

PAGL View

The Epistemology of Love

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It is strange that under ordinary circumstances man seldom talks in order to really say something; neither does he remain silent in such a way as to say nothing. Ordinarily, when man talks he is mostly concerned with making himself feel good. And when he keeps quiet he is not really quiet; he talks to himself silently. His mind dwells not so much on the truth of what really is, as on manifold ways and means of making himself feel good and of avoiding feeling bad.

The preoccupation with feeling good, secure, strong, influential, and successful isolates man's

consciousness from reality and hampers his cognitive and responsive faculties. Man derives pleasurable or comforting experiences and sensations from the gratification of his assumptions. Assumptions are thoughts of "what should be." When the "should be" is gratified, reality is ignored. Man tends to live to a greater or lesser degree in a private world of illusions. He is thus more or less estranged, alienated, and disconnected from life, reality, truth, love.

Man who is concerned with feeling good spends most of his life in "pursuit of happiness" and thus tends to miss out on truth, reality, love, communion, joy, health. For while illness is "disease" and health is "ease," ease is not necessarily health. The pursuit of ease does not lead to health. The pursuit of happiness, of feeling good, of being successful, as ends in themselves, is mostly self-defeating; these are at best only by-products of the loving mode of being-in-the-world. For instance, the quest for sexual pleasure and successful "performance" produces mutual exploitation with interpersonal complications that often result in such disorders as impotency and frigidity.

The concern with feeling good makes man a hedonist. He tends to become a "consumer" of cigarettes, alcohol, chewing gum, candy, drugs. To him, things become means to an end. People, business, profession, children, friends, objects, ideas,

religion, and education all become tools and gimmicks serving the purpose of making him feel good. The hedonistic view of life tends to produce severe forms of egotism and a progressive deterioration of cognitive and responsive faculties.

The striving to feel good is the foundation of ambitions, competitiveness, success-hunting, pleasure- and power-seeking. The primary concern with feeling good is a misguided mode of being-in-the-world. It makes man unavailable to the cognitive faculty that constitutes the prerequisite for love.

Love is essentially a mode of cognition. Love is concerned neither with feeling good nor with feeling bad. Love is concerned with understanding. Love listens to hear. Love is a state of complete attention, without intruding thoughts and motivations. Contrary to general belief, love is not just a feeling or emotion. The opposite of love is not hate, as is generally assumed. The opposite of love is calculative thinking (in the sense of Heidegger's "das vorstellende Denken"). The opposite of thinking is not nonthinking; it is paying attention to understand.

The term paying attention is of some semantic significance because it implies a certain sacrifice or payment or giving up of something. The question offers itself: What is the payment that is being paid in paying attention? The payment in paying attention is the giving up or

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sacrificing of a certain mental content. This means that to pay attention one must give up certain thoughts and cherished assumptions. The mental currency to be paid for attention is the giving up or letting go of favorite assumptions. Mental assumptions are the price to be paid for the realization of the loving state of consciousness.

Attention is a state of mental receptivity to whatever is, in contradistinction to concentration and fascination, which are object-oriented selective states of cognitive focusing. The object of attention is understanding. The object of love is Love. Love is that intelligence which forever reveals itself as Understanding. The concern with feeling good ignores love. Ignorance is that mental activity which ignores what is forever available. Ignorance then is not a passive state. Neither is love. Love is neither active nor passive. In order for love to come into being, both activity and passivity must “die.” “Whosoever would lose his life for my sake, shall find it” (Luke 9:24). This well-known utterance of Jesus is of great significance for existential psychology. “For my sake” means for the sake of love. To lose one’s life means to abandon the false meanings of life, to drop the misguided endeavors and concerns that give the illusion of constituting the essence of life. After a relatively short time in psychotherapy one patient remarked: “I don’t understand how it happened but I lost my fear of

dying. I never spoke to you about it but it used to be my most pressing problem.” Actually, what happened was that the patient shifted her concern from the gratification of a desire for power and dominance to a realization of the essential significance of the loving mode of existence. This revealed to her that the fear of dying was the fear of discovering that what had previously seemed all-important in her life was based on erroneous assumptions.

Commitment to love is often experienced as frightening. Actually, love requires man to let go of all attachments, outward and inward. More often than not it seems particularly difficult to loosen the hold on mental attachments, for this amounts to what could be called “losing one’s mind,” because what is considered to be mind consists of memories and learned knowledge, assumed notions, favorite strivings. All this must be out of the way for understanding to occur. Since love is complete attention, it must be undivided. The striving, clutching, ambitious man is incapable of undivided attention; his consciousness is impaired, his cognition is deficient, his contact with reality tenuous. Such a man exists on an abased level of mentality. Love is that state of consciousness which brings human potentialities to optimal degrees of realization.

