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Goals, Principles, and Practices for Community-Based Adult Education Through the Lens of A Hatcher-Assagioli Synthesis

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GOALS, PRINCIPLES, AND PRACTICES FOR COMMUNITY-BASED ADULT EDUCATION THROUGH THE LENS OF A HATCHER-ASSAGIOLI SYNTHESIS

A Dissertation Presented

by

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DEDICATION

To my parents,
Alessandra and Paul Shepard,
to my husband Jacob,
and to our children,
Alena Isa and Cedric Lucca.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

GOALS, PRINCIPLES, AND PRACTICES FOR COMMUNITY-BASED ADULT EDUCATION THROUGH THE LENS OF A HATCHER-ASSAGIOLI SYNTHESIS

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This study examines how adult education can facilitate learning towards the full realization of human potential. It synthesizes two theories of human development, and applies this to the practice of community-based adult education carried out by trained facilitators who do not have formal degrees in the field of mental health. The first part of the methodology used modified analytic induction to carry out a synthesis between the works of William Hatcher (1935-2005) and Roberto Assagioli (1888-1974). The second part of the methodology works with the goals, principles, and practices which emerged from the "lens" provided by this synthesis, and applies these to an analysis of the Integrated and Systemic Community Therapy (CT) approach to community-based adult education, in Brazil. The impetus for this study was a desire to move beyond limitations of the humanistic orientation in adult education towards a more holistic theory, which draws on

and combines both scientific and spiritual views of human reality. The study theorizes that learning which supports the full realization of human nature should actively seek to a) foster a person's ability to take action in the 'outer world' of human social relations (interpersonal dimension) while b) aligning one's 'inner world' (intrapersonal dimension) with an emerging implicate order, which is the origin of the structure of reality. Based on its relevance to the expanding Community Therapy approach the conclusion of the study is that the "lens" of a Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis deserves to be applied and explored further.

Key words: community-based adult education; William Hatcher; Roberto Assagioli; Integrated and Systemic Community Therapy; spirituality in adult education.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure   **Page**

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCING THIS STUDY

A Guiding Vision

On the whole, the field of adult education takes a hopeful stance on humanity's collective capacity to build another, better world. This hopefulness is partly what attracted me to the field in the first place, and it has held me as I carried out this study. In both my professional and personal life I am sustained by my belief in humankind's capacity to succeed in the pursuit of a just and peaceful world, one in which every human being can not only survive, but also flourish.

More than a feeling, Brazilian educator Paulo Freire holds that hopefulness in human capacity to succeed in establishing another, better world, is essential to the success of this undertaking:

> …when it becomes a program, hopelessness paralyzes us, immobilizes us. We succumb to fatalism, and then it becomes impossible to muster the strength we absolutely need for a fierce struggle that will re-create the world…the attempt to do without hope, in the struggle to improve the world…is a frivolous illusion…Without…hope, we cannot so much as start the struggle… Hence the need for a kind of education in hope (Freire, 1995, p.8)

To believe that humankind is capable of building a better world is ultimately to believe that nothing intrinsic within human nature makes this hoped-for-world impossible to achieve. The stance of every educational philosophy is determined by the assumptions it makes about human beings, whether or not these assumptions are explicitly stated. This includes the assumptions it makes about what human beings *are* (the nature of human

1

nature), as well as its assumptions about what human beings *can and should* aspire to become (their "*telos*" or purpose) (Hergenhahn, 1992; MacLeod, 1975; Youngman, 1986).

A Historic Focus on Pathology

Throughout most of the twentieth century Western psychology's interest in the amelioration of psychopathology overshadowed its' interest in the promotion of well-being and personal growth. It was not until the late 1950's and early 1960's that the focus of psychology began to shift away from psychopathology in the direction of prevention, and not until the 1970's that theoreticians, researchers, and clinicians began to study growth, well-being, and the promotion of wellness in earnest (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Hergenhahn, 1992).

Abraham Maslow - a major architect of the new movement and generally regarded as the father of Humanistic or Third Force psychology - was elected president of the American Psychological Association in 1968. Psychologist and educator Carl Rogers came to be widely known for his humanistic approach to therapy, and many held him be the most influential psychologist in the nation. Other luminaries of the early history of the humanistic psychology movement include Rollo May, Gordon Allport, Gardner Murphy, Henry Murray, Erich Fromm, Charlotte Buhler, Virginia Satir, Fritz Perls, Ludwig Binswanger and James Bugental. The contributions of these theoreticians and practitioners notwithstanding, the stance of academic psychology towards the humanistic psychology movement has mainly been a critical one from its inception, and this stance only began to noticeably shift with the launching of the Positive Psychology movement

(Aanstoos, Serlin & Greening, 2000; DeCarvalho, 1991; Hergenhahn, 1992; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Unfortunately if not surprisingly, this same tendency to focus on pathological human functioning has historically played out in the international health and development arenas, as well. In a comprehensive study on the state of world's mental health, Desjarlais, Eisenberg, Good & Kleinman (1995) point to the persistent use of disease and mortality rates as "indicators of health" even while there is an "expressed concern for a broad definition of health" (p. 259). One consequence of this focus on morbidity and mortality is that many of the "most profound issues" affecting the health and the well-being of communities and individuals - such as alcoholism, drug addiction, the exploitation of children, homelessness, discrimination and abuse against women, and ethnic and political violence - have been "largely neglected" by researchers and have "little place in policy development" (Desjarlais, et al., 1995, p. 259).

This analysis is echoed by Brazilian neuro-psychiatrist and community therapist Maria Henriquetta Camarotti, who similarly laments the short sightedness of policy that equates psychological well being with the absence of formally diagnosed disease. In a sweeping assessment of the psychological health of the impoverished masses of Brazil Camarotti observes that,

> …the mental health institutions don't reach these people, including the national public health services. They are people who suffer in many ways, but historically have not been considered human beings worthy of care. They may not have an officially diagnosed disease but they live lives of suffering, of abandonment, of anguish…(Camarotti, n.d., para. 1)

How can we address the global burden of suffering that affects individual and community mental health, limiting the potential for human development on a global scale?[1] In examining how community-based adult education can further its capacity to facilitate learning which supports movement and growth towards the full realization of human nature this study is situated within the broad range of approaches that choose to see human beings as whole persons, possessing innate and universal potential for growth and development, and psychological well-being as more than the absence of disease.

Early Theoretical Grounding of This Study

Humanistic approaches have a strong hold within the field of adult education, and psychological humanisms' conception of human nature is one of the key sources of adult education's hopeful view of human capacity to establish a more just and humane world. While others have made significant contributions, the works of Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow - in particular Roger's theory of the fully functioning person and Maslow's theory of motivation ending in self-actualization, as the highest level of human experience - constitute the foundation of modern humanistic approaches to education (Elias & Merriam, 2005; Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007; Sahakian, 1984).

Andragogy, Malcolm Knowles' set of assumptions about adults as learners and the "best-known" framework of adult learning (Merriam et al., 2007, p. 83) is founded on the assumptions of modern humanistic psychology and on the work of Carl Rogers, in particular (Elias & Merriam, 2005). The "theoretical popularity" of Freire's "radical pedagogy" notwithstanding, Elias and Merriam note that the number of educational

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[1] For many mental and health behavioral problems there is little evidence of a decline with a rise in a society's wealth, thus these problems are truly global in nature (Desjarlais, et.al., 1995)

practices "grounded in humanistic philosophy" far exceed the number of radical

programs in the United States (2005, p.143),

> Principles from humanistic philosophy and psychology
> have permeated the field of adult education...When one
> adds to Knowles's humanistic theory of andragogy the
> philosophical efforts of McKenzie, Stanage, Mezirow and
> Jarvis, one grasps the strong hold that the humanistic
> approach has on the philosophy of adult education (Elias &
> Merriam, 2005, p. 143)

Along with their positive outlook on human potential and their general

philosophical influence within the field of adult education, the works of Maslow and

Rogers also contributed to this study the view that learning in adulthood can be – and

ideally is - a means of fostering self-actualizing and fully functioning individuals

(Sahakian, 1984; Elias & Merriam, 2005). Particularly for Rogers, who developed his

learning theory "out of his experiences as a therapist, learning life from his clients",

learning and psychotherapy have "much in common, if they are not entirely alike"

(Sahakian, 1984, p. 444). This assumption of the mutually reinforcing relationship that

exists between learning in adulthood and growth in the direction of the full realization of

human nature, has been another main assumption of mine from the outset.

<u>A Story With Two Beginnings</u>

When I designed this inquiry I proposed to analyze four case studies, each one

documenting the implementation of a different "therapeutically-oriented" approach to

nonformal adult education. The data obtained would provide a working definition of what

"therapeutically-oriented" means in the context of education which supports "eudaimonic

well-being", a modernist interpretation of the realization of one's true nature and

potential with roots in classical Aristotelian philosophy and based on the works of Maslow and Rogers, among others (Norton, 1976; Ryff, 1995; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman, 1993).

In the subsequent analysis I proposed to contrast the view of human nature and fulfillment found in the works of Italian psychiatrist Roberto Assagioli (1988-1974) with the view of human nature and fulfillment obtained inductively from the above case study analysis. Assagioli's assumption that adults can generally learn how to carry out much of the work required for self-development towards the full realization of human nature was an important reason for including the theory and practice of his work in my proposed study.

As I delved into the works of Maslow and Rogers in greater depth I came upon differences between my growing understanding of Aristotle's views of human nature and fulfillment and the sometimes more, and other times less explicit, understanding of human nature and fulfillment in the works of Maslow. This was partly due to my own limitations and partly due to the fact that (as I would later learn) Maslow reworked his theories over time, and often did not incorporate these changes into his theoretical constructs (Crain, 1992). As a result, his theory of motivation is plagued with several important instances of what Neher (1991) describes as "Maslow contradicting Maslow" (p. 105).

While troubled, I persevered with my original proposal since there is much in the works of Maslow and Rogers I feel deeply aligned with. As a graduate student with deadlines to meet, I was also understandably concerned with the implications of changing my proposed research. Finally, in a very long footnote in Maslow's *Motivation and*

Personality (1987) I came across a statement by Maslow, indicating that the differences I

had noted were real and intentional. Below is an excerpt of this footnote:

> At first blush this conception [his own] reminds us a great
> deal of the Aristotelian and Spinozist ideas of the past. In
> truth, we must say that this conception has much in
> common with the older philosophies. But we must also
> point out that we now know a great deal more than
> Aristotle about the true nature of the human being. We may
> agree with Aristotle when he assumed that the good life
> consisted in living in accordance with the true nature of
> man, but we must add that he simply did not know enough
> about the true nature of the human being. All that Aristotle
> could do in delineating this essential nature, or inherent
> design of human nature, was to look about him, to study
> people, to observe what they were like…The only thing
> that Aristotle could do was to build a picture of the good
> man in his own culture and in that particular period of time
> (Maslow, 1987, p. 115)

As a result of this process, I slowly came to the decision to change my proposal.

My advisor submitted a request for an extension to the Graduate School and asked me to

include a written explanation of my own. An excerpt of this statement follows,

> When I proposed this inquiry into nonformal adult
> education I intended to use the foundation of humanistic
> psychology to identify the principles and practices of a
> "therapeutically-oriented" approach to nonformal adult
> education. Over the past year I found myself obliged, for
> reasons of intellectual and moral honesty, to critically re-
> assess humanistic psychology's concept of human nature,
> and my whole proposal shifted. Although I have since
> overcome this impasse and incorporated (with the approval
> of my advisor) the necessary changes into my proposal
> which allow me to move forward, getting to this point has
> been a difficult and time consuming process. It required
> that I undertake the study of fields of knowledge unfamiliar
> to me -- most notably the study of the World Religions and
> Philosophy -- and to draw on this study in order to make a
> case for a conception of human nature that is based on a
> holistic (i.e., spiritual and material) conception of human
> nature rather than humanistic psychology's more restricted
> concept of human nature.

As I would later learn, identifying suitable theoretical grounding for these changes was not as easy as I originally anticipated. Implementing a coherent argument for the present study within the adult education literature was a challenging process, slow in coming, and comprising a significant portion of the journey I undertook in carrying out this work. This study is a summary of that journey.

Statement of the Problem

This study concerns itself with the problem of how adult education can further its ability to facilitate learning which supports movement and growth towards the full realization of human nature, in the context of community-based adult education interventions carried out by trained facilitators who do not have formal degrees in the field of mental health. The motivation behind this study was my desire to move beyond certain limitations, which I perceive in the approach of the humanistic orientation within adult education, to facilitating learning that supports movement and growth towards the full realization of human nature.

The humanistic orientation has brought valuable contributions to the field of adult learning through its focus on the whole person who possesses unlimited and innate potential for growth and development in higher, uniquely human dimensions. Maslow and Rogers both forged new territory in seeking to move beyond behaviorism and classical Freudianism, in developing the foundations of the humanistic orientation to education. Nonetheless, they maintained the reductionistic view of their predecessors through their assumption that human nature consists of an essential, biological core or inner nature, which includes and directs all the basic needs and impulses towards growth

and self-actualization (Crain, 1992; Garrison, 2001; Maslow, 1987, 1968, 1971; Rogers, 1961, 1983). In my view, this assumption has limited the ability of the humanistic orientation within adult education to facilitate learning towards the very ends it envisions.

Purpose of This Study

The purpose of this study is to examine what an approach to adult education might be which assumes: 1) that human reality is dual in nature, possessing both material and spiritual aspects or powers 2) that it is the spiritual dimension of human nature which confers innate and universal human potential for growth and development and 3) that education which supports movement and growth towards the full realization of human nature should actively seek to foster a person's ability to take action in the world of human social relations, which increasingly brings one into alignment with an implicate order, which is the origin of the structure of reality[2].

Among the various approaches that could have been used to implement this study I choose to carry out a synthesis between the works of two pioneers in the field of education, broadly stated: they are psychiatrist, theoretician and educator Roberto Assagioli (1888-1974) and philosopher, logician and educator William Hatcher (1935-2005). While Assagioli and Hatcher each hail from different branches of inquiry into the nature of human nature and fulfillment, an initial examination of their work showed me that they hold remarkably similar understandings of the nature of reality, and of the nature of human nature and fulfillment within this reality.

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[2] The theory of an implicate order underlying apparent chaos was developed by quantum physicist David Bohm (1917-1992). Bohm's argument for a holistic understanding of the universe in which every part is related to every other part, in different degrees (interrelated) holds that visible, tangible reality is fundamentally a process of continuous enfoldment and unfoldment from a deeper, seamless, flowing whole (implicate order) (Bohm, 1996).

Briefly, Hatcher and Assagioli are in agreement that:

- A supernatural, Transcendent/Ultimate Reality is the origin of reality as we know it, including human reality

- Reality (all that exists, everything there is) is both material (concrete or physical) and spiritual (non-material or metaphysical)

- Objective laws inherent in the structure of reality determine order (causality) and set down in a predictable manner (cause and effect) the functioning of reality, in both material and spiritual spheres, or dimensions of reality

- Human reality is dual in nature, possessing both material and spiritual aspects or powers

- It is in the spiritual sense that Hatcher and Assagioli hold human nature to be intrinsic and universal, irrespective of race, culture, or time period

- The most significant/defining characteristic of human nature is the individual's capacity for consciousness or self-awareness, which endows every human being with an inner, private world to which only s/he has direct access

- Reality, each Hatcher and Assagioli affirm, is teleological and is evolving towards greater order and complexity in both the macrosphere (reality as a whole) and the microsphere (human reality)

- Education that fosters a person's ability to bring her "inner world" increasingly in line with a universal moral imperative - an ongoing process with direct implications for the individuals' interactions in the "outer world" of human social relations - is fundamental to the full realization of human nature (Assagioli, 2000, 2002; Hatcher, 2002).

Other aspects which informed my decision to undertake a synthesis of the work of Hatcher and Assagioli in this study were that 1) each regards adult learning as having an important role to play in supporting the full realization of human potential and 2) each holds that scientific and religious understandings of human nature and fulfillment are not inherently in conflict with each other.

Primary Research Questions

In light of this purpose this study examined the following primary research questions, together with their related sub-questions.

In looking through the "lens" of a Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis:

1) What are the goals, principles, and practices of an approach to education that seeks to support the full realization of human nature?

2) How does such an approach support a person's capacity to establish ethical relations in the interpersonal and intrapersonal dimensions?

3) How can the approach be applied in community-based adult education programs implemented by trained facilitators, who do not have formal degrees in the field of mental health?

Sub-Questions Related to the Interpersonal Dimension

1) What is the goal of education that seeks to support the development of

key capabilities that are necessary (but not sufficient) for right (ethical)

relationships within the world of human social relations?

    1.1 What key principles support learning and growth towards this goal?

    1.2 What key practices support learning and growth towards this goal?

Sub-Questions Related to the Intrapersonal Dimension

2) What is the goal of education that seeks to support the development of

key capabilities that are necessary (but not sufficient) for right (ethical)

relationship with needs, impulses, and desires as they manifest within the

self?

    2.1 What key principles support learning and growth towards this goal?

    2.2 What key practices support learning and growth towards this goal?

The next chapter locates these questions within the literature, providing

background for this study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter is divided into three parts, as follows:

Part A: Looking at the Present

Part A discusses the perspective of modern humanistic psychology and education regarding human nature, and the role of education which fosters the full realization of human nature, and compares it with the pre-modern approach of classical humanism towards the same.

Part B: Looking at the Past

Part B discusses the perspective of human nature and fulfillment of six global religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and the Bahá'í Faith) in light of the elements of the pre-modern humanistic tradition that were outlined in Part A.

Part C: Looking Towards the Future

Building on this analysis, Part C introduces the works of philosopher William Hatcher (1935-2005) and transpersonal psychiatrist Roberto Assagioli (1888-1974) as two pioneers whose perspective on human nature and fulfillment provides insight into the direction adult education might conceivably turn, with a view to moving beyond the limitations of the humanistic orientation to learning towards the full realization of human nature.

Part A: Looking at the Present

Modern humanistic psychology and education are a recent expression of the humanistic intellectual tradition with roots in ancient philosophies from different historical eras. Throughout human history humanistic sentiment has emerged whenever people have felt human dignity was being undermined by a given system or authority, whether it be a political, religious, or an intellectual one. As such the humanistic philosophical approach has appeared under many guises among which are Classical Humanism, Renaissance Humanism, Christian Humanism, Enlightenment Humanism, Existential Humanism, Scientific Humanism, Secular Humanism and Marxist Humanism.

While all of these approaches to humanistic philosophy and sentiment hold in common a belief in the intrinsic dignity or value of the human being and in the potential of each human being to develop her or his self, and to contribute to the wider good of the collective, they have produced a variety of approaches to learning in support of this process and do not always see eye-to-eye (Kurtz, 1973; Lamont, 1988; Hergenhahn, 1992).

Psychological Foundations of the Humanistic Orientation Within Adult Education

Many of the distinctive features of the humanistic orientation within education can be traced to the ideas of Maslow and Rogers, as they sought to counter the limitations they perceived in the prevailing understandings of human nature and potential within the discipline of psychology of their time (Elias & Merriam, 2005; Sahakian, 1984).

Maslow's motivation to call upon a humanistic orientation within psychology emerged within what has been called the fourth and latest, wave of humanism which

14

began at the turn of the 20th century; in psychology this humanist sentiment emerged primarily in reaction to the behavioristic approach to scientific inquiry, and to a lesser degree, also in reaction the deterministic views of classical Freudianism. Prior to this, the other three great waves of humanism to emerge were: Classical humanism in 5th century Greece, Renaissance humanism approximately 400 to 600 years ago, and Enlightenment humanism in the 17th and 18th centuries (Schneider, Bugental, & Pierson, 2001).

According to Crain (1992) many behaviorists saw themselves within the humanistic tradition given that they were ultimately trying to develop scientific techniques seeking to "better the human lot" using an "environmental, scientific approach" (p. 318). Others within the field of psychology disagreed with their approach, however. Among these were Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, whose basic concerns with the behaviorist approach were that human beings could not be reduced to those aspects which lend themselves to measurement and environmental control (Aanstoos et al., 2000; Moss, 2001).

Whatever its merits (Maslow himself had written his dissertation and worked for many years within the Behaviorist tradition) Maslow argued that behaviorism's picture of the human being was limited, and called for a new approach. Classical Freudianism (psychoanalysis) was the other main branch of psychology against whose views humanistic psychology sought to establish itself. Rogers in particular, sought to move beyond certain assumptions of Freudian psychoanalysis that predominated within clinical settings in the United States at the time (Hergenhahn, 1992).

