aims of the Foundation. Dr. Hora described the inception of the PAGL Foundation as an idea, saying, “When a God-given ideal is born in the form of a concept, it is tangibly good and is endowed with energy to fulfill itself.” Generous contributions of funds have come as evidence of this fact, and the Foundation will now be able to support some of the needs of the School of Existential Metapsychiatry.