Pleasure-seeking man’s consciousness is focused on gratification. Desires, if gratified, tend to increase; if frustrated, they tend to become more urgently demanding. As long as there is desire

The mind that is attached to the object world—or to the world of ideas and concepts, or to self and others—does not dwell in the realm of Understanding, that is, in the realm of Love. It dwells in the

We are blessed with a certain definition of Love which makes divine Love accessible, even to human comprehension . . . Love is nonpersonal, nonconditional benevolence.

-One Mind 5: Beyond Words

and “pursuit of happiness” in any form, there is anxiety, suffering and conflict. Love is neither gratification nor frustration. Love is harmony with what really is. It is at-one-ment with the flux of life.

Just as ignorance is an active ignoring of what is, anxiety is in no sense something that, so to speak, befalls man. It is self-manufactured. Anxiety is that disturbance of consciousness which is caused by the discrepancy between what “should be” and what really is. Anxiety is generated by the ignoring of the actual. It is the experiential awareness of pursuing a false reality.

Freedom from anxiety and freedom from ignorance are contingent on the same condition, namely, on the cognitive harmony with what is. This, in turn, can only take place in the absence of mental presuppositions concerning what “should be.” Fear, then, is a product of thought and so is everything else outside of love. True love cannot be thought. Love that is thought is not love; it is a concept, an idea about love. True love can be neither given nor gotten. When it is, it gives itself. True love can only be lived as a state of consciousness.

realm of assumptions.

The sphere of the interpersonal is the interrelationship of two conceptual systems, so-called self systems. Conceptual systems

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LOVE AND SELF

The seat of anxiety, fear, pleasure, and pain is in that conceptual system called the self or the ego. Without the self, fear has no place to be.

Love And Self

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are unreal in themselves. In the interpersonal sphere of consciousness there is no understanding of what really is. There is only mental manipulation and calculative thought.

Discordant conditions are evidence of the fact that consciousness has left the realm of Love and become attached to the abstract, alien self. Love is that background of harmony which is obscured but also revealed by the foreground of the discordant ego. The Japanese term Yugem points to that cognitive phenomenon in which the background is meaningfully highlighted by the foreground.

“All things work together for good” (Romans 8:28) for those who dwell in a loving state of consciousness. A man who understands love becomes immune to hate, intolerance, and sensory attachments. To love “Unattached in the Tao” means to understand love as the “essence and destiny of All Things.” Love heals. It makes man whole by enabling him to transcend the dualities and multiplicities of the phenomenal world.

There is an apparent dialectic tension between the self and love. Man is turned either toward love or toward self. In the final analysis there is really no other choice.

In dreams, beliefs, assumptions, and thoughts tend to become images. During waking hours

There is a great difference between attachment and love. Love is non conditional, non personal benevolence, which is liberating. Attachment, on the other hand, is enslavement.

-Commentaries on Scripture

thoughts and assumptions tend to become actions, behavior, bodily experiences, and even structural changes, that is, diseases of the body, mind, feelings, and behavior.

Lovelessness inevitably leads to psychological, somatic, or social complications; discord; and illness. When confronted with his self-generated problems, man tends to fall into the error of attempting to cure himself by “figuring out” the reasons for his suffering and then devising methods to change himself. All such intentions, efforts, and attempts are naive and self-righteous. They ignore the real source of healing that is the outcome of the realization of Love-Intelligence-Understanding as a state of consciousness and a mode of existence.

The subjective perspective on life is a source of suffering. The objective perspective is subjective. Truth is neither objective nor subjective; it is transcendent.

Self-centered consciousness does not discern love as the Ground of Being. Interpersonal consciousness is focused on the interaction of the self and the other; it also fails to see that background without which a foreground could not appear. The interpersonal focus ignores the truth of what really is, because it is concerned with the relationship of the self to the other. It does not realize that the self is the same as the other, since the other is but an other self. In the realm of Understanding there is neither “self” nor “other;” there is only that which really is.

Loveless man often manifests “nervous tension,” which is essentially hunger for gratification of wrong desires. The slave of wrong desires suffers when gratified and suffers when not gratified. Wrong desires hurt. The gratification of wrong desires leaves an unpleasant

aftertaste. Desire desires the gratification of the self. Man too often prefers to glorify himself rather than to love.

Wrong desires can only be displaced by one desire, that is, concern, and that is love. Love frees the mind of wrong desires. When the concern with love takes precedence over all desires, there is a change of base—a reorientation toward that which brings harmony into man’s life. The experiential realization that there is no fear in love suffices for a complete commitment to a loving mode of being-in-the-world.