Drawing a line separating the ideas of different schools of thought usually leaves significant overlaps, and this also is true in the case of humanistic psychology. Crain

notes that in a sense, Maslow never gave up Behaviorism since he always realized that

"people are subject to conditioning from the external environment" as can be seen in his

Theory of Motivation (1992, p. 320). Maslow himself makes this point,

> It is very difficult, I have found, to communicate to others
> my simultaneous respect for, and impatience with, these
> two comprehensive psychologies. So many people insist on
> being *either* pro-Freudian *or* anti-Freudian, pro-scientific
> *or* anti-scientific psychology, etc. In my opinion all such
> loyalty-positions are silly. Our job is to integrate various
> truths into one whole truth, which should be our only
> loyalty (Maslow, 1968, p. vii**)**

A broader historical context of his day that influenced Maslow's work was World

War II. The day after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor a profoundly shaken Maslow

vowed to devote the rest of his life to developing "a psychology for the peace table" that

would be useful on "a worldwide basis" based on, "factual evidence, which could be

accepted by all mankind". With this vision in mind Maslow set himself to the task of

proving that "human beings are capable of something grander than war and prejudice and

hatred" (Maslow, quoted in Hoffman, 1992).

The Views of Abraham Maslow

In developing his scientifically-based alternative to the theories of human

motivation, along with their respective theories of human nature and fulfillment, of both

behaviorism and classical Freudian psychoanalysis Maslow proposed a hierarchy of six

levels of biologically-given needs which motivate human behavior, and which must be

met for human fulfillment. They are physiological, safety, belonging, love, self-esteem

and self-actualization. On the lowest level of his hierarchy Maslow placed intrinsic and

universal physiological needs such as hunger and thirst, which must be reasonably met

before one can meet the next level, for security and protection, and from there on to the remaining levels which represent human social needs for belonging and love, followed by esteem needs (Maslow, 1968, 1987).

At the highest point of his hierarchy Maslow placed the human need for becoming all one is capable of becoming which he called "self-actualization" and by which he meant the actualization of a person's potentials, capacities, and talents. Maslow studied this dimension by studying the lives of people whom he considered to be exceptionally healthy and creative (Maslow, 1968, 1987).

As previously noted, understanding Maslow's position on critical points in his theory is complicated by the fact that he modified his ideas over the years, and was not always systematic in the process (Crain, 1992; Neher, 1991; Goble, 1971). The assumptions below represent a partial summary of his views according to Crain (1992). Viewed as a whole, these assumptions provide the foundation of Maslow's thinking on the role of learning towards the actualization of the highest human potential:

- Humans possess an essential, biological, inner nature, which includes all the basic needs and the impulses towards growth and self-actualization.

- This inner core is partly species-wide and partly idiosyncratic, for we all have special bents, temperaments, and abilities.

- Our inner core is a positive force that presses toward the realization of full humanness; our inner nature, not the environment, plays the guiding role.

- Our inner nature is not strong, like instincts in animals. Rather it is subtle, delicate, and in many ways weak…Maslow says that it is easily "drowned out by learning, by cultural expectations, by fear, by disapproval, etc."

17

- The suppression of our inner nature usually takes place in childhood…socializing agents frequently lack respect for children's choices; instead they try to direct children, to teach them things…Consequently children quit trusting themselves and their senses and begin to rely on the opinions of others.

- Although it is weak, our inner core with its urge towards self-actualization rarely disappears altogether. Even in adulthood…it persists underground, in the unconscious, and speaks to us as in inner voice waiting to be heard… Our inner core is a pressure… it is this urge or "will to health" on which all successful psychotherapy is based.

- There are a few people – "self-actualizers" - who have remained deeply responsive to their inner natures and urges towards growth. These people are less molded and flattened by cultural pressures, and have preserved the capacity to look at the world in a spontaneous, childlike manner (adapted from Crain, 1992, pp. 321-322).

The Views of Carl Rogers

Carl Rogers is generally held to be the "major theoretician and spokesman for humanistic education" and he is also the one who articulated and popularized many of the practical applications of a humanistic philosophy to education (Elias & Merriam, 2005. p. 132). Because he came to his educational theory after many years of practice as a clinician, Rogers' theoretical approach is less comprehensive than Maslow's. However his insights and prescriptions for education have the added merit of being developed in

the context of real-world counseling settings based on Rogers' years of refining and personally striving to live up to them (Elias & Merriam, 2005; Sahakian, 1984).

As a clinician Rogers initially worked within the psychoanalytic school that predominated in the 1950's in the United States but his personal experiences with his clients led him to reconsider this approach. Over the course of his career Rogers first developed what he called a "non-directive" approach, because at the time he believed that clients would solve their problems automatically, given a positive environment. He later modified this understanding when he understood that the therapist had a distinct role to play in making an effort to understand the client, and accept her perspective, before progress could be made; this second approach became known as the "client-centered" approach (Rogers, 1961, 1957).

Like Maslow, Rogers postulates an innate, biological, human drive towards self-actualization and holds that by living according to it people will live lives that are fulfilling, ultimately reaching their full potential. Rogers called the process of living according to one's innermost feelings the *organismic valuing process*. The problems most people are facing, and which keep them from realizing their full potential, arise from the lack of what he called *positive regard*. Rogers postulates that when a child does not freely receive love, acceptance, sympathy and respect from the people she depends on, she develops patterns that lead her to get what she needs in ways that are not true to her innermost valuing process. These *conditions of worth* lead her to deny and distort her inner experience, leading to a lack of inner *congruency* (Rogers, 1961; Sahakian, 1984).

Roger's understanding of the need to avoid imposing conditions of worth on people, by giving them unconditional positive regard, is fundamental to what later

19

evolved into his views on education. In therapy he had learned to trust that the client, rather than the therapist was the one who knew which directions to take, and should be trusted to do so. In his book *Freedom to Learn for the 80's* (Rogers, 1983) he similarly suggested that the ideal relationship between the learner and the educator was one in which the facilitator served as a resource for the learner.

Another fundamental point was the quality of the relationship between learner and facilitator: Rogers called for lack of pretense on the part of the facilitator; for caring and acceptance; for recognizing and accepting each learner as a separate person, worthy and unique; for lack of judgment regarding the way a learner sees the world. Rogers' understanding of significant learning assumes that when provided a certain type of relationship, every person can discover within herself the capacity to "use that relationship for growth and change and personal development will occur" (Rogers, 1961, p. 33).

Implications for Adult Learning Theory

For both Rogers and Maslow the impulse to learn is intrinsic within human nature and is related to the process of becoming fully human (Rogers, 1961, 1983) and of self-actualization (Maslow, 1968, 1971). Within the humanistic orientation to education in adult learning theory the influence of Rogers is generally recognized, and this influence is particularly visible within, Knowles' conception of Andragogy (Elias & Merriam, 2005; Merriam et al., 2007). While behaviorism and classical Freudianism held that human behavior is predetermined by either the environment (behaviorism) or one's subconscious (Freudianism) a humanistic orientation holds that people are free to choose their own

course of action; consequently, along with the goal of fostering agency within the individual learner the relationship of the learner and facilitator is also significant, in that the facilitator should serve as a resource who supports the aims chosen by the learner (Elias & Merriam, 2005; Merriam et al., 2007; Sahakian, 1984).

Because the humanistic orientation assumes that people are "inherently good and will strive for a better world" (Merriam et al., 2007, p. 282) along with an overall emphasis on non-directiveness there is also an emphasis on an inclusion of the inner, affective dimension of learning and of enabling the learner to find the answers within, in an effort to maximize the potential for learning to actualize the human potential for growth. Building on this assumption another characteristic of the ideal learning experience that contributes to human growth and the development of human potential is the value placed on experiential learning. This appears in several ways. Rather than a prescribed curriculum, it is assumed that the learner is the one who is best able to set the goals for the learning process; a self-chosen curriculum is held to be the means to encourage growth and development within the individual learner (Merriam, et al., 2007; Merriam & Elias, 2005; Sahakian, 1984).

The Pre-Modern View of Classical Humanism

Maslow uses the example of an oak tree growing from an acorn to explain the intrinsic growth force, which impels a person towards self-actualization. This example is one that he borrowed from Aristotle. However Jung (who re-introduced Aristotle's concept of self-actualization) and later Maslow and Rogers, modified Aristotle's original understanding of self-actualization. While Maslow and Rogers speak of the realization of

an individual's potential, what Aristotle was referring to was the realization of the potential of one's species (Hergenhahn, 1992).

Another difference between modern and pre-modern humanistic views of human nature and fulfillment is that in contrast with the view of human nature in the works of Maslow and Rogers, for classical and Renaissance humanists the process of human flourishing was not automatic or inevitable (Dillon, 2008). Within the classical and Renaissance humanistic tradition the sociopolitical regime in which a person lives was held to deeply shape the development of character, which is not seen as merely internal and personal; in classical humanism a great deal of help from others - the educational process known to the Greeks as *Paideia* - plays a critical role in the actualization of human potential (Dillon, 2006).

The pre-modern view also sees human beings as being engaged in an internal struggle for actualization that calls for the development of inner mastery (Dillon, 2006; Trigg, 1999). For 20th century humanist Irving Babbitt (1865-1933) in contrast to the romantic view of human beings as governed by benevolent passions within, begun by the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rosseau (1712-1778) the classical, pre-modern, Eastern and Western sources are in agreement that "there is a tension within human nature" between the "normative and the idiosyncratic, the expansive and the selective" (Dillon, 2006, p. 64). Thus for Aristotle,

> The path of virtue was not a matter of private concern
> alone, and was too important to be left to individual
> whim…Aristotle was under no illusion about the difficulty
> of acquiring virtue. The different faculties of the soul were
> always in potential conflict with each other…We can only
> become virtuous by becoming accustomed to doing
> virtuous things…A virtue is a state of character which has
> to be acquired. It is perhaps something of a paradox that we

have to learn to act in the way that is most in accord with our true nature…It is though, what will contribute most to our well-being. A State should help us fulfill our nature, and Aristotle never underestimates the power of habit and tradition. Unless the State provides the right background, humans will never be able to flourish (Trigg, 1999, p. 31)

Modern romantic views of human nature "recast" this inner tension, making it take place not within human nature but "between the outside and the inside, between the outer shackles of norms and the liberating forces of individual emotion and impulse" (Dillon, 2006, p. 64). A philosopher of the early Enlightenment era, Rosseau was strongly opposed to the doctrine that human nature is inherently depraved. One of the central elements of Rosseauian romanticism is that human feelings and expansive impulses are essentially good and to be trusted, while social institutions are responsible for human misery and moral evil. From Rosseau onward, there has been a modern tendency to "look on everything that is expansive as natural or vital and on everything that restricts expansion as conventional or artificial" (Babbitt, in Dillon, 2006, p. 63).

Babbitt's critique of Rosseau's views is not that they oppose original sin or that they glorify human nature. He rather takes issue with Rosseau's contention that human nature "does not require any internal discipline or control to come into its own" and that "expressive desire on its own" is held to be the path to self-realization (Dillon, 2006, p. 63). Babbitt disagreed that the expansive component of human nature is "more real, valid or authentic than the selective component". For him "…[l]anguage, reason, and ethical restraint" are as natural as "emotion and impulse" (Dillon, 2006, p. 64).

Romanticism in Adult Learning Theory

Modernity's shift away from pre-modern, classical, Eastern and Western views is evident

within the modern humanistic orientation towards human nature and fulfillment in

psychology and education. Hergenhahn (1992) notes that Rogers' understanding of an

organismic valuing process which impels an individual to become fully functioning is a

restatement of Enlightenment humanisms' emphasis on the individual, as given through

"Rosseau's beliefs in the primacy of personal feelings as guides for action" (p. 516).

Crain (1992) notes that Maslow's view of human nature is essentially the Romantic view

of the Enlightenment era which is characterized by a fondness of past, earlier periods of

life in which "we were more in tune with Nature and had a more spontaneous outlook"

(p.327). He also points to Maslow's reliance on Nature and biological forces as opposed

to society as a trait that makes his views on self-actualization "strongly romantic" (Crain,

1992, p. 324).

The modern worldview of romantic naturalism with its excessive focus on the

inner experiences of the autonomous self, appears in the modern humanistic orientation

to psychology and education through the assumption that the individual is free to live

according to her own scheme of meaning, purpose, and value in the process of fulfilling

her talents and abilities, and that effective education fosters and supports an individual's

biological core or growth forces, which are held to be the individual's source of direction.

Within the humanistic orientation to adult learning these assumptions can be seen within

andragogical assumptions which hold that the process of learning should place the

individual learner's interests, and the development of her talents and abilities at the center

of the learning venture, and through the assumption that fostering self-direction and

independence from her socio-cultural context is essential to adult learning (Merriam et al., 2007).

Implications Towards Future Practice

The point of this review is not to say that the "molding" and the "flattening" which Maslow speaks of, leading to a clouding of some aspect within one's deepest sense of self, does not take place in the course of lived experience; nor that deeply respectful relationships which encourage a person's internal congruence, are not fundamental to human well-being.

The point rather, is that when we equate the individual's fulfillment with the actualization of an innate, biologically given drive to be self-actualized, our approach to learning which fosters the full realization of human nature becomes limited, in a large way, to supporting the inner subjective experience; this in turn, limits to our ability to foster the fulfillment of human potential.

In an effort to address the imbalances within the modern humanistic orientation psychologist James Dillon (2008) has proposed several strategies, calling for a return to the essence of a pre-modern understanding of human nature and fulfillment in humanistic psychology and education. Three of these strategies that are relevant to the aims of this inquiry are summarized below:

Focus More on Character, Less on Inner Experience

- Modern approaches to facilitating learning and growth towards the full realization
  of human potential tend to focus much more upon the self, inner experience,
  feelings, and meaning than the classical sources. By way of addressing this "lack
  of balance" Dillon proposes that modern humanistic approaches to psychology
  and education should focus "more on character and less on selfhood and inner
  experience" (Dillon, 2008, p. 236).

Build Upon Previous Work Which Emphasizes Social Action

- Dillon's call for a "renewed focus on character" is followed by a call for this
  focus to build on previous work of figures within humanistic psychology that
  have "challenged the discipline to be more focused on social action and ethics".
  "Contact with genuine and authentic human experience is not an end in itself," he
  says "but must lead to the development of enduring habits and just action in the
  world" (Dillon, 2008, p. 236).

Place Less Emphasis on Self-Directedness in Education

- Dillon likewise calls for a renewed emphasis on the role of the teacher and a
  renewed focus on "the guiding (not stifling) hand of wisdom in this process"
  (Dillon, 2008, p. 233). Under the influence of modernity the attempt to facilitate
  the optimal development of human nature or *"paideia"* has come to be seen as
  "little more than manipulation and indoctrination" and a form of me "imposing
  my values on you" (p. 232). As a result, the idea that people "should adopt habits
  and practices that are not immediately generated from the inner self" is often
  regarded as a form of "self-betrayal, a subjugation of ones' desires and impulses

for the sake of something extrinsic" (Dillon, 2006, p. 70).

Others within humanistic psychology have noted similar concerns and have proposed similar re-configurations of the ideal approach to learning that fosters human fulfillment. Diaz-Laplante (2007) identifies the need to integrate "humanistic psychology principles" into the practice of social transformation and in particular with, "poverty eradication in the least developed countries…of our world (p. 55). She maintains that what is "missing" from humanistic psychology is "a clearly specified link between personal healing and social transformation" and that "the emancipatory goals of humanistic psychology cannot be achieved without linking dialogue to action" (p. 62).

Hanks (2008) makes a case for the need to develop "new paradigms within humanistic psychology that are less ethnocentric and individualistic" and proposes the adoption of "a new humanistic paradigm" based on, "the principles and values of the African collectivistic philosophy of Ubuntu" (p. 116). In Hanks' (2008) understanding programs which upheld this philosophy would contribute to "the ultimate goal" of helping individuals attain "the qualities and characteristics of personhood" as the result of embracing the "14 Ubuntu virtues or qualities of humanness" (p. 131). These are: hospitality, compassion, empathy, tolerance, respect, interdependence, collective solidarity, patience, kindness, reconciliation, cooperation, warmth, forgiveness and supportiveness (pp. 131-2).

Within adult learning theory the concern that a "Western perspective" dominates what is considered the "legitimate knowledge of adult learning" has been noted (Merriam et al., 2007, p. 219). Within their classification of what constitutes "non-Western" approaches to learning, these authors place "major philosophical or religions systems of

27

thought such as Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Confucianism, and so on" and also "indigenous knowledge systems found in Africa, in Native American and First Nations peoples of North America, and in Maori people of New Zealand and Aboriginal people of Australia" (2007, p. 225).

While it is true that these approaches to understanding the nature of human nature and fulfillment share in common the pre-modern assumption of the need for social learning which fosters a personality that is inclined to embrace spiritual values, and which reflects human connections to a higher order, as well as to the group (Merriam et al., 2007) it is incorrect to call their view of adult learning "non-Western". These are universal human views, which were put aside by the modern worldview of scientific naturalism; this study assumes that the time has come to reclaim them, together with their vision of learning which fosters the full realization of human nature.

Towards this end, the next part of this chapter discusses the pre-modern worldview of six global religious traditions. This search for a broader, transcultural footing seeks to link human fulfillment with learning processes which cultivate one's inner nature through fostering an innate need to be in right relationship with others and with an overarching Transcendent, which is the origin of the structure of reality.

Part B: Looking at the Past

This section provides transcultural footing for the call to move beyond certain limitations within the humanistic approach to learning towards the full realization of human potential which were discussed in Part A. It does this by locating, within six global world religions, the idea that learning which supports the realization of human

nature should actively seek to foster a person's ability to take action in the "outer world" of human social relations (interpersonal dimension) which increasingly brings one's "inner world" (intrapersonal dimension) into alignment with an implicate order, which is the origin of the structure of reality.

This discussion does not intend to provide an in-depth presentation of what is generally thought of as a religious metaphysics (Runzo, 2001). This would be far beyond my ability, as well as the aims of this study.

Initial Assumptions

In order to be able to make my way through the thousands-of-years-old maze of religious thought and come out with a handful of aspects in relation to which there appears to be general agreement regarding the process of supporting learning towards the full realization of human nature, I have made certain choices and assumptions which I would like to state clearly at the start.

Each of these six religions shares the following commonalities: a) they are all global religions according to Hopfe & Woodward (2007) b) they represent both non-theistic (Hinduism and Buddhism)[3] and theistic (Judaism, Christianity, Islam and the Bahá'í Faith) approaches to the Transcendent and c) each one possesses the three interdependent aspects or levels that must be present in order for a body of teachings to be considered a religion, according to Momen (1999). These are:

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[3] More accurately it is the *advaita vedanta* school of Hinduism which is a non-theistic approach to the transcendent reality. Hinduism, as practiced in India, has given rise to both non-theistic and theistic modes of thought. Of these, the theistic or *bakhti* yoga path which enunciates love of, and passionate devotion to, God prevails numerically in India (Runzo, 2001; Momen, 1999)

Individual level

- The experience of the "holy", or the "sacred" or the "Transcendent". This is the personal, experiential aspect of religion.

Conceptual level

- The universal idea that there is a Transcendent, and that the most important activity for human beings is to establish and clarify their relationship with this Transcendent. This is the conceptual and doctrinal aspect of religion.

Socio-ethical level

- All religions are to a greater or lesser extent, involved in creating social cohesion and the integration of the individual into society; all of them have created some form of institutional order. From this, the ethical and social aspect of religion is derived (Momen, 1999).

Without wanting to ignore the fact that significant differences exist between these six religions I have adopted the same approach as the 1993 Global Parliament of the World Religions in developing the document titled, "Declaration Toward a Global Ethic" (Küng & Kuschel, 1993; Küng, 2005).

By focusing on the similarities in the views of human nature and fulfillment of the world's major religious traditions rather than their differences, theologian and moral philosopher Hans Küng (2005) explains that the delegates to the 1993 Parliament of the World Religions were enabled to set down "a minimal basic consensus" relating to "binding values, irrevocable standards and moral attitudes" which can be affirmed "by all religions despite their undeniable dogmatic or theological differences" and which, he maintains, "should also be supported by non-believers" (Küng, 2005, para. 1).

From this perspective, I assume that both theistic and non-theistic conceptions of the Transcendent have something legitimate to say about human nature and fulfillment. Despite their metaphysical and dogmatic differences, I take the commonalities in the practice of these six world religions to be an indication that each one embodies some

aspect of objective truth regarding human relationship to the Transcendent, to other human beings, and to oneself.

Each one of the six religious traditions examined in this section has a history of producing individuals who consistently demonstrate the ability to live by the highest ideals and most noble qualities known to human beings, including that of consciously choosing to sacrifice one's personal well-being to ensure the well-being of others. Moreover, these individuals are universally recognized - across the non-theistic/theistic metaphysical divide - as having achieved something of great worth. Hearts everywhere, are attracted to the beauty of their actions, while minds see in their lives a vision of human perfection. Mother Theresa of Calcutta, Martin Luther King Jr., and Mohandas Ghandi are three such individuals, who have lived and served in modern times. His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama has the following to say on this point,

> I maintain that every major religion – Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Sikhism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism – has similar ideals of love, the same goal of benefiting humanity through spiritual practice, and the same effect of making their followers into better human beings. All religions teach moral precepts for perfecting the functions of the mind, body and speech. All teach us not to lie or steal or take others' lives, and so on. All religions agree upon the necessity to control the undisciplined mind that harbors selfishness and other roots of trouble, and each teaches a path leading to a spiritual state that is peaceful, disciplined, ethical and wise. It is in this sense that I believe all religions have essentially the same message. Differences of dogma many be ascribed to differences of time and circumstance as well as cultural influences; indeed, there is no end to scholastic argument when we consider the purely metaphysical side of religion. However, it is much more beneficial to try to implement in daily life the shared precepts for goodness taught by all religions rather than to argue about minor differences in approach (His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, 1984, p. 13).

General Considerations

If it seems surprising that a discussion on the theory and practice of modern

humanistic approaches to psychology and education examines how these approaches

have developed in relation to the broader problems and concerns of antiquity, it may help

to remember that it was not until relatively recent times, after the Renaissance, that the

various sciences gradually became identified as distinct categories and placed in separate

disciplines. And it was not until late in the nineteenth century that the discipline of

psychology achieved what can be called an independent status (Hergenhahn, 1992).

Prior to this, the study of humans and their behavior was almost exclusively the

domain of philosophers and theologians seeking to answer fundamental questions about

human nature and the place of human beings in the universe,

> …the persistent problems of psychology spring from man's
> attempt to understand his own nature; but when man
> wonders about himself he must also wonder about that
> which is not himself. To wonder about the totality of things
> is to be a philosopher. The persistent problems of
> psychology, like those of every other science, are thus
> initially the problems of philosophy (MacLeod, 1975, p.
> 31)

Over the course of Western history the concern about human behavior and in

particular, the question of whether it should be understood as being freely chosen or

caused by external stimulation of internal processes, shifted gradually from metaphysical

supernaturalism to metaphysical naturalism as it passed from the hands of the philosopher

and the theologian, to the scientist (Hergenhahn, 1992; MacLeod, 1975).

In 1859 this process gained decisive momentum with the publication of *On the*

Origin of Species by Charles Darwin. Foley (1995) deftly summarizes the philosophical

implications of the unprecedented shift brought about by Darwin's thinking and its

widespread influence, both then and today:

> In *The Origin of the Species* and *The Descent of Man*
> Charles Darwin laid out not just another narrative of human
> origins, but more importantly, a scientific mechanism by
> which humans could have arisen without the need for
> divine intervention. That mechanism was natural selection,
> and it applied equally to mice and men. Humans were not
> the act of special creation but were instead merely part of a
> continuum of evolutionary change. Science had, in the
> shape of evolutionary biology, extended its grasp to the
> most basic of philosophical questions – why are there
> human beings? (Foley, 1995, p. 16)

In light of its central role in the development of humankind's understanding of the

nature of reality and of the place of human beings within this reality, it should not come

as a surprise that the religious view of human nature has historically occupied a

prominent place in the generation of psychological knowledge. Hergenhahn (1992) holds

that the religious conception of human nature is one of psychology's "major historical

influences" as well as the one that "persisted longer than any other" (p. 531). And given

the dominance of the mechanist-materialist mindset within the modern academy, it is

likewise not a surprise that this influence is all but denied today. Robinson (1986) for

one, finds the absence of the religious perspective of life "a remarkable feature of

contemporary psychology" noting that,

> …no major spokesperson for the discipline, no figure
> identified as one responsible for its methods and concerns,
> none who has provided a theory of consequence to
> contemporary endeavors, has argued that the religious
> dimension of life is necessary for an understanding of
> human psychology (Robinson, 1986, in Hergenhahn, 1992,
> p. 531)

Modern scientific naturalism notwithstanding, Hergenhahn (1992) maintains that the influence of the pre-modern, religious worldview persists within psychology, but in an altered form. While human relationship to a Transcendent/Ultimate Reality or Deity - the supernatural aspect of religion - is "ignored or denied" Hergenhahn holds that "remnants of the religious perspective" can be seen in, "contemporary humanistic psychology's emphasis on free will, responsibility and human uniqueness and on the importance of subjective, emotional experience" (1992, p. 531).

This type of partial borrowing – the taking of certain aspects of an original understanding while leaving out the rest – is what philosopher Michael Perry refers to as relying on borrowed cultural capital (Perry, 1998). The modern humanistic orientation to psychology and education is clearly not alone in this practice. Secular approaches to humanism have relied on borrowed cultural capital since the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century. Having claimed the right to speak on questions that currently lie beyond the limits of its jurisdiction given its commitment to modern, scientific method (Runzo, 2001; Tierny, 2001) the biological sciences also practice selective borrowing - a stance evolutionary historian John Greene (1999) forcefully challenges,

> One would like to feel optimistic about the scientistic mythology that has grown up around the theory of evolution, but it is hard to do so. The myth is intellectually dishonest, employing teleological and vitalistic figures of speech to describe processes that are advertised as "mechanistic" and pretending to derive from evolutionary biology values that stem from classical, Judaeo-Christian, and Enlightenment sources. It defies science, denigrates philosophy and religion and panders to the Western culture's penchant for regarding science and technology as the guarantors of indefinite progress toward some hazy but glorious future paradise on earth (Greene, 1999, p.43)

The Transformative Influence of the World's Religious Traditions

It is unquestionable that religion has been a contested topic in the past, and that it continues to be a contested topic in the present. Levinger (1996) observes that progressive circles in the U.S. today commonly link religion to partisan political agendas, reducing it to a host of unpopular "isms" - such as racism, sexism, imperialism, creationism and homophobism - due to its championship of moral values. Levinger offers the following vignette by progressive evangelical and political activist Jim Wallis as a case in point,

> I was speaking in New York City not too long ago to a group of foundation executives who were all liberal funders of artistic and social causes. Their immediate concern that I was asked to address included the "culture wars," the "Religious Right," and the Republican takeover of Congress. After I spoke, several people in the audience jumped down my throat. "We will not sell out to racism, homophobia and right winged politics," they declared. I was puzzled. Having never been accused before of even being a "moderate" on such issues as racism, I asked what I had said to have led to such an outburst. "You used the phrase 'moral values,' one of them replied. "And what do those words mean to you?" I asked. "They mean right wing!" agreed my accusers. I responded. "If the liberal Left concedes the whole territory of public discourse over moral values to the Religious Right, you will lose the cultural and political wars. And, indeed, you will deserve to lose (Walsh, in Levinger 1996, para. 9)

This modern attitude towards religion is at least partly due to the history of human interactions, carried out within the world's religious communities themselves. It is a matter of historical fact that the followers of the worlds' religions have been responsible for some of the most deplorable violations of human rights known to humankind and that often they have carried out these atrocities in the very name of the religious cause they espouse. Modern Liberalism as we know it today grew out of the Enlightenment and the

European religious wars of the 17th century. Hoping to get the religious fights out of politics early Enlightenment thinkers established the tradition of separation between Church and State, a tradition that came to be established in the United States.

To complicate matters further, the destruction of human life and property in the name of religious beliefs has historically been carried out between followers of the *same* religion as well as followers of *different* religions. Perhaps the most extreme example is the Inquisition, in which thousands upon thousands of Christian believers were put to death because they were held to deviate in some way from officially established ideology. There were more Christians were killed by their fellow Christians during the Inquisition than during the entire period of the Crusades.

There is another side to the religious story, however. Returning to the historical record for another look we also find that the teachings of the world's religions have demonstrated an unparalleled capacity for inspiring human beings to *transcend* limited conceptions of selfhood and group identity and for supporting growth towards the fulfillment of the highest human potential, throughout the ages. The history of the human race is equally a testimony to religion's unique ability to unite peoples with previously conflicting group identities, melding them under the banner of a single, unified cause. Peace, prosperity, the advancement of civilization, the arts and sciences are also recorded in human history as the outcome of humankind's development under the teachings of the world's religious traditions.

While the era between 400-1000 A.D. is commonly called the Dark Ages, this was only true of the West; during this same period in the East, a profound cultural transformation brought about by the teachings of the prophet Mohammad was actively re-

writing the pages of human history. Under the influence of Islam warring and barbaric Arab tribes whose sole allegiance was to their tribal warlord; who lived for revenge and to defend the "honor" of their kin-based group; and whose customs included burying their baby daughters alive were transformed to such a degree that their cultural and scientific discoveries paved the way for the renewal of Europe, lifting it out of the Dark Ages and leading humankind to the establishment of the modern nation-state.

During Islam's Golden Age Muslim philosophers such as Averroes and Avicenna, further influenced by the rediscovery of the works of Aristotle, made discoveries in mathematics and the healing sciences that are still in use today.

The capacity of religion to lift human beings out of barbarism and away from the inhumane use of their uniquely human powers, putting them to use towards the renewal of civilization and the establishment of peace is not limited to the more widespread and thus better-known, religious traditions of humankind. Other, less widely-known religious "teachers" and "teachings" pertaining to traditional and indigenous cultures of the world have historically served the same function of establishing a socio-ethical environment which facilitates training and education towards the full realization of human nature, and the collective transformation of human societies.

While a detailed examination is beyond the scope of this review, the history of the native peoples of North America has notable similarities with the history of the Arab tribes before, and after their collective transformation, as the result of coming under the influence of the teachings of Islam. Very briefly, internecine warfare and blood feuds had been ongoing between different groups in the Northeast woodlands for many generations prior to the formation of what is known today as the Iroquois or Six Nations

Confederacy. Seneca elder and traditional storyteller John Mohawk says, "The people had been at war for so long that some were born knowing they had enemies and not knowing why they had enemies" (2004, para. 1). It was the emergence of a moral leader who came to be known as the "Peacemaker" and his teachings of the Great Law of Peace, as enshrined in the Iroquois Confederacy which enabled an extended period of peace to be established between the different groups, through forging a system of alliances (Barreiro, 2010).

Human Being and Becoming Across Time and Place:

A Religious Orientation Towards Human Nature and Fulfillment

The next few pages attempt a summary of a religious understanding of human nature and fulfillment which links each individual human being to every other human being, through their shared connection to a Transcendent source of reality. This outline is presented in four assumptions, which are followed by a short explanation and illustrative quotations[4].

1) The Assumption of a Transcendent Ultimate Reality, and of Human Relationship to This Reality

> Any philosophic system which includes the idea of a
> Transcendent, and this includes every World Religion,
> demarcates between the mere world of appearance and
> things as they really are, where the latter either includes or
> is identical to the Transcendent (Runzo, 2001, p. 45)

While important distinctions and different emphases exist among the various religions some conception of what Wilson (1991) calls an 'original' human nature or

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[4] The quotations are presented in historical order, from the most ancient to the most recent.

'divine self' which establishes human relationship to a Transcendent/Ultimate Reality, is found universally among the various religions.

A theistic perspective portrays human relationship to the Transcendent/Ultimate Reality in terms of metaphysical and psychological claims of human *likeness* to divinity, while a non-theistic perspective portrays this relationship in terms of human *identity* to Ultimate Reality (Wilson, 1995). Illustrative quotations of these two perspectives on innate and universal human nature appear below[5],

Innate and Universal Human Nature Portrayed as
Identity with or Similarity to, the Transcendent/Ultimate Reality

Hinduism
That which is the finest essence – the whole world has that as its soul. That is Reality. That is the Self. That art Thou (*Chandogya Upanishad 6.8.7*)

Buddhism
Every being has the Buddha Nature. This is the Self (*Mahaparinirvana Sutra, 214*)

Judaism and Christianity
God said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (*Genesis, 1.26*)

Judaism
Let a man always consider himself as if the Holy One dwells within him (*Talmud, Taanit 11b*)

Christianity
Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells within you?...For God's temple is holy, and that temple you are (*1 Corinthians 3.16-17*)

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[5] The perspective of an original human nature in terms of innate value or worth seemingly runs counter to the "fallen nature" dogma of original sin that exists in some Western accounts of Christianity, but not in others (it also does not appear in Eastern Orthodox accounts). However even those approaches to Christianity which uphold the "fallen nature" dogma can be seen as viewing all persons as spirit in the sense that they uphold, and call all human beings to uphold, the universal moral imperative set down in the Golden Rule. "One way to express the Golden Rule is in terms of love: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself"" (Matt. 22:37-39) observes Runzo, and within the World Religions "...the only appropriate object of this sort of unconditional love is the Transcendent, and anything made, or manifest, in the image of the Transcendent" (2001, p. 222). Additionally, and importantly for this study, even those who are held to have attained salvation are viewed as needing to develop the ability to uphold the ethical imperative of the Golden Rule in their relationships with others.

Islam
I have breathed into man My spirit (*Qur'an 15.29*)

Bahá'í Faith
O Son of Being! Thou art My lamp and My light is in thee. Get thou from it thy radiance and seek none other than Me. For I have created thee rich and have bountifully shed My favor upon thee *(The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh, 11 Arabic)*

2) The Assumption of the Realization of Human Nature Through a Process of

   Entering into Right Relationship with the Transcendent/Ultimate Reality

   A religious metaphysics holds that human fulfillment is an inherently moral

process in which human potential is fulfilled in two ways: a) by entering into right

relationship with the Transcendent/Ultimate Reality (vertical dimension) and b) by

entering into right relationship with other human beings (horizontal dimension).

   Wilson (1995) maintains that these two "ethical dimensions" - a vertical one

towards the Absolute and a horizontal one towards one's neighbor - "are characteristic

of…every religion" (p. 110). Runzo (2001) agrees, noting that within a religious

metaphysics, the meaning of life is "ultimately grounded in relationships, relationships to

the Transcendent and to others" (p. 216).

   There are notable similarities as well as differences, between theistic and non-

theistic approaches towards entering into right relationship with the

Transcendent/Ultimate Reality, which is universally held to the ultimate purpose of

human life by all six of the world religions examined here (Wilson, 1995).

   On a theistic view, the task of entering into right relationship with the

Transcendent/Ultimate Reality is spoken of in terms of the universal human potential for

Salvation through a process of making one's will congruent with the will of the Divine as

set down in the laws of the sacred texts (also known as divine command theory) (Runzo,

1991). The divine command theory of ethics holds that what is right and wrong, good and bad "is what God commands" (Runzo, 2001 p. 183).

On a non-theistic view, the task of entering into right relationship with the Transcendent/Ultimate Reality is spoken of in terms of the universal human potential for *Liberation* through a process of entering into alignment with a universal ethical imperative known as the *Dharma* in Buddhism and Hinduism. The directions which the "standards of morality provide" are directions which are "embedded in the *Dharma* which tell us how to align ourselves correctly with the true nature of reality", rather than "commands" given by a "divine being" (Runzo, 2001, p. 186). Karma in Hinduism and Buddhism is thus an articulation of "cosmic laws under which all phenomena in the universe operate" (Momen, 1999, p. 339)[6].

> *The Fulfillment of Human Potential Viewed as the Outcome of a Process of*
> *Entering into Alignment with a Divine Order (Theistic Religions) or*
> *Universal Law (Non-Theistic Religions) (Vertical Ethical Dimension)*

Hinduism
Bright but hidden, the Self dwells in the heart.
Everything that moves, breathes, opens and closes
Lives in the Self. He is the source of love but not through thought.
He is the goal of life. Attain this goal!
The shining Self dwells hidden in the heart.
Everything in the cosmos, great and small,
Lives in the Self. He is the source of life,
Truth beyond the transience of this world
He is the goal of life. Attain this goal! (*Mundaka Upanishad, 2.2.1-2*)

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[6] There are actually two approaches to the ethical dimension of human fulfillment on a non-theistic perspective to the Transcendent/Ultimate Reality. One is that "human beings become moral when they realize their own identity with Absolute Reality and hence come into harmony with the universal law". The other is that "the scriptures of the religion reveal the Dharma which defines the path that human beings must follow if they want to be in tune with the universal law and hence be moral" and is a parallel with divine command theory (Momen, 1999, pp. 339)

Buddhism
The Essence of Mind or Suchness is the real
Buddha,
While heretical views and the three poisonous
Elements [greed, anger, delusion] are Mara
Enlightened by right views, we call forth the
Buddha within us
When our nature is dominated by the three
Poisonous elements
We are said to be possessed by the devil;
But when right views eliminate from our mind
these poisonous elements
The devil will be transformed into a real
Buddha (*Sutra of Hui Neng)*

Judaism
As God is called merciful and gracious, so you be merciful and gracious, offering gifts
gratis to all; as the Lord is called righteous and loving, so you be righteous and loving
(*Leviticus 19.1-2*)

Christianity
You must therefore be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. (*Matthew, 5.48*)

Islam
Conform yourselves to the character of God (*Hadith of Abu Nuaym*)

Bahá'í Faith
O Son of Spirit! I created thee rich, why dost thou bring thyself down to poverty? Noble I
made thee, wherewith dost thou abase thyself? Out of the essence of knowledge I gave
thee being, why seekest thou enlightenment from anyone beside Me? Out of the clay of
love I molded thee, how dost thou busy thyself with another? Turn thy sight unto thyself,
that thou mayest find Me standing within thee, mighty, powerful and self-subsisting
(The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh, 13 Arabic)

3) The Assumption of the Innate and Universal Need for an Education that Fosters

an Intrapersonal Dimension of Human Development

The assumption of a spiritual reality within innate and universal human nature,

which establishes human relationship to a Transcendent/Ultimate Reality, is different

from romantic views of natural goodness. A third universal assumption within these six

global religions is the innate and universal need for what Wilson (1995) calls, "a

lifetime" of effort towards "spiritual growth and self-development",

> A responsible life is not realized in a moment. Throughout
> a lifetime, effort must be invested continually for spiritual
> growth and self-development. A growing and fragile self,
> like any growing thing, requires cultivation. Good character
> is realized through constant cultivation of goodness. In
> particular, a mature person will have cultivated an attitude
> of sincerity, a pure heart, and a measure of self-control.
> Virtues which are required on the way include: a proper
> start, heedfulness and vigilance during the journey, and
> perseverance to reach the goal (Wilson, 1995, p. 509).

In "doing away" with a supernatural aspect within human reality scientific

naturalism also "did away" with the view that prevailed in the West as in the East, for

5,000 years at least, and which Adler (1968) calls the "common-sense" view of human

nature[7] (p. 52). Two metaphors commonly used within the key religions of the world to

describe the process leading to the fulfillment of human potential according to this

"common-sense view" are military conquest and the relationship between horse and rider.

Other metaphors include: the training of an athlete; learning a secular trade such as

shaping wood, metal or water; the tilling of soil; the cultivation of a garden; the cleansing

and purification of the mind and heart, and thus of one's inner vision (Wilson, 1995).

A representative summary of these metaphors within these six world religions

follows:

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[7] Adler's "common-sense view" of human nature is the view held by "the common man, based on common experience". Its origin is the religious view of metaphysical supernaturalism which holds and modern civil law rests on its assumption that, human beings differ from all other things in kind, not in degree. "Acting in light of common sense, men tend to treat human beings – at least some if not all - as persons rather than things; conversely, they also tend to treat most animals as things rather than persons" (Adler, 1968, p. 52).