The self, however, is forever seeking to attract consciousness to itself and thus divert it from truth. Man is inclined to concentrate on the self or on the “other”—the body, clothes, behavior, feelings, appearances—and thus loses contact with that which is accessible to the loving mode of cognition. Love is complete attention to what really is.

Fear and anxiety are experiential evidences of not seeing the actual. Moreover, they further distract attention by attracting it to themselves, and thus a vicious cycle is established. Fear is never of what really is, but of what one thinks is. Man is frightened by his assumptions—assumptions that originate mostly in childhood experiences and are exaggerated by the helplessness of the child’s perspective in relationship to the adult world.

Defensive concerns hamper and deflect consciousness from the task of cognizing what is. Defensive man is preoccupied with what should be, namely, the security and gratification of the self. Or he is preoccupied with what should not be, namely, anxiety, fear, and discomfort.

LOVE AND TIME

Thought as memory is of the past. Anxiety is a product of thought. The habit of thought interferes with cognition and produces disturbances of consciousness. The past as anticipated future obscures the reality of the present.

Anticipatory anxieties are fears of assumptions, that is, the fear of the past repeating itself in the future. Love precludes fear and anxiety because it is fully observed in the seeing of what really is in the present. Love is not concerned with self or other, with feeling good or bad, with being safe or unsafe, with self-esteem or humiliation, with recognition or ridicule. It is concerned only with understanding and responding. It is, then, vital to learn the open-minded confrontation of what really is. Such a confrontation leads to a liberation of the mind from assumptions. This can only be from moment to moment. It means responding to life, not on the basis of past experiences, but rather on the strength of one's

cognitive resources available at all times.

“That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past” (Ecclesiastes 3:15). Love requires man to let go of the past. The loving mode of cognition can only come into being when consciousness is emptied of memory traces, assumptions, and strivings. Truth cannot be cognized purely on the basis of past experiences. What is required is an unequivocal commitment to understanding of what takes place from moment to moment. When light enters, darkness vanishes. Light dissipates darkness. The truth of what really is dissolves preconceptions.

Knowledge is always of the past. Discursive knowledge is not unlike belief. Belief is that mental content which provides man with an illusory sense of security. Man is eager to have his beliefs confirmed and dreads having them challenged. As long as there are beliefs there is anxiety.

The child who is afraid of the dark and the adult who is afraid to be alone are frightened not by what really is, but by their thoughts about what might be. Their fear is due to thinking, imagining, expecting. However, man can only think that which was; he cannot think what is or what shall be. So man is afraid only of the past. The past, however, has no reality, as it is memory. Therefore, fear has no reality; fear is a product of thought.

Cognition of the present is entrance into the realm of love. Only love can free the mind of the past with its prevalently childish assumptions, memories, and misinterpretations. Love is that state of consciousness which is capable of cognizing the truth. Truth liberates from bondage to assumptions.

The self, too, is the past. The self ignores the present. In seeing what is, the self and the past are not. There is neither thinking nor fear in the present. In the present there is only responding to that which reveals itself from moment to moment. ■

LIBERATION

That which is clung to is defended. That which is desired is clung to. That which is desired and clung to is cherished. If truth and love are cherished, nothing is clung to—and man is free. Liberation is the realization of that cognitive freedom which is true love. It can be attained by learning the meaning of letting-be, of meditation, mind-fasting, encounter, and cognitive transcendence.

1. Letting-be (not to be confused with leaving alone) is that mode of being that is characterized by reverent, choiceless awareness of what is in order that it may reveal itself in the essence of its being.

It is that mental attitude which facilitates understanding. Letting-be opens the mind to unimpeded cognition.

2. Meditation is the practice of mindfulness (awareness) of the past interfering with the present in the form of assumptions, beliefs, desires, marginal thoughts. Meditation transcends time.

3. Mind-fasting is a method of bringing the mind into focus with the Infinite through awareness (that is, experiential understanding) of the self as being merely conceptual in character. The mind that is focused on the Infinite (indefinite) is in a state of undivided attention. Undivided attention is capable of seeing whatever reveals itself in its full

and proper context. Mind-fasting transcends the self.

4. Encounter is the crucible of existential psychotherapy. The full import and reality of love is best revealed when, as a result of a series of meaningful encounters with a loving, understanding being, a healing experience comes about. Love makes whole. Encounter transcends the subject/object dichotomy.

5. Cognitive transcendence is a supreme state of intelligence that “sees through” all mental, physical, and interpersonal phenomena that would tend to obscure the luminous lucidity of love in man's consciousness. Truth is not visible; yet it is clearly seen. ■

Excerpt from:

Beyond The Dream 14: *Beyond Nothingness*

Most of the time we think of love in the context of interaction between individuals. We want to get love and to give love. If we think in these terms and see love as coming to us from someone, we feel good, secure, and unafraid. We have the illusion of security. But when this is not forthcoming and instead something else is coming forth — like criticism or rejection — we get frightened and hurt. We can become resentful. This often takes the form of a headache or some other symptom. Therefore, it is important to understand love in a broader context.