Hinduism
That man is disciplined and happy who can prevail over the turmoil that springs from desire and anger, here on earth, before he leaves his body *(Bhagavad Gita 5.2)*

Know that the Self is the rider, and the body the chariot; that the intellect is the charioteer, and the mind the reins. The senses, say the wise, are the horses; the roads they travel are the mazes of desire....When a man lacks discrimination and his mind is uncontrolled, his senses are unmanageable, like the restive horses of a charioteer. But when a man has discrimination and his mind is controlled, his senses, like the well-broken horses of a charioteer, lightly obey the rein *(Katha Upanishad 1.3.3-6)*

It is true that the mind is restless and difficult to control. But it can be conquered, Arjuna, through regular practice and detachment. Those who lack self-control will find it difficult to progress in meditation; but those who are self-controlled, striving earnestly through the right means, will attain the goal *(Bhagavad Gita 6.35-36)*

Buddhism
Irrigators lead the waters. Fletchers bend the shafts. Carpenters bend wood. The virtuous control themselves *(Dhammapada 80 and 145)*

If a man should conquer in battle a thousand and a thousand more, and another man should conquer himself, his would be the greater victory, because the greatest of victories is the victory over oneself *(Dhammapada)*

Excellent are trained mules, so are thoroughbred horses of Sindh and noble tusked elephants; but far better is he who has trained himself. Formerly this mind went wandering where it liked, as it wished and as it listed. Today with attentiveness I shall completely hold it in check, as a mahout controls an elephant in must *(Dhammapada 322, 326)*

The flickering, fickle mind, difficult to guard, difficult to control--the wise person straightens it as a fletcher straightens an arrow. Like a fish that is drawn from its watery abode and thrown upon land, even so does this mind flutter. Hence should the realm of the passions be shunned. The mind is hard to check, swift, flits wherever it lists: to control it is good. A controlled mind is conducive to happiness. The mind is very hard to perceive, extremely subtle, flits wherever it lists. Let the wise person guard it; a guarded mind is conducive to happiness. Faring far, wandering alone, bodiless, lying in a cave, is the mind. Those who subdue it are freed from the bonds of Mara *(Dhammapada 33-37)*

Judaism and Christianity
He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city *(Proverbs 16.32)*

Judaism
Who is strong? He who controls his passions *(Mishnah, Abot 4.1)*

Engage in Torah and charity even with an ulterior motive, for the habit of right doing will lead also to right motivation *(Talmud, Pesahim 50b)*

Christianity
If any one purifies himself from what is ignoble, then he will be a vessel consecrated and useful to the Master of the house, ready for any good work. So shun youthful passions and aim at righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call upon the Lord from a pure heart *(Timothy, 2.21-22)*

Train yourself in godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come *(1 Timothy 4.7-8)*

Islam
The Prophet declared, "We have returned from the lesser holy war (al jihad al-asghar) to the greater holy war (al jihad al-akbar)." They asked, "O Prophet of God, which is the greater war?" He replied, "Struggle against the lower self" *(Hadith)*

Bahá'í Faith
O Companion of My Throne! Hear no evil, and see no evil, abase not thyself, neither sigh and weep. Speak no evil, that thou mayest not hear it spoken unto thee, and magnify not the faults of others that thine own faults may not appear great; and wish not the abasement of anyone, that thine own abasement be not exposed. Live then the days of thy life, that are less than a fleeting moment, with thy mind stainless, thy heart unsullied, thy thoughts pure, and thy nature sanctified, so that, free and content, thou mayest put away this mortal frame, and repair unto the mystic paradise and abide in the eternal kingdom for evermore *(The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh, 44 Persian)*

4) The Assumption of the Innate and Universal Need For an Education that Fosters

the Ability for Right Relationship with Others

> …relationality is a religious obligation, for on the view of the World Religions, one cannot relate to the Transcendent unless one relates to other persons….to take the religious point of view is to direct one's life – through prayer and mediation, creed and text, ritual and social practice – toward a felt Transcendent – whether Allah, or Shiva, or YHWH, or God, or Ahura Mazda, or Akal Purakh, or the Tao or the Dharmakaya – and by so doing, to treat other persons as spiritual beings. This means that one treats others as having the same spiritual value as oneself and

with the same potential for salvation or liberation (Runzo,
2001, p. 189)

Both theistic and non-theistic approaches to understanding human relationship to the Transcendent/Ultimate Reality hold that human beings are enabled to enter into alignment with an underlying Universal Order (non-theistic religions) or with a Divine order (theistic religions) though a lifetime of choices which enable one to personify the qualities necessary to uphold a universal ethical imperative in one's relationships with others (Runzo, 2001; Wilson, 1995).

The Golden Rule: The Fulfillment of Human Potential
Viewed as the Process of Upholding a Universal Ethical Imperative in
Human Social Relationships (Interpersonal Ethical Dimension)

Hinduism
One should never do that to another which one regards as injurious to one's own self. This, in brief, is the rule of dharma. Other behavior is due to selfish desires *(Anusasana Parva, Section CXIII, Verse 8)*

Buddhism
Comparing oneself to others in such terms as "Just as I am so are they, just as they are so am I," he should neither kill nor cause others to kill *(Sutta Nipata 705)*

Judaism
That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow. That is the whole Torah; the rest is the explanation; go and learn *(Talmud, Shabbat 31a)*
Islam

Christianity
Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets *(Luke 6:31)*

Islam
None of you [truly] believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself *(Hadith)*

Bahá'í Faith
And if thine eyes be turned towards justice, choose thou for thy neighbour that which thou choosest for thyself *(Epistle to the Son of the Wolf)*

In Closing

To summarize the above, each one of these six world religions:

- Recognizes the idea of a Transcendent/Ultimate Reality

- Holds that the most important activity for human beings is to enter into right relationship with this Transcendent/Ultimate Reality, thus attaining salvation (theistic religions) or liberation (non-theistic religions)

- Recognizes the intrinsic dignity or worth of innate and universal human nature by upholding the universal human potential for entering into right relationship with the Transcendent/Ultimate Reality (liberation or salvation)

- Upholds the innate and universal need for education towards the fulfillment of human nature (affirms that the capacity for the ethical use of our faculties or powers is innate, but the ability must be cultivated/acquired)

- Affirms that the cultivation of the ability for the ethical use of our powers requires education which enables individuals to establish ethical relationships with needs, impulses, and desires as they manifest within the self (intrapersonal dimension of human fulfillment)

- Affirms that the cultivation of the ability for the ethical use of our powers requires education which enables individuals to establish ethical relationships with other persons - that is, to treat other persons as if they possessed the same worth or value as oneself (interpersonal dimension of human fulfillment)

- Affirms that, to whatever degree human beings are capable of demonstrating it, the ability for the ethical use of our powers in our relationships with self and others is hard earned, requiring dedicated effort over the course of a lifetime

  (Adapted from Adler, 1968; Hatcher, 2002; Küng, 2005; Küng & Kuschel, 1993; Runzo, 1991; Solomon, 2008; Wilson, 1995).

In light of limitations of the humanistic orientation within education to effectively facilitate the full realization of human potential as discussed in Part A, and given the pressing needs of our times, which urgently call for effective means to support human beings in the quest for a better world for all, the third and final part of this chapter

introduces the ideas of two pioneers whose work draws on the best of both pre-modern and modern approaches to learning towards the full realization of human nature.

Part C: Looking Towards the Future

The first of these pioneers is Italian psychiatrist, theoretician, and educator Roberto Assagioli (1888-1974) who conceived the transpersonal psychology known as *Psychosynthesis* in 1910. Assagioli continually developed the discipline of psychosynthesis until his death in 1974, in collaboration with what has become an international community of psychosynthesis practitioners and theorists.

From these many contributions a psychosynthesis-based orientation to human nature and fulfillment has been developed and applied in a variety of clinical and non-clinical settings including psychotherapy, counseling, organizational development, personal growth, and formal education (Assagioli, 2000, 2002; Brown, 1993, 2004; Ferrucci, 1982; Firman & Gila, 1997, 2002; Parfitt, 2003; Whitmore, 1986, 2004).

The second pioneer whose work is introduced in this Section is Canadian philosopher, logician, and educator William Hatcher (1935-2005) who authored the outlines of a transcultural theory of morality based on the notion of authentic relationships between the self and reality (Hatcher, 2002, 2008b). Another source of Hatcher's views are the materials developed by The Authenticity Project, a transdisciplinary, international, collaborative group which Hatcher was a member of until his death in 2005 and whose goal is to develop materials that seek to support a global approach to moral and spiritual development (Penn & Nardos, 2003; Radpour, 2002).

An in-depth review of the work of Hatcher and Assagioli is beyond the scope of this review which - starting with Assagioli and moving on Hatcher – instead provides a general overview of the assumptions of each regarding: the nature of reality; the nature of human nature and fulfillment; and the role of education which seeks to support learning and growth towards the full realization of human nature.

Roberto Assagioli and the Discipline of Psychosynthesis

Raids by Fascists on his office during Mussolini's regime led to the loss of many of Assagioli's works, both completed and in progress (Firman & Gila, 2002) and there are only two major published books in English, along with many interviews, transcriptions of talks, and monographs on various topics authored by Assagioli.

From the start Assagioli always welcomed and even encouraged, the contributions of like-minded collaborators. In his view the discipline of Psychosynthesis (with a capital "P") was an ongoing attempt at systematizing principles and practices in support of the universal tendency towards synthesis which continually plays out within reality, and which in human reality manifests as the innate and universal tendency towards psychosynthesis (with a lower-case "p") (Assagioli, 2002, 1968, n. d. c).

In his first English book titled, *Psychosynthesis: A collection of basic writings* Assagioli explains that, while psychosynthesis "has much to offer" it is not yet fully developed: "On the contrary, I consider it a child – or at the most as an adolescent – with many aspects still incomplete yet with a great and promising potential for growth" (Assagioli, 2000, p. 8).

Ever a visionary, during his medical studies at the turn of the 20th century Assagioli

was fascinated by the works of then little-known Sigmund Freud, who had recently

developed a psychology based on the existence of an unconscious dimension within the

human psyche. Assagioli requested the approval of his doctoral committee to write his

doctoral thesis on psychoanalysis and was reluctantly given permission to travel to Zurich

to study with Bleuler, who was the first to classify schizophrenia (Assagioli, in Keen,

1974).

Once there it did not take long for the young Assagioli (then in his early twenties)

to develop a deep appreciation for Freud's pioneering work on the unconscious psyche,

and an equally profound sense of dissatisfaction with the inability of the psychoanalytic

framework to adequately portray human nature and potential. He felt that psychoanalysis

concentrated on the pathological side of the psyche and ignored the healthy side

(Assagioli, 2000; Firman & Gila, 2002). Firman and Gila (2002) additionally note that

Assagioli's views on human nature and fulfillment put him into conflict with "Freud's

reductionistic drive theory, his contempt for spirituality and religion and his insistence

upon a disengaged attitude on the part of the analyst" (p. 3).

Freud and Assagioli are known to have corresponded, although they never met.

Years later Assagioli summarized their differences in an interview published in the

December 1974 issue of the magazine *Psychology Today*,

> We pay far more attention to the higher unconscious and to
> the development of the transpersonal self. In one of his
> letters Freud said, "I am interested only in the basement of
> the human being." Psychosynthesis is interested in the
> whole building. We try to build an elevator which will
> allow a person access to every level of his personality.
> After all, a building with only a basement is very limited.
> We want to open up the terrace where you can sun-bathe or
> look at the stars. Our concern is the synthesis of all areas of
> the personality. That means psychosynthesis is holistic,

global and inclusive. It is not against psychoanalysis or
even behavior modification but it insists that the needs for
meaning, for higher values, for a spiritual life, are as real as
biological or social needs. We deny that there are any
isolated human problems (Assagioli, in Keene, 1974).

Following the death of his father, Assagioli's mother remarried when he was two
years of age. As grew into adulthood his "cultured upper-middle-class Jewish" family life
(Hardy, in Firman and Gila, 2002, p. 12) exposed him to an unusual range of cultural and
religious influences. The family spoke Italian, French and English at home, and Assagioli
additionally studied German, Latin, Greek, Russian and Sanskrit by the time he was 18.
Along with his Western medical and psychoanalytic training, Assagioli was also a
student of the world religions. Building on his knowledge of Judaism he was deeply
influenced by the branch of esoteric knowledge of Theosophy - which is generally known
to be his philosophy of personal practice - as well as the Buddhist and Christian
traditions. He was additionally a practitioner of Hatha and Raja yoga (the yoga of body
and of mind) as well as various types of meditation (Whitmore, 2004; Firman & Gila,
2002).

Assagioli was a friend of Martin Buber and Karl Jung, the latter with whom he
established a life-long friendship. Many other visionaries from both East and West were
also instrumental in inspiring Assagioli, and contributed to his development of a
psychospiritual lens from which to view human reality and fulfillment. Among these are:
Russian esotericist P.D. Ouspensky; Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore; Sufi mytic Inhayat
Khan; Zen scholar D.T. Suzuki and psychologist Viktor Frankl. His works also reference
William James, Viktor Frankl, Abraham Maslow, Erich Fromm and Kurt Goldstein,
among others (Assagioli, 2000; Whitmore, 2004; Firman & Gila, 2002).

<u>Assagioli's View of the Nature of Reality</u>

Much has been said already, which gives a general sense of Assagioli's views on the nature of reality. While Assagioli did not outwardly align the theory and practice of psychosynthesis with any particular religious or philosophic tradition (Assagioli, 2000) his stance is clearly not a materialistic one. Assagioli understood the individual human being as a subject "in continuous, active interaction with a larger relational field" (Firman & Gila, 2002, p. 3) which establishes "an intricate network of vital, psychological and spiritual relations, involving mutual exchanges and interactions with many other individuals" (Assagioli, n.d. c, p. 3).

Moreover this network of relations includes, and connects all life forms with, what Assagioli variously refers to as the "Universal Will" (2002, p. 130) and the Universal Self (2002, p. 126) leading him to affirm "…the essential divinity in each, in all, and in the great Whole" (Assagioli, n.d. e, para. 31). For Assagioli reality is holistic, teleological, and spiritual in nature where the "greatness of the universe" points to a deeper, more wonderful Greatness with which humankind is fundamentally related,

> In contemplating the greatness of the universe, we realize that it not only is a wonderful physical mechanism, but that it is pervaded by and pulsating with Life; that it is evolving under the guidance of intelligent laws; that it must have significance and purpose. Even those who may not have a religious faith or a definite philosophy of life can hardly deny that the universe is ruled by a law of evolution and progress. We perceive in the stars and the insect, in the atom and in the heart, the same trend towards a mysterious goal…In the laws that rule the Cosmos man discovers the laws which should regulate his own actions (Assagioli, n.d. d, p. 15)

The Nature of Human Nature and Fulfillment

Among all the modern psychotherapists Assagioli considered Jung's theories and practice to be closest in understanding with the discipline of Psychosynthesis (Assagioli, n.d. a). Understanding the close ties between the work of Jung and Assagioli, as well as their differences, is thus helpful in understanding Assagioli's conception of human nature and fulfillment.

Briefly, Jung and Assagioli are united in rejecting "pathologism" within psychotherapy. They are also in agreement that the principle of synthesis is dominant within the psyche, and that "[i]rreconcilable opposites do not exist" (Assagioli, n.d. a, p. 7). Assagioli further notes that both Jung and himself have stressed the need for a person to develop "the higher psychological functions" in the "spiritual sphere" (p. 6). Moreover, the task of therapy for both Jung and Assagioli, is to aid the individual in transforming the personality, and integrating apparent contradictions (Assagioli, n.d. a).

A key difference according to Assagioli is the position of each towards the process by which transformation of the personality takes place, including development within the spiritual dimension of human reality. While he is in agreement with Jung that the process of the transformation of the personality can occur as the result of the "creative and synthesizing action" of symbols that, "spontaneously" emerge from the unconscious Assagioli additionally believes that these processes can and should be, "promoted and effectively assisted by the co-operation of the conscious personality" (Assagioli, n.d. a, p. 14).

Thus, along with "pointing out and suggesting to the patient" as Jung does, "the goal of his individuation" Assagioli proposed a psychoeducational approach in which the

therapist actively takes the role of "encouraging and educating [the patient] from the outset to practice active methods of acquiring an increasingly clear self-consciousness", the "development of a strong will", and the "mastery and right use of his impulsive emotional, imaginative and mental energies" with the goal of utilizing "all means of gaining independence of the therapist" (Assagioli, n. d. a, p. 12). Jung on the other hand, does not advise "the intervention in this process either of the therapist, or of the will of the Ego, the conscious "I" (Assagioli, n. d. a, p. 14).

While "fully recognizing" the importance of "spontaneous processes of self-healing and the integrative function of symbols" (p. 14) Assagioli maintains that psychosynthetic therapy,

> …proves that these processes can be promoted and effectively assisted by the co-operation of the conscious personality. This action is performed by what constitutes the center, the dynamic element, that is, the conscious and active subject, using his will (Assagioli, n.d. a, p. 14)

The Role of Education Towards the Full Realization of Human Nature

Assagioli's conception of the discipline of psychosynthesis is founded on the assumption that education which supports an individual in developing awareness of the dynamics which are ongoingly taking place within one's inner world (in both its psychological and spiritual dimensions) is a requirement for the full realization of human nature.

Assagioli's approach to education towards human fulfillment holds that conscious awareness of an inner, psychological center ("I") together with its innate and universal origin ("Self" or human spiritual reality) can - and should be - facilitated through learning. This learning should additionally support the individual in developing the

54

capability for cultivating harmonious relationships between the various energies within one's inner world, contributing to greater harmony within one's relationships in the outer world of human social relations.

Assagioli called the process of cultivation of the awareness of a psychological center ("I") *personal psychosynthesis* and the second process, the cultivation of the awareness of one's innate and universal human spiritual reality ("Self"), *transpersonal psychosynthesis* (Assagioli, 2000).

Since the awareness of both *I* and of *Self* is continually being cultivated (refined) throughout lived experience, both personal and transpersonal psychosynthesis are held to be ongoing processes which take place throughout the course of one's life (Assagioli, 2000, 2002; Brown, 2004; Ferrucci, 1982; Firman and Gila, 2002; Parfitt, 2003; Whitmore, 2004). The overall aim of the discipline of psychosynthesis is to support the individual in making conscious efforts towards these processes.

William Hatcher and The Authenticity Project

Canadian mathematician, philosopher, and educator William Hatcher is listed as one of eight Platonist philosophers of the second half of the twentieth century in the 1992 edition of the highly regarded *Encyclopédie Philosophique Universelle* and he is the author or co-author of over fifty professional monographs, books, and articles in the mathematical sciences, logic, and philosophy.

Raised as a Protestant, Hatcher decided to enter the ministry upon finishing his undergraduate studies and was awarded financial aid to attend Yale Divinity School. However after studying the teachings and writings of the Bahá'í Faith for a number of

years, in 1957 he choose to become a member of the Bahá'í Faith and changed his career orientation to mathematics (The William S. Hatcher Library, n.d.).

Hatcher was a specialist in the philosophical interpenetration of science and religion and he developed a new proof of God's existence based on first-order logic in which he attempts to address many of the criticisms raised against previous theistic philosophers. His understanding of a theistic perspective of the Transcendent/Ultimate Reality is partly what establishes the value of his work for the purpose of this study[8] (Hatcher, 20002).

Instead of a traditional conceptualization of a theistic metaphysics based on divine command theory and injunctions to obey the will of God (Runzo, 1991) Hatcher's system of ethics establishes human relationship to an underlying structure of reality. Briefly, Hatcher's approach to developing his proof of God's existence is based on three axioms that are "empirically grounded"[9] in an *a priori* assumption that, "something exists" (Hatcher, 2008b, p. 6). As such Hatcher's argument for the existence of God does not establish the existence of the God of any particular religion but rather supports the existence of a God that he defines as "a universal, uncaused cause" (Hatcher, 2002, p. 141)[10].

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[8] Throughout this study when discussing Hatcher's understanding of authentic relationships between the self and reality I have summarized and concluded freely, rather than attempting to keep the formal structure of Hatcher's philosophical argumentation. Although this approach compromises this presentation somewhat my goal here is to examine Hatcher's work from the perspective of what it can offer adult educators - the greater number of whom, like myself, are not professional philosophers. Additionally, given that this study assumes a dual (physical and spiritual) conception of human nature, I have omitted Hatcher's argumentation for this perspective.

[9] Meaning that "the supposition is consistent with known facts and indeed is the most reasonable hypothesis in the light of known facts" (Hatcher, 2008b, p. 6)

[10] In saying that God is a "universal cause" Hatcher does not mean that God has directly caused every phenomenon, but rather that every existing thing is the end effect of a causal chain starting with God (Hatcher, 2008c)

Non-theistic religions offer two perspectives on how human beings come to fulfill the ultimate purpose of life: a) they either realize their identity with the Transcendent/Absolute Reality and are thus enabled to come into harmony with the universal law, or b) they follow the Dharma (underlying order) as set down in the scriptures of the religion, and are thus enabled to demonstrate their similarity to the Transcendent/Ultimate Reality (Runzo, 2001; Momen, 2009). Both of these approaches to viewing human relationship to the Transcendent/Ultimate Reality are represented by Hatcher's formulation of God as the "uncaused cause" or the Cause of the structure of reality that functions according to the laws of cause and effect (laws of causality) (Hatcher, 2002).

Another aspect of Hatcher's approach which establishes its relevance for this study is that his work provides the outlines of a "principle-based" rather than a "rule-based" system of ethics. While rules "dictate exactly how one should act in a given circumstance" principles, "give the moral goal that is sought and the nature of the action necessary to attain this goal, but do not absolutely determine the action to be taken" (Hatcher, 2002, p. 132).

In practice, this means that any individual who chooses to act on the basis of a given principle has a range of choices open to her. Another way of putting this would be to say that Hatcher's approach upholds objectivism at the level of metaphysical principles, and contextualized relativism at the level of potential responses that could be generated by any individual seeking to act on the basis of these principles (Hatcher, 2002).

In developing his system or program of ethics Hatcher acknowledges that he has drawn freely on three major sources of knowledge - science, philosophy and religion - in particular although not exclusively, the Bahá'í Faith. He additionally notes that several of the concepts and ideas are original, in the sense that he did not consciously or deliberately borrow them from other sources (Hatcher, 2002).

Hatcher's Perspective on the Nature of Reality

Reality (everything that is, or was or will be) is structured as a value hierarchy where God (the universal uncaused cause) is the supreme value in reality, and humanity is the supreme value in creation (everything that exists other than God/the universal uncaused cause) as we currently know it. By virtue of its essence every created entity has a relationship to God (universal uncaused cause), whether it is capable of conscious awareness of this or not (Hatcher, 2002).

The value of any entity is inherent in its very nature (essence) and therefore exists objectively (independently of our perception of it). Because intrinsic value does not depend on anything other than its own nature, it is changeless. The *objective value* of an entity is determined by the degree of refinement of its structure, which in turn determines its place on a continuum of refinement that is inherent in the structure of reality, where greater value is equal to greater refinement (Hatcher, 2002).

Since the second law of thermodynamics governs the physical world, physical entities can be viewed as thermodynamic systems of increasing complexity (refinement), with their objective value increasing accordingly. At the lowest end of the value scale are inorganic substances, such as rocks and minerals. These have the simplest structure.

Thermodynamically speaking they are not capable of transforming energy other than to absorb and radiate it. Next in value come plants which are more structured than minerals and can ingest inorganic substances and process them in such a way that they are capable of furthering the complexity of their own structure (i.e., grow) (Hatcher, 2002).

Next in value come higher animals. These possess the functions of minerals and plants, along with the capacity for locomotion and sensibility. In particular, sensibility confers the capacity for processing a wide range of forms of energy by an appropriate (individual) response (Hatcher, 2002). Humans have all the abilities of animals, but can also process energy in its most refined form: as abstract (symbolic) information. As a result human beings "have the ability to attribute, to arbitrarily chosen symbols, a meaning or significance totally unrelated to the physical form or structure itself" (Hatcher, 2008b, p. 10).

A final element in this summarized presentation of Hatcher's conception of the nature of reality is that reality is both physical (concrete or material) and abstract (invisible or immaterial). The laws inherent in the structure of reality determine order (causality) and set down in a predictable manner (cause and effect), the functioning of reality in both the physical and non-physical spheres, or dimensions of creation (Hatcher, 2002).

The Nature of Human Nature and Fulfillment

To say that all human beings possess the same intrinsic value is to say that human beings possess the same innate (because it precedes all forms of socialization) and universal (because all human beings possess it) human nature, which is the source of this

value. Along with the physical powers which we share with higher animals (e.g., sight, hearing, sensation, emotion, taste and smell) human beings also possess, as the result of their greater refinement, capacities which animals lack. Hatcher's articulation of universal human nature includes four such capacities: consciousness, mind, heart and will.[11]

Human beings represent the supreme value in creation by virtue of our possession of these spiritual capacities, or powers[12]. Everything that is uniquely and fundamentally human arises from the interactions that are continuously taking place between our spiritual powers of consciousness, mind, heart, and will; these interactions take place in the same manner in all human beings, since we all share the same essential human nature.

We have seen that the objective value of an entity is determined by the value hierarchy inherent in the structure of reality; among all creation only human beings (by virtue of our possession of the spiritual powers of consciousness, mind, heart and will) are capable of apprehending this value. In a summarized manner we can say that, because human consciousness confers the capacity for self-awareness (consciousness of our consciousness) when a human being interacts with reality, the mind confers the capacity for developing ideas (conceptions) about that which we are aware; the heart confers the capacity to feel attraction to (or repulsion from) it; and the will enables us to set into motion actions with the intention (desire) to possess that which we are attracted to, or to avoid that which we feel repulsion towards (Hatcher, 2002).

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[11] Hatcher holds that essential and universal human nature contains *at least* these four capacities. While there are others he focuses exclusively on these four because they are the only ones necessary to develop his system of ethics (Hatcher, 2002)

[12] Hatcher's use of the term "powers" has a previous history in psychology. What psychology today calls faculties it used to call *powers* or *functions* and these are all names for the same thing: capacities that are innate to essential human nature and are thus universally present within all human beings (Hergenhahn, 1992)

The Role of Education Towards Human Fulfillment

Authenticity, for Hatcher, is the capacity to apprehend the innate (objective) value of an entity. Thus defined authenticity is "a generalization of the notion of validity, which occurs in science and logic, where 'valid' means 'in conformity with reality'" (Hatcher, 2002, p. 5). Our relationship with any given category of existence (mineral, vegetable, animal or other humans) is *authentic* to the degree that it is based on an accurate perception of the structure of reality: "To interact authentically with reality is thus to interact in such a way that the intrinsic and universal value embedded in reality becomes known to us" (Hatcher, 2002, p. 5).

Hatcher's perspective on human fulfillment in terms of the development of the capability for authentic relationships with the various categories of existence in general, and with other human beings in particular, is based on the assumption of the existence of two types of value: intrinsic value and extrinsic value. Intrinsic value is "inherent in the properties and capacities of an entity", while extrinsic value is "ascribed to an entity through personal subjective preferences and social conventions" (Penn & Nardos, 2003 pp. 121-122).

The value of the human person is inherent in the fact that human beings "represent the most complex, refined and evolved entity in nature" (p. 122). This is in contrast to the extrinsic value of any object used as currency, for example; because extrinsic value is dependent upon social agreement, any currency becomes useless whenever a society withdraws its recognition of this value. The value of the sun, like the human being, is determined by the fact that its light and warmth are essential to our

biosphere. This value is intrinsic inasmuch as it exists irrespectively of the opinion any one may have of it (Hatcher, 2002).

Through the ongoing interaction of our spiritual powers of consciousness, mind, heart, and will every human being creates and lives in, an inner world of subjective, internal states. This world (inner model of reality) is structured according to an internal hierarchy of valuation which arises as the result of the interaction of our powers of consciousness, mind, heart and will in the context of our encounters with reality, and according to universal laws of cause and effect.

Hatcher holds that human fulfillment is essentially moral in nature where "true morality" consists in "apprehending the inherent (objective) value of the self and others" and in living, "in such a way as to afford the development and expression of humanity's true potential" through an education which cultivates the development of the human powers of consciousness, mind, heart and will (Penn & Nardos, 2003, p. 122).

To the extent that our internal model of reality becomes increasingly authentic we are enabled to develop, and ongoingly refine, our ability to establish and sustain relationships with other human beings which - because they are based on an increasingly accurate perception of the intrinsic value of the other and our own, in terms of the inherent qualities of human spiritual nature - foster the development of both parties (Hatcher, 2002).

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND PROCESS OF INQUIRY

Primary Research Questions

This study examines the primary research questions that were set down in chapter 1, together with their related sub-questions. To repeat these questions here:

In looking through the "lens" of a Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis,

1) What are the goals, principles, and practices of an approach to education that seeks to support the full realization of human nature?

2) How does such an approach support a person's capacity to establish ethical relations in the interpersonal and intrapersonal dimensions?

3) How can the approach be applied in community-based adult education programs implemented by trained facilitators, who do not have formal degrees in the field of mental health?

Sub-Questions Related to the Interpersonal Dimension

1) What is the goal of education that seeks to support the development of key capabilities that are necessary (but not sufficient) for right (ethical) relationships within the world of human social relations?

    1.1 What key principles support learning and growth towards this goal?

    1.2 What key practices support learning and growth towards this goal?

Sub-Questions Related to the Intrapersonal Dimension

2) What is the goal of education that seeks to support the development of

key capabilities that are necessary (but not sufficient) for right (ethical)

relationship with needs, impulses, and desires as they manifest within the

self?

     2.1 What key principles support learning and growth towards this goal?

     2.2 What key practices support learning and growth towards this goal?

Methodology

The methodology used to implement this study is carried out in two stages (stage one and

stage two) that are implemented throughout three chapters, as follows:

Stage One: Identifying and Articulating Key Goals, Principles, and Practices

Through a process of modified analytic induction, as described by Bogdan and

Biklen (2003) this stage of the study identifies and articulates key conceptual "threads" -

in the form of goals, principles, and practices - obtained from a synthesis of the works of

transpersonal psychiatrist, theoretician and educator Roberto Assagioli (2000, 2002) and

mathematician, philosopher and educator William Hatcher (2002).

Stage one of the methodology is implemented in chapter four, and it results in the

"lens" of the Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis, that is used in the second stage of the

methodology (stage two).

Stage Two: Applying the Hatcher-Assagioli Synthesis in the Context of

Community-Based Adult Education Settings

Through a combination of document analysis and participant observation applied to qualitative case study analysis as described by Merriam (1998), stage two of the study assesses the relevance of the Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis for community-based education settings. This stage of the methodology is implemented in two separate chapters. Chapter five presents the case study - the Integrated and Systemic Community Therapy (CT) approach in Brazil (Barreto, 2008) - and chapter six analyzes the CT case study using the "lens" of the Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis which was developed in chapter four, in the first stage of the methodology (stage one).

Rationale for the Methodology Used

The rational for the methodology used is discussed in two parts, as follows:

<u>Rationale for Stage One</u>

Analytic induction has been used in qualitative research both as an approach to collecting and analyzing data, and as a way to develop and test a theory (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). According to Bogdan and Biklen, the procedure of analytic induction is employed when a given specific problem, question, or issue becomes the focus of research. Data are collected and analyzed to develop a descriptive model that encompasses all cases of the phenomena. While analytic induction has been used extensively in open-ended interviewing, Bogdan and Biklen (2003) additionally note that it can be used with participant observation and document analysis.

The method of sampling in analytic induction is purposeful sampling. The rationale for choosing particular cases, subjects, or documentation is because they are believed to facilitate the expansion of the developing theory (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). Because Bogdan and Biklen recognize that the traditional approach to analytic induction, which involves developing and then testing loosely descriptive theory that is successively rewritten and modified through new testing, until no new cases can be found which do not fit the theory is not practical for most researchers to complete in the time they have, their modified approach allows for the possibility that researchers will instead choose to limit their study by "tightly defining" the population the theory is encompassing (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 65).

Rationale for Stage Two

Merriam (1998) holds that case studies are differentiated from other types of qualitative research in that they are descriptions and analyses of a single unit - some examples of which include a single individual, program, event, group, intervention or community. The single most defining characteristic of case study research in Merriam's (1998) view is that it examines a unit around which there are boundaries which fence in the phenomenon being studied.

One measure for assessing whether a topic is bounded enough to be considered a case is to ask how finite the data collection would be. In the case study there is an actual or theoretical end to the data source, however it is defined. Merriam (1998) additionally maintains that the insights gleaned from applying the case study approach to qualitative research in the field of education can directly influence policy, practice, and future

research. Furthermore any and all methods of gathering and analyzing data apply to case study research, and this applies also to qualitative case studies (Merriam, 1998).

Rationale for choosing Integrated and Systemic Community Therapy (CT) as the Case Study

The decision to focus on the CT case study was made for the following reasons: a) The CT approach is currently being used nationwide throughout Brazil, and its use is growing both nationally and internationally b) it uses trained, non-professionals and was originally developed to serve socially marginalized and excluded populations, in community-based settings c) its training approaches are still being developed and are continually being refined d) the CT approach is based in a synthesis of various bio-psycho-socio-spiritual theoretical frameworks (Barreto, 2008; Barreto, Barreto, Oliveira, Barreto & Abdala, 2011; Camarotti, n.d.).

Additional Aspects of the Decision for Choosing Hatcher and Assagioli

Chapter 1 set down the central assumptions that determine the applicability of the work of William Hatcher and Roberto Assagioli to the aims of this study. To summarize these points here, Hatcher and Assagioli each hold that reality (including human reality) is spiritual as well as material; that objective laws inherent in the structure of reality determine order and the functioning of reality in both the material and the spiritual dimensions; that reality is evolving towards greater order and complexity in both the macrosphere (reality as a whole) and the microsphere (human reality); and that human fulfillment is fostered through an education which supports an individual's ability and

67

desire, to bring one's 'inner" and 'outer' worlds increasingly in line with a universal moral imperative which is inherent in the structure of reality (Assagioli, 2000, 2002; Hatcher, 2002).

As well as these assumptions, chapter 2 also notes that Hatcher's principle-based system of ethics articulates "the moral goal" that is sought and "the nature of the action necessary to attain the goal" but it does not "absolutely determine" the action to be taken; this is in contrast to a rule-based system of ethics which dictates, "exactly how one should act in a given circumstance" (Hatcher, 2002, p. 133).

Additionally, neither Hatcher nor Assagioli specifically developed their approach for use in community-based adult education settings with marginalized populations, nor in educational interventions carried out by trained facilitators who do not have formal degrees in the field of mental health. While Hatcher's work with The Authenticity Project brought together therapists, psychologists, and philosophers in an effort to develop materials which might support an individual in the ethical use of one's capacities in one's relationships with self and others (Hatcher, 2002; Radpour, 2002), the materials developed are not applicable to the aims of adult education in community-based adult education settings.

Furthermore, while Hatcher's work on moral authenticity and the body of work that constitutes the theory and practice of Psychosynthesis are both explicit in their inclusion of a human spiritual dimension, neither one excludes *a priori* the larger body of work of the psychoanalytic, behavioral/cognitive-behavioral and humanistic psychological traditions. Each is comfortable taking from these traditions what it finds useful and recasting the assumptions of those traditions within its more inclusive

worldview.

Additional Considerations

In a qualitative study the researcher has primary responsibility for making choices regarding the focus of the inquiry and the strategies used for gathering data, and later for carrying out the work of analyzing and interpreting the data collected. As such, my personal strengths and biases have influenced every step of this study from the development of the original proposal, to the incorporation of the changes that subsequently took place leading to the development of an alternative line of study, and to the final methodology chosen to investigate the questions that were researched (Creswell, 2002; Patton, 2001). The following are the personal strengths and biases that are most relevant to this study:

Linguistic and Cultural Fluency

Almost all of the documentation used for the CT case study was in Portuguese, which I translated. My translations of the CT case study material and my presentation of the case study itself (indeed, my choice of this case study) were possible given that I speak, read, and write Portuguese with native fluency. This fluency is due to the fact that most of my elementary education and all of my high school and undergraduate education took place within the Brazilian educational system, after my American parents moved to Brazil when I was a child. This is where I obtained a B.S. in biology followed by a second B.S. in Nursing. My motivation for pursuing a second Bachelor's degree was so that I could work with people from poor and marginalized communities, in the area of

health promotion and education. My professional experience includes working in "favelas" (slum communities) in primary-level community health centers, in Brazil.

Growing up, studying, and working in Brazil has given me a personal relationship with many of the issues and concerns addressed by Barreto in his development of the CT approach and with the types of issues commonly addressed within this approach, in Brazil. This cultural and linguistic familiarity also enabled me to incorporate participant observation within the CT case study.

I requested, and was kindly granted permission by the *Associação Brasileira de Terapia Comunitária* (ABRATECOM) [Brazilian Association of Community Therapy] through its then vice-president Ms. Marilene Grandesso, to participate in the first module of a training program for community therapists which took place in January 2006, in the metropolitan region of São Paulo, Brazil. This training program was one of several held through a partnership established between the Secretaria Nacional Anti-Drogas (SENAD) [National Narcotics Bureau] and the Universidade Federal do Ceará. At the time ABRATECOM was the organization responsible for coordinating the training and supervision of community therapists in the State of São Paulo.

I participated in approximately half of this weeklong training program, which took place in a convent. During this time I took field notes, and spoke with both trainees and seasoned community-therapists. I also participated in most of the presentations and many of the group dynamics[13].

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[13] A program requirement for the other participants was that they had to had to stay together as a group for the duration of the entire program, including eating and sleeping at the training site. I was excused from this requirement since there was no room for me to stay at the convent. As a result, I did not participate in the early morning and evening activities.

A definite highlight for me during this training was participating in a Community Therapy "circle" held amongst the community of trainees, with faculty and other trained community therapists facilitating. This "circle" was held outside and it went on longer than planned under the hot, summer sun (resulting in sunburn, for me). Still, the large group of people was engaged.

From the relationships I established with various organizers and participants in this training I was able to participate in another CT "circle" a few weeks later. This second "circle" was held in a senior center in the city of São Paulo and was attended by a population of neighborhood women.

Personal Experience With Hatcher's Work

Another personal characteristic that has played out throughout this study is the fact that I am a member of the Bahá'í Faith. In 2002 I attended two workshops presented by the members of The Authenticity Project. Both of these workshops were held at Green Acre Bahá'í School in Elliot, Maine (USA). It was here that I met William Hatcher, Mary K. Radpour and Michael Penn who were instrumental in kindling my original fascination with Hatcher's work on the dynamics of moral authenticity.

Personal experience with Psychosynthesis

Between 2005 and 2008 I completed a two-year professional training program in Psychosynthesis Counseling and received certification according to standards set by the *Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis* (AAP). A follow-up year of supervised work with clients is required should I choose to complete the certification and

71

become a Psychosynthesis practitioner. This training took place at the Synthesis Center in Amherst, Massachusetts (USA) and was taught by core faculty member Dorothy (Didi) Firman, Ed.D. assisted by other teachers. During this same period I also studied at the Synthesis Center with Anne Yeomans, M.Ed., and Thomas Yeomans, Ph.D. I first met Anne in the context of "psychosynthesis-inspired" work she calls "Women's Circles", and later joined one of Tom's seminars in Spiritual Psychology. My positive experiences with all three of these teachers are fundamental to my interest in psychosynthesis.

CHAPTER 4

A HATCHER-ASSAGIOLI SYNTHESIS

<u>Introduction</u>

This chapter examines the original works of William Hatcher and Roberto Assagioli along with the works of others building upon these, with a view to identifying key goals, principles, and practices which are relevant for adult education interventions. These interventions are carried out by trained facilitators who do not have formal training in the field of mental health, and take place in the context of community-based education in general and marginalized communities, in particular. Their goal is to support learning towards the full realization of human nature defined as learning which supports movement and growth towards the ability for: a) right (ethical) relationship within the world of human social relations (interpersonal dimension) and b) right (ethical) relationship with needs, impulses, and desires as they manifest within the self (intrapersonal dimension).

Towards this end, the present chapter answers the research questions that follow:

1. What are the goals of education that seeks to support the development of key capabilities that are necessary (but not sufficient) for right (ethical) relationships within the world of human social relations?

    1.1 What key principles support learning and growth towards this goal?

    1.2 What key practices support learning and growth towards this goal?

2. What is the goal of education that seeks to support the development of key

capabilities that are necessary (but not sufficient) for right (ethical) relationship

with needs, impulses and desires, as they manifest within the self?

      2.1 What key principles support learning and growth towards this goal?

      2.2 What key practices support learning and growth towards this goal?

The present chapter is developed in three parts: Part A, Part B and Part C.

Building on the preliminary examination of the works of Hatcher and Assagioli

that was carried out in chapter 2, Part A carries out further examination and deepening of

their respective views, in two inter-related dimensions: 1) our relationships within our

inner, psychological world and 2) our relationships within the outer world of human

social relations. Specifically, this examination attempts to address the question: "Why do

we have to exert effort in order to cultivate a personality which is inclined towards the

ethical use of our human powers, if it is within intrinsic and universal human nature to do

so?"

Part B carries out a comparative analysis of the themes that emerged in Part A,

highlighting key similarities and differences that are relevant to this inquiry. A crucial

analytical point arising from this examination is that Hatcher and Assagioli each focus on

key aspects which the other underplays, making their respective views complementary

insofar as the purposes of this inquiry are concerned.

Part C examines how the vision of right relations within the self (intrapersonal)

and with others (interpersonal) as developed by each Hatcher and Assagioli, might be

brought together to inform the goals, principles, and practices of an approach to

community-based adult education which seeks to support movement and growth towards the full realization of human nature, within the parameters set down by this study.

Part A: The Works of Roberto Assagioli and William Hatcher

Roberto Assagioli and the Discipline of Psychosynthesis

Assagioli held the matter of elucidating the structure of the inner world of the human being (psyche or personality) to be the "fundamental problem of psychology" (Assagioli, n.d. a, p. 2). One of the ways in which we can view Assagioli's conception of the relationships that exist between the various elements which comprise the personality is presented in below "map" of the psyche, formally known as the "Oval" or more fondly, the "Egg" diagram (Assagioli, 2000; Firman & Gila, 2002).

Assagioli's original configuration of this diagram was slightly different than the version that appears below. In his original conceptualization Assagioli placed a "star" representing essential and innate human spiritual reality – what he calls "*Self*" – in the area corresponding to the higher unconscious. The American Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis (AAP) notes that several alternative versions of Assagioli's original model of the "Egg" diagram have been proposed which seek to emphasize a point made by Assagioli - that human spiritual reality is present in all areas of the psyche and all aspects of a persons life - and not only in "higher" experiences (American Association for the Advancement of Psychosynthesis [APA], n.d.)