The third Metapsychiatric principle says: “There is no interaction anywhere; there is only Omniaction everywhere.” When we say that there is no interaction anywhere, we mean that a great deal

of suffering comes from expecting love from others and building our lives on that idea. If we are living in that context or with such a mind-set, then we are vulnerable, insecure, and easily disturbed. But if we understand love as the essence of God expressing itself through us freely as goodness, intelligence, generosity, and assurance, then love is a spiritual sea, the medium in which “we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28).

No one can deprive us of the happiness and assurance of knowing that we are living expressions of Divine Love. It relieves us of the curse of conceptualizing the good in interactional terms. Problems are basically psychological, which means interpersonal. Solutions are spiritual, which means omniactional.

There is nothing wrong with Reality. It is just that we do not see it clearly. We need to expand our vision.

It is interesting to consider what happens to an individual whose perspective on love and on life is expanded into infinity. If such an individual comes into contact with someone whose vision is interactional, this contact is entirely different from the usual contacts between people. Interaction between unenlightened people could be characterized somewhat along the lines of Zen symbolism as the sound of two hands clap- ping. But the former situation represents what the Zen Masters have so mysteriously designated as the “sound of one hand.” This means that instead of clashing personalities, there is transcendence. ■

Excerpt from:

Beyond The Dream 16: *Willfulness*

When we love one another we love the spiritual qualities which we manifest rather than blue eyes, brown hair, organs, etc. We have to outgrow the primitive form of love which focuses on the tangible, and we have to cultivate an

appreciation of spiritual qualities in one another to a point where these become of primary value. In proportion that we have learned to appreciate spiritual qualities, our interest in the material substance of people, things, and places will

fade out of awareness and will lose its importance. This can reach a point when a piece of property or a physical body completely disappears from thought and the spiritual qualities are clearly present. ■

PAGL Community News Listings

PAGL Group Meetings

Susan von Reichenbach, an established student of Thomas Hora, and teacher of Metapsychiatry, leads regular META Classes (CT) as well as offering private spiritual guidance in Metapsychiatry ~ in person, by telephone or Skype. For more information or inquiries, please

email susan@theMetaWay.com, or visit www.theMetaWay.com or tel. 860.405.4044.

PAGL Group Tuesday mornings in Greenwich, CT led by Susan Fisher. Individual Coaching/Teaching of Metapsychiatry available as well. Call 203-332-4890 for more information.

Monthly PAGL Teleconference on the third Wednesday of every month at 6:30 PM Pacific time, 9:30 PM Eastern Time for 55 minutes. The meeting is led by Heather Brodhead, a spiritual guide in the practice of Metapsychiatry, who is also

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available for private consultation. For more information, contact Heather at: hbrodhead@cox.net or call (California): 805-898-9931.

Ruth Robins maintains a private teaching practice for students of Metapsychiatry from her home in Connecticut. She can be reached at Robinspagl@aol.com

PAGL Groups and private consultations with Nancy Rosanoff, available by phone and in person in Westchester County, NY. www.themetaview.com; 914-930-7095; nancy@rosanoff.com.

Monthly PAGL Group on a

selected Thursday of each month at 8 PM Eastern, with Bruce & Diana Kerievsky. For info: 609-662-4911 or bruce.kerievsky@gmail.com. Diana is also available for private consultations by phone and by Skype.

PAGL Resources

Donna Goddard's third book, *Love's Longing*, has now been published. It is based on the longing for spiritual love. Donna's studies with Dr. Hora many years ago formed her understanding of spiritual love. <http://donnagoddard.com/buy-books/>

THREE META BOOKS: A set of two companion books to Metapsychiatry compiled by Susan von Reichenbach: "META Meanings," which defines Metapsychiatry's core ideas, its vocabulary, and juxtapositional

method with examples; and "META Prayers and Principles," which is a collection (with elucidations) of what Hora called Meta's "guidelines to spiritual living;" also "METAtations," a small, verbatim treasury of wisdom words from Hora on diverse topics for contemplation. To view books, visit www.theMetaWay.com or www.amazon.com To order directly, contact Reichenbach at metabooks@metapsychiatry.info or by phone at 860-405-4044

Metapsychiatry on TV ~ In The Listening Place's nine part television series, "Who am I? What is the Purpose of My Life?"; Nancy Rosanoff interviews Ruth Robins about the core ideas of Metapsychiatry. If you would like to watch a free clip from the show, read the text of some interviews or purchase the DVD series, visit: www.metapsychiatry.org

PAGL View

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