Based on his of years of experience working with this model in clinical and educational settings psychosynthesis theorist John Firman proposed the following revised diagram:

Figure 1: Roberto Assagioli's "Oval" or "Egg" Diagram

An explanation for the various areas of this diagram appears below:

1. The Lower unconscious

Corresponds to elementary psychological activities which direct the life of the body; this region includes innate and universal fundamental or lower, impulses and drives which human beings share with other life forms; dreams and imaginations of an inferior kind; repressed material arising from lived experience including desires and traumas; many complexes, charged with intense emotion.

2. The Middle Unconscious

Corresponds to psychological elements which are similar to our waking consciousness and which can be brought at will into our field of consciousness; in this region experiences are assimilated; the elaboration and development of ordinary mental and imaginative activity also takes place here before its "birth" into the light of consciousness.

3. The Higher Unconscious

Corresponds to higher impulses and drives which are unique to human beings including ethical "imperatives" and urges to humanitarian and heroic action; higher intuitions and inspirations (artistic, philosophical or scientific); higher feelings such as altruistic love; the states of contemplation, illumination, ecstasy; universal spiritual qualities or energies, and innate and universal impulses towards them.

4. The circle located at the center of the "Egg" (in the middle unconscious)

This circle is a representation of a person's field of consciousness at any given moment in time - that of which we are directly aware - including the incessant, changing flow of sensations, observations, images, thoughts, feelings, desires and impulses, which we can observe, analyze and judge.

5. The "dot" within this circle

This "dot" represents the source or center of human conscious awareness at the level of the psyche ("I" or self).

6. Outside of the "Egg" lies the collective unconscious

Processes of exchange take place ongoingly - both with other human beings, and with the general environment (psychological osmosis).

7. Assagioli's use of "dotted" lines

A final aspect of the "Egg" diagram is represented by lines between each level and also in the "shell" or boundary, of the "Egg" itself. These lines are dotted by way of indicating Assagioli's understanding of the three levels of unconsciousness as dynamic rather than static and ever changing in terms of their content, which moves between them. Assagioli holds that the psychological energies within one's inner world are continually undergoing a natural and spontaneous process of transformation and interaction, a process that can also be consciously mediated by the subjectivity of the individual. This process of transformation and interaction takes place vertically, between the levels in either direction: upwards (sublimation) and downwards (degradation) (Assagioli, 2002, 2000; Ferrucci, 1982).

In Firman's revised version of the "Egg" diagram which we saw above, the original "star" Assagioli used to represent universal human spiritual reality (the higher Self or *Self*) is not represented, by way of indicating that the reality and influence of *Self* "pervades all areas of the person". As such, it is an active influence in the middle and lower dimensions of the unconscious, as well as within the higher unconscious. To use Firman's language *Self* is present in, and influences, the personality while also remaining transcendent of it. It is thus "transcendent-immanent" or distinct but not separate,

> Transcendence here denotes that Self cannot be equated
> with any specific content or process of the higher, middle,
> or lower unconscious, while immanence denotes that Self is
> still completely present and active within the content and
> process of all these levels—both insights at the core of
> Assagioli's understanding of Self (Firman, n.d.)

Firman additionally notes that this revised representation of the inner world of the human person has the advantage of making clear another assumption of Assagioli's - that

human fulfillment "is not a matter of seeking a particular experience of unity or enlightenment" but rather is a matter of "living one's life calling or dharma…in relationship to other people and the world" (Firman, n.d. p. 4).

Keeping the "Egg" diagram "in mind" (*i.e.*, within the "circle" representing our field of conscious awareness, within the middle unconscious!) we are now ready to examine the theory of psychosynthesis in specific detail, furthering our understanding of Assagioli's assumptions of human nature and fulfillment.

"I" or Psychological Center

We have seen that it is Assagioli's assumption that human fulfillment requires the person to engage in an ongoing process of aligning her inner world with a universal ethical imperative. Towards this end, Ferrucci (1982) observes that the energies within the unconscious need to be "coached" (p. 127). Effective training and education assist the individual to "gradually acquire" the "capacity" to carry out this coaching or directing[14], enabling her to fully utilize her powers towards the fulfillment of her highest - but initially latent - potential (p. 129),

> By coaching our unconscious, we also discover in it a
> potentiality for countless transformations…It is precisely in
> this moldability of the human psyche that lies the promise
> of unfathomable possibilities (Ferrucci, 1982, p. 129)

Here we are faced with a curious and inevitable question: who, within the personality, carries out the "coaching" of the energies within the psyche? Assagioli's answer is that the directing agent is innate and essential (universal) human spiritual reality, with its inherent capacity for self-awareness (consciousness) of what we are

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[14] Elsewhere Assagioli describes this capacity as "self-training" (2002, p. 75)

feeling and what we are thinking, and for the power of choice. Assagioli takes great care to emphasize that what is usually thought of as "the will" is in fact, one of the essential functions of a "will-er": a "living self-conscious being" who wills and acts as "a directing agent of the play of the various functions and energies" (Assagioli, 2000, p. 101). All of these functions are the functions of the subject, or center of consciousness (innate and essential human spiritual reality) at the level of the psyche, which Assagioli calls "*I*". Assagioli elaborates,

> In reality, all functions are functions of a *living, self-conscious being* and thus of an "I". It is the "I" that feels and thinks, that imagines, desires and wills - above all that *wills*—and therefore as one has in general a vague and dim sense of one's self, of self-consciousness, it is not surprising that one's sense of its fundamental function—the will is equally confused and faint (Assagioli, n.d. a, p. 3, emphasis in original)

The Fully Developed Will: Strong, Skillful and Good

The process of developing the capability to consciously direct the energies within one's inner world according to a universal ethical imperative is held by Assagioli to be essential to individual and collective human fulfillment – indeed, for the "very survival of humanity". It is only through development of his "inner powers" that is man enabled to "fulfill his true nature" (2002, p. 6).

Among the powers of innate and universal human nature Assagioli holds that the "training and use" of "the will" (the power of choice) is "the foundation of all endeavors" and the one "to which priority should be given" (2002, p.6). He dedicated an entire book (his second and last) to discussing the means and approaches that could be used by an individual who is intent on this task. In this book titled, "The Act of Will" Assagioli notes

80

the will's "central position in man's personality" and "its intimate connection with the core of his being – his very self" (Assagioli, 2002, p. 6).

In following the thread of Assagioli's thinking thus far, we are - rather awkwardly at first - led to the understanding that the process of developing the capability for the ethical use of the will is one that requires the development of the will, by none other than the 'will-er' herself. Assagioli sees this process proceeding in stages, and progressing from "*recognizing* that the will exists", then that "one *has* a will", then that "one is a will" or rather, is a "willing self" and then finally to the development of the capability for generating consciously chosen action (2002, p. 15, emphasis in original). Elsewhere in this same book Assagioli asserts that,

> …much of what is said in this book faces two ways at once: one towards the use of the will to accomplish a variety of purposes, the other towards using the will to train the will itself, as a prior or concurrent activity. Happily there tends to be a constant interaction – every act of the will trains the will and each bit of training allows for further acts of will. If we keep this fact in mind, the will will be present in our minds as we act. This in itself is a good technique for developing the will (Assagioli, 2002, pp. 176-7)

The below insightful exchange in an interview of Assagioli in the December, 1974 issue of the magazine *Psychology Today* helps clarify Assagioli's understanding of the function of the will itself, which is markedly different from usual understandings:

Keen: What other techniques do you use to develop will power?

Assagioli: Let me clarify something. Psychosynthesis is not primarily concerned with developing will power. Strength is a necessary but not a sufficient condition of the will. It is equally important to develop a skillful will and a good will. We have many techniques for developing each of these qualities. I deal with these at length in *The Act of Will* [his second book] (Assagioli, in Keen, 1974, p. 6)

This same interview continues:

Keen: Good will seems to belong more to religion than psychotherapy. Can't the will be healthy without being good?

Assagioli: No. A person is always in a social context; he is not an isolated unit. So the more conflict there is, the more energy is wasted. If we are to have any deep peace it depends upon the harmonization of wills. Self-centeredness is deeply destructive to the cooperation without which a person cannot live a full life in community. Why should we consider good will an expendable virtue, a matter only for the religious? I can go even a step further. This same principle applies to an individual's relation to nature and the universe. No person can take an arrogant stand and consider himself unrelated to the universe. Like it or not, man is a part of the universal will and he must somehow tune in and willingly participate in the rhythms of universal life. The harmonization and unification of the individual and the universal will—the Chinese identification with the Tao, the Stoic acceptance of destiny, or the Christian will of God—is one of the highest human goals, even if it is seldom realized (Assagioli, in Keen 1974, p 7).

The Innate Origin of the Need for Training and Education

Italian Piero Ferrucci is a student of Assagioli's who worked closely with him in Florence, in the final years leading to Assagioli's death in 1974. Ferrucci was fortunate to have the opportunity to learn about Assagioli's views in the context of Assagioli assisting him in his own process of development, which Ferrucci describes as "my search for a higher consciousness" (Ferrucci, 1982, p. 113).

In describing the process by which higher aspects within human reality come to be experienced within human consciousness, Ferrucci explains that part of energies within the unconscious are "fragmented, dispersed and unpurposive" and comparing them to "a group of children who have a lot of energy but do not know what game to play",

> As we all know, they won't just sit there and wait. If the
> energy inherent in the unconsciousness is not channeled, it
> creates a vauge sense of dissatisfaction and restlessness.
> We experience a lot of nervous stimulation but end up
> doing nothing (Ferrucci, 1982, p. 127)

An innate and universal need for training and education arises partly from this configuration of the energies within the psyche, as given by essential human nature.

82

Ferrucci (1982) explains that the "unconscious, and particularly this disorganized, chaotic part of it needs to have rhythm and a direction communicated to it…" (p. 127) while further noting that,

> …[t]he mythical image of the charioteer and the horses, which we find in both Western and Eastern traditions, symbolizes one's capacity to deftly handle internal irrational and unknown forces (Ferrucci, 1982, p. 127)

Generally speaking, drives and impulses generate desires and motivations, which lead to actions (Assagioli, 2002). Lack of the development, on the part of the individual Self (will-er), of the ability for "*disciplining itself* and *choosing* such aims as are consistent with the welfare of others and the common good of humanity" (Assagioli, 2002 p. 86, emphasis in original) constitutes a lack of, what Assagioli calls "*will to good*" (Assagioli, 2002, p. 87, emphasis in original); it is this capability which Assagioli is speaking of his reference to "good" will, in the above interview in *Psychology Today*.

The other two aspects of the will mentioned by Assagioli in this same interview are "strong will" and "skillful will". It is his understanding that a "well-developed" will is developed in all three aspects: it is thus strong, and good and skillful. Such is the case with the "greatest mystics" whom Assagioli maintains, "have demonstrated a strong and well-developed will" (Assagioli, 2002, p.117).

In Assagioli's view the innate and universal need for the development of the power of choice (the will) in all three aspects, arises from several fundamental tendencies within innate and universal human nature. Among the obstacles towards the will to good, Assagioli cites "selfishness" and "self-centeredness". Of these, he holds that "[s]elfishness constitutes the fundamental obstacle" (p. 86). Assagioli is clear that the tendency to selfishness is *not* acquired in the course of lived experience:

83

Selfishness is inherent in man and has always existed; but in our present day it assumes more accentuated and dangerous forms because modern life provides stronger stimuli, fewer restraints, and more powerful instruments of destruction. The control of selfishness is therefore not only an ethical exigency; it is a necessity for the very safety of mankind. A skillful use of the will can greatly assist this curbing of selfishness (Assagioli, 2002, p. 87)

Assagioli further explains that "selfishness",

…springs from the desire to possess and to dominate, which is an expression of the basic urges of self-preservation and self-assertion. Inevitably it comes into collision with obstructions that block its satisfaction; aggressiveness and violence are thereby aroused, and the will used to destroy whatever is interfering with the attainment of the desired objects (Assagioli, 2002, pp. 86-7)

Elsewhere Assagioli makes reference to the transpersonal character of the highest forms of humanitarian and social action, explaining that these are "motivated by the Transpersonal Will" which runs against "the instinct for self-preservation" and the "drive to personal assertion",

The highest forms of humanitarian and social action have a transpersonal character. They are motivated by the Transpersonal Will, which is independent of, and at times even against, the personal will, against the instinct for self-preservation and the drive to personal assertion. These actions may involve courage, hardships, sacrifices, risks. They may be prompted by a selfless devotion and active consecration to an ideal or cause, and can reach the peaks of true heroism (Assagioli, 2002, p. 117)

The obstacle of *self-centeredness,* or the "tendency to refer everything to the personal self" and to "consider everything from the angle of one's own personality, to concentrate solely on one's own ideas and emotional reactions" (Assagioli, 2020, p. 87) is different from selfishness; whereas selfishness is an expression of a basic urge that

cannot be eliminated, self-centeredness is a limitation of perspective that can, and should be, corrected through training and education (p. 88).

The self-centered individual "may not be and often is not at all *selfish*" Assagioli explains. In fact, "he may be altruistic and sincerely want to do good. But he wants to do it *in his own way*". The result is that this person "attempts to convert everybody to *his* methods, and sees salvation only in the remedies *he* offers" (Assagioli, 2002, p. 87 emphasis in original).

Assagioli additionally cites the "[l]ack of understanding of others" (2002, p. 88) among the various obstacles the individual faces in developing the power of choice towards action which is, "consistent with the welfare of others and the common good of humanity" (2002, p. 86).

Another tendency which serves as an obstacle towards cultivating the aspects in which "the will may be deficient" is "hedonism" which Assagioli defines as "the fundamental desire for pleasure and for the avoidance of suffering, which is innate in human nature" (2002, p. 167). Assagioli also points to the need to eliminate the "unwillingness in active training" which he says, "has its chief source in a basic inertia existing in all of us" (2002, p. 98).

It is truly essential that we do not loose from sight the fact that Assagioli's stance regarding these impulses of our earlier, more primitive (lower) nature is *realistic* rather than *fatalistic*. Two fundamental points within Assagioli's conception of innate and essential human nature are that there is no duality in terms of universal human spiritual reality, and that our lower impulses and drives are *amoral* rather than *immoral*.

Furthermore, at all times we have the power of conscious choice (although we have seen

that its capacity is initially latent, as a potential). Assagioli is emphatic on this point,

> It is well to be quite clear on the point that no drive,
> emotion, or desire needs to be repressed or should be
> condemned on its own account; it is the skillful regulation
> of its use and manifestations that is needed (2002, p. 74)

Ferrucci (1982) expands this assumption:

> The distinction between the "lower" and the "higher"
> unconscious, or superconscious, is developmental not
> moralistic. The lower unconscious merely represents the
> more primitive aspects of ourselves, the beginner in us, so
> to speak. It is not *bad*, it is just *earlier*. Conversely, the
> superconscious constitutes all that we can still reach in the
> course of our evolution. It is not, however, a mere abstract
> possibility, but a living reality, with an existence and
> powers of its own (1982, p. 44 emphasis in original)

For Assagioli the fundamental task shared by all human beings - to develop our

capability for conscious choice as to how our impulses and desires (both higher and

lower) should be channeled - arises from within the very structure of Reality, of which

humankind is an integral part,

> In our individual lives we are reflecting the universal fact
> of duality. It is inherent in the cosmic manifestation. The
> Supreme Reality, the Ultimate, is One, but the expression,
> the manifestation of the Absolute and Un-manifest brings
> duality and the polarity of Spirit and matter…It is the
> achieving of a right relationship between these two aspects
> of ourselves, their balancing and their synthesis, which is
> one of our most fundamental problems (Assagioli, 1975, p.
> 28)

The development of human potential is thus a highly complex and multi-layered

process in light of our dual (material and spiritual) nature. Discernment, and the wisdom

to implement it in the circumstances of one's life are key ingredients for success. These

however, must be developed in the course of living.

In reflecting on a central challenge inherent in the realization of human nature –

of how one can come to know one's true self well enough, that one is inclined towards

making conscious choices which reflect this awareness – Assagioli says that,

> In the case of self-love, all depends on *what* we love in
> ourselves and *how* we love it. It is truly egotism if we love
> the egocentric and separative aspects in us, the craving of
> pleasure, possessions, and domination. But if we love what
> is higher and best in ourselves, what we *are* essentially, if
> we love our potentialities for growth, development, creative
> ability, and communion with others, then this love, devoid
> of egotism, urges us to live a life of higher quality. This
> love is then not only not an obstacle to loving others in the
> same way but, rather, a powerful means for doing so. As
> with all the types of love, self-love can be helped to
> regulate and direct itself by the will (Assagioli, 2002, p. 92
> emphasis in original)

The Acquired Origin of the Need for Training and Education

All human beings come to know themselves in the context of relationships with

others - "the isolated man does not exist" observes Assagioli,

> …he is in constant interaction with his family, his working
> associates and society in general; he has many and diverse
> relationships with his fellowmen and with the world
> (Assagioli, n.d. d, p. 11)

Since it is in the context of lived experience that we, who are "will-ers" by nature

are first trained and educated to use our power of choice, it follows that our use of this

power is necessarily conditioned by our past experiences with other people. Every

individual "is at once, the product of an enormous number of collective and individual

elements rooted in the past and the present" and also of "all kinds of conditioning over

which he did not have control" (Assagioli, 2002, p. 90). Fundamental to Assagioli's

conception of psychosynthesis is his assumption that, in the process of cultivating a

personality which is aligned with the Universal will, we have to move beyond acquired tendencies which limit our further development; ultimately they are more damaging to ourselves than to anyone else.

A fundamental and related point arising from Assagioli's study and partial validation of psychoanalytic theory is that, in fostering change within one's personality we cannot simply ignore impulses and drives and their related motivations (underlying needs), even if they are of a lower nature. These must be acknowledged and met, even if only symbolically and/or substitutively. If instead of consciously acknowledging an impulse, we repress or suppress it, the energy that motivated the impulse does not dissipate harmlessly: we have merely "pushed it" out from our field of conscious awareness and into our lower consciousness, where it can form into highly charged complexes (Assagioli, 2000, 2002).

In one way or another, these complexes or patterns represent historical choices made by the "will-er" at some point in her/his past and at a given level of developmental maturity, motivated by the instinct for self-preservation enacted at the level of the psyche. Holding on to these patterns and defending them amounts to the preservation of the integrity of the psychological self - of who we perceive ourselves to be - rather than of our actual Self (our spiritual reality) (Firman & Gila, 1997).

Since the impulse towards synthesis and unification is inherent in human reality, much psychic energy is required in order to keep the contents of these isolated, energetic "complexes" out of the "light" of conscious awareness, and in the "darkness" of the lower unconscious. Assagioli maintains that conscious recognition of their existence, followed by release/transmutation of their energies must take place in the process of

cultivating the fully developed will. The released energy must then be applied towards

establishing new, more effective patterns through the conscious use of the power of

choice (Assagioli, 2000, 2002).

Here we see another fundamental assumption of Assagioli's: that conscious

acknowledgment of existing patterns/complexes does not mean we must enact them.

Through the use of discernment the ineffective pattern should be inhibited, and a

consciously chosen alternative approach to meeting the underlying need must be enacted

(Assagioli, 2000). Assagioli clarifies the subtle, yet profound in terms of results,

difference between *inhibition* and *repression* which has far reaching implications for

human psychological health,

> To the modern ear, the word "inhibition" carries a rather
> unpleasant sound; it brings to mind repression and its
> unfortunate consequences…it is worth clarifying the great
> difference that exists between "repression" and conscious
> control. To repress an impulse is to condemn it, to try to
> obliterate it or to "bottle it up" in the unconscious and
> pretend that it doesn't exist. But whatever is repressed
> returns later, and often in disguise, to claim its due.
> Inhibition on the other hand, consists in resolutely [through
> an act of will] holding back an impulse or tendency, while
> deliberating on how best to deal with it…rightly used,
> inhibition can be the mark of wisdom (Assagioli, 2002, p.
> 153)

Further elaboration of a psychosynthesis perspective on the acquired need for

learning towards the full realization of human potential and for transformation of

ineffective patterns, leading to healing which supports human fulfillment was developed

by psychosynthesis theorists John Firman and Ann Gila (2002, 1997). Their work

identifies and examines what they see as a "violation" of the fundamental reality of our

innate Self, which takes place in the context of one's lived experience. Firman and Gila

(1997) call this violation the "primal wound",

> The primal wound is the result of a violation we all suffer
> in various ways. In this violation we are treated not as
> individual, unique human beings, but as objects. Our
> supportive milieu - whether early caregivers, peers,
> institutions, or society at large - does not see us as we truly
> are, and instead forces us to become objects of its own
> purposes. In Martin Buber's…terms, we are treated as
> "It's" rather than "Thou's" (Firman & Gila, 1997, p. 1)

The Process of Psychosynthesis: Individual Psychosynthesis

Assagioli outlined the general aims of the discipline of psychosynthesis in terms

of two ongoing and overlapping stages which he calls *personal* and *transpersonal*

psychosynthesis.

Personal psychosynthesis is the name Assagioli gave to the process in which

one's sense of being a personal self – an "'I" – gradually comes into focus, and becomes

integrated into the personality. Thinking back to the Egg diagram, our "I" or

psychological "center" is "located" in the center of the "circle" of our conscious

awareness. As such, it is aware of the constantly changing sensations, feelings, and

thoughts within one's inner, psychic world. Since the quality of the will is its essential

quality it also possesses the power to make conscious choices in the role of coordinating

center, or "director". It is thus the integrating center of the personality (Assagioli 2000,

2002).

The psychosynthesis principle known as "disidentification" which Assagioli

describes as the creation of a certain psychological distance is fundamental to Assagioli's

understanding of the process of personal psychosynthesis. The inner world of the

personality, as we have seen, is formed of shifting energies, some which are already

formed into complexes or patterns which constitute habitual approaches towards meeting

needs, and some of which are free energies. Assagioli likens these free energies to film

that has not yet been exposed to light, affirming that they confer incredible potential for

development towards higher pursuits over the course of one's lifetime (Assagioli, 2000).

Assagioli's understanding of the principle of "disidentification" assumes that the

center of conscious awareness ("I") becomes "identified" with the energies which are

moving within one's inner world, effectively loosing "itself" (and we, "ourselves")

amidst these energies of various levels (qualities), ranging from higher to lower.

Consequently Assagioli holds that true self-consciousness or self-awareness is not

our usual state. What we generally perceive and take to be ourselves, is simply our

identification with some portion of the contents of our inner world,

> But generally…self-consciousness is indeed implicit rather
> than explicit. It is experienced in a rather nebulous and
> distorted way because it is usually mixed with, and veiled
> by, the contents of consciousness (sensations, drives,
> emotions, thoughts, etc.). Their constant impact veils the
> clarity of consciousness and produces spurious
> identification of the self with these changing and transient
> contents. Thus if we are to make self-consciousness
> explicit, clear, and vivid, we must disidentify ourselves
> from all these contents and identify with the self (Assagioli,
> 2002, p. 11)

Within the practice of psychosynthesis, the principle of "disidentification" is also

a capability that can be developed by the skillful will. Because it supports an increased

ability to be aware of feelings and thoughts, this capability is vital to the discernment

required for meeting needs in ways that are good for oneself and others,

91

Drives and desires constitute the active, dynamic aspect of our psychological life. They are the strings behind every human action. But their origin, nature, value and effects differ widely; these must therefore be recognized and then examined with the same objectivity with which one examines a natural object. The procedure necessitates disidentification from them, at least temporarily, and this in turn means acquiring awareness of the self, the conscious "I," as distinct from these psychological elements and forces; and from that central point observing their flow. An act of will is called for here, and the will, as we have seen, is the most immediate and direct function of the "I (Assagioli, 1974, p. 60)

To summarize the fundamental psychosynthesis principle and practice of disidentification, we can say that it (skillful will) contributes to our capability to consciously inhibit impulses, as they arise. Provided we have capability for discernment (will to good) we can then choose an alternate mode of expression, which when enacted over time (strong will) will effectively pattern the energies of the psyche, in a way that is more consistent with the reality of *Self* (Assagioli, 2000, 2002).

Assagioli's conception of the process of personal psychosynthesis takes place in four steps:

1. Thorough knowledge of one's personality

2. Control of its various elements

3. Realization of one's true Self: the discovery or creation of a unifying center ("I")

4. Psychosynthesis: the formation of reconstruction of the personality around the new center (Assagioli, 2000, p. 18)

The Process of Psychosynthesis: Transpersonal Psychosynthesis

In personal psychosynthesis strictly speaking the will is not fully developed, leading to a limited perspective in the development of innate and universal human

potential. Strength of will and skillful will have been cultivated to some extent, but the will to good is lacking. For this reason, Assagioli maintains that "individual" (personal) psychosynthesis "is not, and cannot be, and end in itself, since each of us is closely linked in life with other persons and groups" (2002, p. 185).

A fundamental principle of psychosynthesis is that the will of the human spiritual essence (Self) seeks ongoingly, to manifest its latent potentialities within the personality, in spite of whatever degree of resistance/limitation this personality may present, at any given moment in time. *Transpersonal Psychosynthesis* is the name Assagioli gave to the gradual process by which conscious awareness of oneself in terms of one's spiritual essence or true nature (Higher Self or *Self*) comes into focus within the middle unconscious, and from there becomes integrated into the personality (Assagioli, 2000, 2002).

Ferrucci notes that Assagioli's assumption, and the "working hypothesis" of psychosynthesis is that "a living entity which is perceived as unchangeable, silent, pure being" (which in psychosynthesis is known as the Transpersonal Self) "is at the core of the superconscious, just as the personal self, or "I", is at the core of the ordinary personality" (1982, p. 131). However rather than different entities, "I" and Self are in fact, "the same reality experienced at different levels" (Ferrucci, 1982, p. 45).

Additionally, while awareness of the personal self ("I") is held to be a precondition for psychological health, awareness of the Self is held to be fundamental to human spiritual realization (Ferrucci, 1982).

Regarding the expansion of consciousness and higher awareness that accompany growth in the direction of self-realization, Assagioli assumes that there is no "single

stable state" of "enlightenment" or "liberation" that is "to be reached once and for all and to be enjoyed permanently" (Ferrucci, 1982, p. 130). The process of Self-realization is viewed in terms of "experiences" rather than "states" where superconscious experiences are held to run the gamut from: an insight; the sudden solution to a difficult problem; seeing one's life in perspective and having a clear sense of purpose; transcendence of time and space as we know them; the delight of beauty; waves of luminous joy; creative inspiration; a sense of boundless compassion; an extraordinary inner silence and the fading of the usual sense of time or intimations of timelessness, among others (Ferrucci, 1982, pp. 130-1).

What is common to all of these experiences is some sense of underlying oneness where before there was multiplicity. In this regard Ferrucci explains that, "…as we move toward the Self, unity replaces multiplicity" (Ferrucci, 1982, p. 134). For Assagioli this distinction between personal and transpersonal psychosynthesis does not imply a moralistic distinction. Ferrucci elaborates,

> At this point we could make the mistake of believing that the realm of the Self is *good* and the realm of the personality is *bad*. But such a judgment would prevent us from understanding that the personality and the Self can be seen as two aspects of the same evolution. A butterfly is not better than a caterpillar. It is a development, an unfoldment. The view we have from the valley is not worse than the one we can enjoy on top of the mountain. It is simply narrower, and that is the order of things. There would be no top without a valley, no butterfly without the caterpillar, no realization of the Self without the previous stage of personality (Ferrucci, 1982, p. 139)

While they are *distinct* these two stages of personal and transpersonal psychosynthesis are not *separate*; furthermore, within the same person "different levels"

of personal and transpersonal realization "can be active in various proportions, and also in various degrees at different times" (Assagioli, 2002, p. 121).

The Process of Psychosynthesis: Interpersonal Psychosynthesis

While Assagioli's practice focused mainly on supporting the "vertical" dimension of transpersonal development he also recognizes the need for a "horizontal" dimension of transformation, which he calls *interpersonal psychosynthesis*. Assagioli describes his vision of interpersonal psychosynthesis using the metaphor of "concentric circles," which "gradually include ever larger groups, from family to humanity as a whole" (Assagioli, n.d. b, p. 3).

Assagioli holds that the innate and universal tendency towards psychosynthesis within each human being, "may also be considered as the individual expression of a wider principle, of a general law of inter-individual and cosmic synthesis" towards evolution and progress (Assagioli, 2000, p. 27). The "large field of interindividual psychosynthesis" reaches he says, "…from the interpersonal relationship of man and woman to the harmonious integration of the individual into even larger groups" leading up to "the one humanity" (Assagioli, 2000, p. 4).

Whereas transpersonal psychosynthesis runs along a vertical axis (I-Self), inter-individual or interpersonal psychosynthesis runs along a horizontal axis (I-Thou). Nonetheless, inasmuch as they both require, and support the development of increasingly higher capabilities of growth and movement away from the more restricted focus on the personal self, Assagioli holds that transpersonal and interpersonal psychosynthesis are both required for the fulfillment of human spiritual potential.

In light of the fundamental importance he attributed to it both for the individual and for society at large, Assagioli maintains that "[e]ducation in right human relations" (interindividual psychosynthesis) is a requirement for the full realization of human potential (n.d. b, p. 3),

> This important aspect of education is, in reality, part of the
> spiritual education, because to be spiritual does not mean
> only to be able to transcend the little self in a vertical
> direction through communion with God. It includes a
> horizontal attitude; that is, communion of thought and love,
> and harmonious collaboration with all fellow-creatures.
> This extension must be obtained by means of concentric
> circles, which gradually include ever larger groups, from
> the family to humanity as a whole (Assagioli, n.d. b, p. 3)

In relation to other human beings the process of interpersonal psychosynthesis leads to a sense of unity, which is experienced "as a sense of solidarity with the human race at large" and an awareness of "one single source common to all beings" in whose light, "all conflicting viewpoints and interests disappear, or lose their importance" (Ferrucci, 1982, p. 134). Assagioli (2000) holds that interindividual psychosynthesis can be expressed "…. as the reality and the function of love in its various aspects and particularly if that of "agapé," altruistic love, "charity," brotherhood, communion, sharing…" (p. 4).

Fulfillment Through Action in the World

The general aims of the various approaches, exercises, and techniques within the body of psychosynthesis theory and practice can be grouped into two broad categories, both of which are held to be necessary, and each of which should ideally reinforce the other. They are: 1) those approaches which support, within the psyche, the cultivation of the ability for skillful interaction with habitual established patterns which have been

96

formed in the process of living and growing, and the establishment of new patterns and 2)

those approaches which support, within the psyche, the cultivation of the awareness or

realization of one's essential spiritual reality (*Self*) which includes being of service to

others. Ferrucci sheds light on this understanding,

> The basic expression of the Self is service – a service that is
> free, having nothing in common with trying to be good and
> seeking to help. Persons who can give without strings
> attached, just for the sheer delight of it, are rare, but they
> exist. And many of us have tested such pleasures from time
> to time. On the other hand, the personality is characterized
> by unfulfillment. In it you will always find a need that cries
> out to be satisfied. And if that does not happen, the
> personality feels that its own existence is threatened. Its
> central and recurrent preoccupations are, therefore, physical
> and psychological survival (Ferrucci, 1982, p. 128)

With this we arrive at another assumption of Assagioli's: it is a fundamental

principal of psychological health that "[s]uperconscious energies seek and need to be

manifested" (Ferrucci, 1982, p. 142). In other words there is a need, within universal

human nature, to express the qualities of our higher, transpersonal or spiritual nature -

such as love, compassion, truthfulness, forgiveness and justice - in one's relationships

with others,

> Superconscious energies seek and need to be manifested.
> This is a fundamental principle of psychological health.
> The point then, is not only to induce peak experiences,
> ecstasy, satori, and the like; but also to make the ideals of
> which peak experiences are an explosive demonstration a
> pervasive reality in our life and in the lives of others. Even
> without ecstasy, such inner realities as altruistic love,
> insight, wonder and gratefulness, the sense of beauty and
> justice, can constitute the themes of our life… (Ferrucci,
> 1982, p. 142)

Additional, Fundamental Principles of Psychosynthesis

In light of the depth and breadth of its goals as they have been discussed this far, it is clear that a full examination of the theory of the discipline of psychosynthesis cannot be carried out here. The remainder of this review limits itself to outlining a few additional aspects that are relevant to the aims of this study:

1) Flexibility of Approach

Those who work within the general framework of a "psychosyntheic" understanding of human nature and fulfillment have drawn on psychosynthesis principles in a variety of clinical and education settings. However a fundamental caveat set down by Assagioli is - or rather should be - the standard against which the appropriateness and usefulness of any approach, exercise or technique used within the practice of psychosynthesis can be measured: it is not the exercises themselves which lead to the results, but rather the *intention* with which they are practiced (Assagioli, 2002; Ferrucci, 1982).

New approaches and/or modifications of older approaches are welcome as long as they contribute to the general aims of the process of personal, transpersonal and interpersonal psychosynthesis. In this sprit, Assagioli maintains that all techniques "…can be used and modified at will by therapists and educators, provided they keep in mind the basic purpose of the therapy" (Assagioli, 2000, p. 58).

2) Balancing and Synthesis of Opposites

Psychosynthesis assumes that any emotion or reaction has an opposite, and the task is to unite and create a synthesis between the two, rather than repressing one or both. What brings about the synthesis is the active "I", the observer, the controlling factor in

the human being, and later the higher Self (Assagioli, 2000, 2002).

3) Repression of the Sublime

While Freud recognized the problems arising from the repression of impulses of a lower nature which are thus relegated to the lower unconscious, Assagioli additionally recognizes the repression of higher needs, including those of manifesting the higher or transpersonal qualities of our essential Self. Within the discipline of psychosynthesis this is referred to as "repression of the sublime" (Haronian, 1967). The energy "tied up" within the psyche as the result of this repression is held to be a cause of tension, which appears as a deficiency in the development of the power of will towards higher pursuits (Assagioli, 2000).

Within psychosynthesis theory this "repression of the sublime" has both an innate and an acquired origin. Assagioli discusses the innate origin of the impulse to repression of the impulses of the higher nature in the same interview in *Psychology Today*:

Keen: Why should people repress the sublime? What's so threatening about paradise?

Assagioli: We fear the sublime because it is unknown and because if we admit the reality of higher values we are committed to act in a more noble way. Goodness, cooperation, the loss of self-centredness, and responsibility for spiritual growth go along with acknowledgement of the higher self (Assagioli, in Keen, 1974, p. 8)

Regarding the acquired impulse to repress the impulses of the higher nature we have the work of Firman and Gila (1997) on the Primal Wound, which was mentioned earlier.

4) Laws of Psychological Functioning

Assagioli articulates eight universal laws of causality at the level of the psychological world and proposes that an understanding of these laws is of value in the process of developing and transforming the personality. These laws of "psychological

99

functioning" articulate the relationships between various psychological elements and forces, and draws on these to develop specific techniques that can be used in every day life situations (Assagioli, 2002, 1968, n.d. b, n.d. c, n.d. d).

Assagioli holds that the skillful use of the will in this manner, rather than its forceful use, is the most "effective and satisfactory" use of the will (p. 47). As it is not possible to discuss all eight laws and their possible application in detail this overview briefly touches on the first law:

Law I – "Images or mental pictures and ideas tend to produce the physical conditions and the external acts that correspond to them". Assagioli explains that,

> This law is at the base of all psychosomatic influences, both pathological and therapeutic…The centrally located will can mobilize the energies of imagination and of thought, and utilize these energies within the individual to carry out its plan. So the will can be used purposefully and consciously by the individual to choose, evoke, and concentrate on the images and ideas that will help produce the actions he desires. For example, images or ideas of courage and high purpose, used skillfully, tend to evoke courage and produce courageous acts (Assagioli, 2002, p. 52).

5) Human development is ongoing, in both the individual and collective dimensions,

> …psychosynthesis is not a task, which can be completed, which leads to something final and static, as does the construction of a building. Psychosynthesis is a vital and dynamic process, leading to ever new inner conquests, to ever broader integrations. All this is true for each of us as individuals, but it is just as true concerning the relationships which exist, or which can and should be established, among human beings (Assagioli, n.d. c, p. 3)

In Closing

To summarize this review, we might say that:

1) The discipline of psychosynthesis recognizes the need to foster healing, and the development of capability for future growth, in the context of education that seeks to support the fulfillment of human potential.

2) The inherent plasticity of the psyche enables better, and more fundamentally human understandings of self to be realized and enacted - to be moved from latent potential to realized ability - through the use of the power of choice towards this end.

3) Human fulfillment calls - through the process of synthesis which is inherent in the structure of reality - for actions that increase and ongoingly refine one's capability for personal growth, *away* from self-centeredness and *towards* the recognition of the essential oneness of the human family.

Psychosynthesis is thus fundamentally and integrally hopeful and optimistic regarding the potential for increased harmony within each human being, within human communities, and within humanity as a whole - a potential that arises from Assagioli's vision of,

> ...the essential unity of human nature existing beneath, and in spite of, all individual and group diversities. In each of us there are potentially all the elements and qualities of the human being, the germ of all virtues and of all vices. In each of us there is the potential criminal and the potential saint or hero. It is a question of different development, valuation, choice and control (Assagioli, n.d. d, p. 14)

William Hatcher and The Authenticity Project

The above review of the works of Assagioli provides the context for an in-depth examination of the works of Hatcher. In Chapter two we saw that in Hatcher's work it is through the ongoing interaction of the powers of mind, heart, and will that human beings construct an inner world, which is structured according to an *internal* hierarchy of valuation. This internal hierarchy of valuation will be, to a greater or lesser degree, in accord with the *objective* hierarchy of valuation that is inherent in the structure of reality (Hatcher, 2002) [15].

Hatcher holds that this internal model of reality is developed according to certain laws inherent in the structure of reality. These laws are somewhat analogous to Assagioli's laws of psychological functioning. To recapitulate what was discussed in chapter two, when a human being interacts with a portion of reality the mind confers the capacity for developing ideas (conceptions) about that which we are aware; the heart confers the capacity to feel l*ove* for (attraction towards) an entity; and the will enables us to set into motion actions with the motivation (intention) to possess that which one feels attracted to, or to avoid that which we feel repulsion towards. In particular, Hatcher holds that the capacity of the heart – "love" – is "our natural response to the perception of value" (Hatcher, 2002, p. 48).

Hatcher assumes that the powers of mind, heart, and will are functions of innate and universal human spiritual reality, and that because of this they function in the same way, in all people (are governed by the same principles). Hatcher further assumes that

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[15] Hatcher's use of "heart" is a symbolic reference to the human emotional capacity rather than a reference to the physical organ.

human fulfillment requires the development (actualization) of these powers in accordance with universal, moral and spiritual laws of cause and effect[16] (Hatcher, 2002).

Hatcher's understanding of the process by which the soul (human spiritual reality) comes to develop an inner model of reality is similar to the process which Assagioli describes as the conscious "I" becoming "identified" with the contents of the inner, psychic world. Human beings create an inner world (inner model of reality) through the ongoing interaction of the powers of mind, heart, and will and then perceive themselves as "being" whatever this inner model holds they "are" (Hatcher, 2002).

In particular, our inner world contains an image - which we ourselves conceived, of ourselves - and it is this image (self-concept) with which we become identified, taking it to be our essential reality (Self) and thus seeking to defend it. This is Hatcher's definition of egotism: to love the image we ourselves made, of ourselves, more than our true self (our objective, spiritual reality) (Hatcher, 2002).

Other fundamental assumptions which Hatcher and The Authenticity Project make regarding human nature and fulfillment and which bear relevance to this study are:

1) Human beings have an innate need to conceive of themselves as having value since, "to consider oneself worthless is to perpetuate spiritual or psychological suicide…" (Hatcher, 2002, p. 22).

2) Human beings have an innate to need to be loved (valued) for who we truly are (our intrinsic spiritual reality) whether or not we manifest this essential reality in

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[16] While Hatcher's framework focuses on "universal patterns" which appear in the form of "principal abilities in the human personality" arising from the actualization of the capacities of mind, heart, and will he also recognizes the "individuality and the specificity of each human being". In his view the "person or true self of the individual exists from the moment of its creation by God, but initially its capacities are pure potential"; as one's capacities are actualized in the course of living, this potential "is actualized in the form of an increasingly rich personality". Hatcher likens the soul to a prism and the personality to, "the particular spectrum of colors into which the prism refracts the white light of the pure human spirit" (Hatcher, 2002, p. 49).

our interactions with another. That is, whether or not we have actualized our latent ability for upholding the inherent qualities of our essential spiritual nature (virtues or qualities of essential human nature such as compassion, justice, honesty, truthfulness, trustworthiness, forgiveness, unity, patience, service, courage) in our interactions with another (Hatcher, 2002; Radpour, 2002).

3) Human beings have an innate need to develop their latent ability for loving (valuing) other human beings for who they truly are (their intrinsic spiritual reality) regardless of the degree to which the other upholds the qualities of essential human spiritual reality in her/his interactions with us.

4) To make efforts towards upholding the humanity of the other in this way both nurtures the development of the other and furthers our own fulfillment/development [17]

The Need for Training in Authentic Valuation

When a human being comes to know herself within a setting which is structured in such a way that it values, above all else, the qualities of character which are inherent in universal human spiritual reality, she is trained and educated from the start of her life (before she is capable of conscious moral choice) to value (love) interactions with others which uphold these qualities, and in this way she acquires a motivation to enact them (Hatcher, 2002; Radpour, 2002).

Because these actions fulfill her intrinsic need to express the qualities of essential human reality in her relationships with others, three things take place: 1) her need to

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[17] This point will be developed more extensively in the remainder of this review. For now, the aspect to note is that upholding the value of another in this manner benefits *both* parties.

know herself as possessing value is met in an *authentic* manner, 2) her ability to recognize the inherent value of other human beings is fostered and 3) the portion of her self-image that is formed in the context of this interaction is *authentic* (it is structured according to the value hierarchy which is inherent in the structure of reality) (Hatcher, 2002; Radpour, 2002).

Hatcher holds that there are three reasons why the inner model of reality of any given person is going to require refinement towards increased authenticity, throughout the course of one's life.

The first reason is because the power of conscious choice required for generating actions which are motivated by the innate need to cultivate the qualities of our innate spiritual reality develops over time (and it is completely latent when we are first born). Hatcher calls this origin "self-generated" or "need-based" and it is analogous to Assagioli's understanding of the innate origin of the need for training of the will. Lacking what Assagioli would describe as a fully developed will (strong, good, and skillful) and given the pre-social impulses for self-preservation which arise from the lower nature, towards meeting one's needs at all costs, we naturally tend towards this path - effectively taking the path of less resistance - since we have not yet developed the capability of doing otherwise[18] (Hatcher, 2002).

The second reason why the inner model of reality of any given person is going to require refinement towards increased authenticity over the course of one's life is because

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[18] The impulse to meet one's needs at all costs is *amoral* in animals. It is *immoral* when it governs the actions of human beings who - because they possess consciousness and freedom of choice - are called, through universal moral and spiritual laws of cause and effect, to make conscious efforts towards fostering the well-being of others. In Hatcher's framework the *potential* for moral evil is inherent within human reality, while human reality itself is not evil (Hatcher, 2002).

our environment is not structured according to the objective value hierarchy that is inherent in the structure of reality – meaning that it does not value, above all else, the qualities that are inherent in universal human spiritual reality (virtues, or qualities of our character).

Hatcher calls this origin for the need for training and education "other-generated" and it is analogous to the primal wound in a psychosyntheic understanding. Hatcher's understanding of this concept has further reaching implications than the current psychosynthetic understanding however, and this will be examined in detail later in this section (Hatcher, 2002).

Hatcher additionally indicates a third reason why our self-image will require refinement towards increased authenticity over the course of one's life: a lack or incomplete knowledge of moral laws of cause and effect, and/or how they apply to a given situation. As a result, when faced with a situation that impels us to exchange short-term pleasure for long-term gain we have no reason to do so (this is equivalent to the lack of what Assagioli calls will to good) and/or don't know how to implement the course of action we perceive to be called for (lack of what Assagioli calls skillful will) (Hatcher, 2002).

The Fostering of Authentic Well-Being

Human knowledge - our assumptions about reality, including self-knowledge – develops and changes in the course of our lived experience, creating an ongoing need for refinement of one's assumptions about oneself and others in the process of growth towards human fulfillment (Hatcher, 2002; Radpour, 2002).

When we come into the world we are not capable of consciously discerning value, and must be taught. The infants' learning is centered on the body, since she is capable neither of self-awareness, nor of exercising the power of choice. It also takes place in the context of a nervous system, which is inclined to seek pleasure and to avoid pain (fight or flight). The infant will thus naturally tend to love (feel attraction to) that which gives us instant pleasure (and will want to avoid delayed gratification), because this is what the body loves (Hatcher, 2002; Radpour, 2002). And as our mental powers develop, a new dimension is added: we seek to avoid shame.

As a child grows, she has an innate need to be loved/affirmed. She also needs to develop her latent capacity to express the essential human quality of generosity (a need is a capacity, waiting to be developed). Put differently, she has to develop the capability to express generosity in order to be able to fulfill her innate need to express generosity[19].

Through her interactions with others the child learns, in a loving home, that her parents give approval when she shares; because this meets her need for love, she becomes inclined to use her power of choice to enact actions that uphold the spiritual principle of generosity (she shares her toys). The love of generosity (innate) now has a means of expressing itself, and the attraction to it increases. This is an example of how a spiritual need has been met authentically - because it has led to the actualization of a spiritual potential, by establishing a pattern which fulfills our innate need to know our self-worth (value) and that of others, in light of the qualities of essential human reality (M.K. Radpour, personal communication, September 2009).

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[19] This is analogous to Assagioli's concept of the "will-er" needing to take on the training of the will to good

Such authentic knowledge of oneself fosters what Hatcher calls a sense of *authentic well-being*, and furthers one's ability to take further steps along the path of consciously actualizing one's development (self-development) (Hatcher, 2002; Radpour, 2002).

Moral Autonomy: The Ability for the Moral Use of Power

Human beings seek value where they can find it. If our environment does not value - above all else - that which has *intrinsic* value within human reality (the qualities of the human spirit) and thus does not affirm our value in relation to these, we will instead become attracted to (desire) anything else which is capable of conferring the value we desire, and we will become motivated to acquire whatever this is (Hatcher, 2002).

In enacting our power of choice towards obtaining whatever *extrinsic* value we desire to posses, we are effectively sacrificing something of higher value in order to obtain it. This is Hatcher's definition of *immorality*: immorality involves the sacrifice of something of higher value, in order to obtain something of lesser value (Hatcher, 2002). The following example from The Authenticity Project expands this point,

> Immorality involves a failure to recognize genuine value through our choices, and inauthenticity is equivalent to abandoning one's true self. Both sacrifice higher values to lower ones. When we hear, for example, that one youth kills another for his leather jacket, we recognize immediately that a terrible waste has occurred, for no jacket has ever equaled the value of a human life. But it is not just the loss of life which chills us; in order for such a crime to have occurred, the perpetrator must have had a long education in inauthenticity. That knowledge is grim, for it suggests that the world around us is one in which spiritual values are lost, and worse, it promises a future in which

> violence will increase unless a way is found to educate
> humanity to the true value of a human being (Radpour,
> 2002, p.11)

Through the repeated use of the power of choice in this manner, we become inclined towards seeking this lower value (in this case, a leather jacket) rather than fulfilling our innate need to know ourselves and others, in light of the qualities of essential human reality (in this case, honesty and compassion). From Assagioli's perspective we could say that, when we become identified with the patterns within this inauthentic portion of our self-concept, we repress the qualities of our innate spiritual reality; Hatcher's framework has an additional layer of understanding to add, however.

There are two types of power in Hatcher's view. External power is what is most commonly meant when we say that someone is "powerful." Generally speaking, external power is power over others. The second type of power is internal power, which is power over one's self. Power - the ability to do work - implies responsibility for how we use our power, for what tasks (work) we choose to do (or not to do) (Hatcher, 2008a).

While external power enables an individual to, "compel others to choose what he (the powerful individual) wants them to choose" the internal power of a *morally autonomous* individual enables her to compel herself to choose what she "desires to choose or feels morally obliged to choose". While public figures such as politicians, administrators and successful businessmen, generally have "external power," this does not mean they have developed "internal power and self- mastery" (Hatcher, 2008a, p. 4),

> Such power derives purely from the role they play in
> society. Similarly, charismatic, manipulative, aggressive, or
> physically strong individuals may have de facto external
> power, which is accorded them through fear, naiveté, or
> excessive deference (Hatcher, 2008a, p. 5)

Competition for Value

The ongoing search for value that is extrinsic to human reality is the underlying dynamic which sets off what Hatcher calls the *universal pursuit of self-valuation attribution* (Hatcher, 2002).

In any interaction with another human being, I have three choices: 1) I can either view myself as her equal - this is a valid (authentic) perception of the value of both individuals) 2) I can view myself as possessing less value than her (this is not valid/authentic) or 3) I can view myself as possessing greater value than her (this is likewise not an authentic perception) (Hatcher, 2002).

As noted above, human beings need to know that our value (worth) is innate (unconditional). If we do not know this, we will search for our sense of value amongst whatever social group we are attracted towards, because we perceive that this will increase our worth. This inauthentic value will have to be *acquired* through the possession of those qualities or things which the social context says we should possess – such as wealth, physical beauty and/or prowess, skills, family lineage, etc.

Since someone else can always have more of whatever material object or trait we possess, this value can be "lost/"taken away from us" at any point in time (it will never be secure). We therefore feel that we have to defend this value, and our self-image. This is the origin of the dynamic driving the competition for value in human relationships, arising from the acquired need for what Hatcher calls "powerseeking" (Hatcher, 2002).

The Authenticity Project maintains that seeking power as an end, rather than a means to an end "involves a wish to be "distinct from (better than) those without power" (Radpour 2002, p.19). Hatcher maintains that powerseeking derives from the universal

self-perception that we lack intrinsic value; it therefore generates the need to seek our

value from others and from society, through various power-based strategies of dominance

and manipulation (Hatcher, 2002).

Powerseeking behaviors thus arise from, and seek to meet *illegitimate* needs.

The Authenticity Project holds that the legitimate needs of every human being are for

"food, clothing, shelter, education, love, encouragement, guidance" and "relationships,

which cultivate the development of our spiritual powers". Illegitimate needs are the need

to control others; to demand their service and affirmation of our value, at the cost of

theirs; to expect to have our preferences and desires elevated about the legitimate needs

of others (Radpour, 2002, p. 28). Hatcher grounds this concept with the following

examples,

> The doctor has (external) power over his patient, the
> teacher over the student, the parent over the child. Again,
> the *fact* of power is neither good nor evil, but the way we
> choose to use external power does indeed have a moral
> dimension. The doctor can use his power humbly to uplift
> and heal his patient or else arrogantly to celebrate his
> superiority over the patient. The teacher can serve and
> facilitate the mental development of his students, or crush
> (perhaps forever) their desire or ability to learn. The parent
> can consciously and lovingly foster the autonomy and self-
> development of his child or seek to maintain the child in a
> continual state of fear, dependence, and submission
> (Hatcher, 2008a, p. 5, emphasis in original)

Implications of Structural Inauthenticity for Human Fulfillment

It is important to understand that Hatcher does not assume any opposition

between our physical and psychological needs, and our spiritual needs. The issue is how

we meet them. Powerseeking is immoral because it enacts a need that diverts the innate

need and desire, to act in ways that demonstrate the nobility of human nature. This takes

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place through upholding the inherent qualities of human spiritual nature or virtues - such as compassion, justice, honesty, truthfulness, trustworthiness, forgiveness, unity, patience, service and courage (among others) - in our interactions with others.

Powerseeking behavior uses our power to coerce the other into affirming our value at the expense of theirs and in this way is contrary to our innate need for noble thoughts and deeds. All powerseeking behavior is characterized by an absence of the qualities of one's essential, spiritual nature (M.K. Radpour, personal communication, September, 2009).[20]

Because it attributes greater worth (value) to those who have certain demonstrated abilities, a society based on the values of individualism is not favorable to cultivating the ability for authentic relationships. Hatcher calls this social configuration the "supervaluation of the special"[21]. Additionally, the demonstration of these special abilities usually takes place through competition that takes place at all levels of society. Within the competitive milieu of individualistic societies human relations thus tend to be conflictual and antagonistic (and thus inauthentic) (Hatcher, 2002).

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[20] There are both *overt* and *covert* forms of powerseeking. The overt form needs no explanation. The covert form - what Hatcher calls "the blame response" - uses covert means of forcing the other to acknowledge our value; the reason the blame response is not authentic is that it compels a response, rather than allowing the other to choose. If I am relating to you in an authentic manner I might seek recognition for something I have done, but I would realize that you have the freedom *not* to recognize me in this way. I do not then have the right to treat you unfairly, nor to seek to make you feel guilty. The strategy of making someone feel guilty is inauthentic because it compels a particular behavior (uses the other as ends to our means) rather than holding a mirror up to the person, "calling" them to reassess, and in this way "inviting" them to choose a different course of action (M.K. Radpour, personal communication, September 2009).
[21] An example Hatcher gives on this point are the individualistic societies of North America and Western Europe which give "extremely high value" to certain athletes and cinema actors, paying them "enormous amounts of money simply because they excel in some unique way, often without regard to the value of their contribution". Hatcher likewise notes the generally low value these same societies accord to motherhood, which is "devalued" because it is "ordinary" (supposedly anyone can be a mother). From the perspective of authentic morality, the role of mothers (who continually give priority to the needs of the child, and whose interactions with their children call on them to demonstrate high levels of detachment, generosity, compassion and patience) is "the primary and most valuable role in society". However the "self-sacrifice of mothers" is taken for granted, while "immense social energy and resources" are "laid at the feet of professional athletes and rock musicians, who perform no vital social function whatever" (Hatcher, 2002, p. 31)

Collectivism on the other hand, denies both the intrinsic and the universal value of human nature, holding that only *extrinsic* value exists. Collectivism likewise generates a widespread and inauthentic pursuit of power as each individual tries to gain a position in society which "gives him the power to compel others to recognize his value" (Hatcher, 2002).

The Principles Governing Authentic Human Relationships

With the above in place we can now examine Hatcher's understanding of the moral principles that determine, through universal moral and spiritual laws of cause and effect, what constitutes authenticity within interactions between human beings (self-other relational authenticity) and also within the inner world of human subjectivity (self-self relational authenticity) whether or not we are conscious of this (Hatcher, 2002).

Self-Other Relational Authenticity (interpersonal, one-to-one)

The general moral principle governing authentic interactions between two individuals (one-to-one) is that in relation to another human being, "we should always strive to act in such a manner as to increase the actuality and potentiality of altruistic [genuine] love" (Hatcher, 2002, p. 66).

Such love benefits the one who receives it since it effectively "holds a mirror up to the person" calling him to "see" who he really is, and in this way encourages him in his own development (fosters his potential to act in ways that reflect the nobility of the human spirit).

It also benefits the one who offers it, since the capability to show forth caring concern for the well-being of another – particularly when this person is not treating us in kind – provides us with an opportunity to enact an action which fosters the development of moral choice.

It is in challenging moments of personal interaction such as these that the actualization of our ability to call on the qualities of our true nature takes place, through conscious moral choice towards manifesting the qualities of the human spirit in one's moment-to-moment interactions with others. Merely loving those whom we perceive as possessing value/feel attraction towards (the lovable) does not challenge our current level of ability, and thus does not further the development of our ability for conscious moral choice towards demonstrating genuine (altruistic or unconditional) love; as Hatcher observes, even the Mafia loves its friends[22] (Hatcher, 2002).

In the face of an injustice in one-to-one interactions the only authentic response is to refuse to engage in competition for value. Refusing to engage (inhibiting reactivity) is the only way we can avoid seeing ourselves as being better or worse than, our offender. This refusal to engage is active, rather than passive. Genuine or unconditional love (the goal towards which we should strive) requires that I make a conscious moral choice to demonstrate that we are equals by treating you as you deserve to be treated (fairly), even if you have treated me unfairly (that is, in the face of injustice). Revenge is not an option since,

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[22] Hatcher holds that enacting actions that are motivated by an intention to uphold genuine or unconditional love constitutes growth towards relational authenticity (fosters our development); it is not necessary to attain such love.

> A crime against us cannot in any way detract from our intrinsic value, which is established by God. Therefore, it is not necessary that our value be restored by vengeance. When vengeance is permitted it is easily subverted by the ego through a subtle effort to gain value through powerseeking (Radpour, 2002, p. 267)

The means I legitimately have at my disposal to address your injustice towards me are those that uphold the truth of our equality: I can seek justice through consultation and education (Radpour, 2002, p. 268). In this way I actualize my own innate spiritual potential (foster my own development) and provide you with a favorable context in which you might also take steps in the direction of actualizing yours, if you so choose.

This response is what Hatcher calls a *unity response* because it is carried out with the sincere intention of responding to an injustice with an appropriate combination of love and justice, instead of using one's power to coerce the other to affirm our value.

A unity response is *educative*. More specifically, the response to an injustice committed against us by an individual should seek to maximize, "the likelihood that the individual in question (and/or others) will acquire a sincere motivation not to repeat the injustice in the future" (Hatcher, 2002, p. 77).

Should I instead seek to make you suffer (use my power to seek revenge) I would be using my power to affirm my value, at the cost of yours; this is not an authentic interaction since you and I both possess the same intrinsic value. The other option would be for me to do nothing (generate a victim response). This response likewise negates the truth of our inherent value because it affirms your extrinsic value, at the cost of mine[23] (Hatcher, 2002).

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[23] This is a very much summarized overview of the subtleties involved in discerning whether or not a given response is, in fact, a power-based response or not. For example, I might refuse to engage with you on a given matter – to an outsider it might appear that I have acquiesced to the injustice when in fact, I have

Self-Other Relational Authenticity, in Groups (interpersonal, one-many)

Since the structure of a group is largely responsible for providing the conditions in which human interactions are carried out and since love cannot flourish in an environment where injustice prevails, authentic human interactions are fostered within a group structure which upholds the principle of justice in human social relations.

Within the context of a group Hatcher's understanding of the dynamics of moral authenticity thus calls every person to make efforts towards fostering an increase in the justness of the group. Together, love and justice create the conditions in which unity can flourish (Hatcher, 2002).

Self-Self Relational Authenticity (intrapersonal)

Our ability to establish authentic relations with others requires a sincere motivation to acquire self-knowledge in terms of:

1) Our innate need to establish and maintain authentic relationships with others, in which we recognize the inherent worth or nobility of the other, regardless of the degree to which the other has actualized his/her ability for expressing the qualities of essential human nature

2) The assumptions, thoughts and feelings that motivate our actions, and which may run counter to our need for authentic relationships.

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deliberately used my will in a discriminating fashion (deliberately withholding/inhibiting the action I might have carried out) with the intention of increasing the potential educative impact my response might have, for you (for a parent, this is known as picking and choosing your battles). For the purposes of this discussion the important point is that the *motivation* behind an action is what effectively determines whether it contributes to an increase in one's ability for self-development (moral autonomy) and authentic well-being. Self-knowledge leading to an increase in one's ability for navigating one's inner world with a sincere desire to discover what motivations are behind one's thoughts, feelings, and actions (the spiritual quality of truthfulness) is thus fundamental for human fulfillment.

3) We also have to be aware of the extent to which we have, in fact, fostered our potential for upholding the qualities of the human spirit in our interactions with others (Hatcher, 2002).

Lacking such self-knowledge we will be motivated to blame others when we feel pain in our interactions with them, instead of viewing this pain as an indication that we need to further our ability for relational authenticity (Hatcher, 2002; Radpour, 2002). A sincere intention of being truthful is thus required (spiritual quality of truthfulness)[24].

It is easy to see that the process of obtaining such self-knowledge is readily sabotaged by established patterns within one's inner model of reality which historically have kept a person from feeling the pain of inauthentic self-concept (repressed portions within the lower unconscious), as well as the impulse to avoid threatening the inner, established order. However increasing self-knowledge is the path we must walk if we are to foster our ability for self-development and further our ability for increased relational authenticity in our interactions with others (Hatcher, 2002; Radpour, 2002).

Additionally, this increase in self-knowledge must be followed by action that cultivates our ability to uphold the qualities of the human spirit in our interactions with others. This development is fostered as we strive to establish relationships with others which are based on mutuality, cooperation, and respect rather than using one's power to coerce others to affirm our inauthentic value, and thus our inauthentic self-image (Hatcher, 2002).

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[24] It is worth remembering here that there are three sources of illegitimate needs according to Hatcher: 1) need-based/self-generated, 2) other-generated and 3) lack of knowledge. Illegitimate needs for inauthentic relations with others thus do not only arise only through the failure of the outer environment to meet our need for authentic love, as would be a modern humanistic reading.

The following example from the work of The Authenticity Project sheds further light

on this process of fostering an increase in self-awareness leading to greater relational

authenticity within oneself (self-self) and with others (self-other), and to an increase in

the ability for self-development (moral autonomy),

> Imagine the mother who feels embarrassed by the
> quarrelling of her children; she becomes fierce with them,
> warning them that if they get out of hand they will be
> punished severely. When her husband suggests that they
> are just being normal children, she turns her anger upon
> him, telling him not to interfere. Underneath her outwards
> control, however, she feels extremely vulnerable. Her
> conscious thought is that her children are the problem and
> their misbehavior is the issue. However, her unconscious
> wish is to avoid embarrassment, and this motive colors her
> actions. If her husband intervenes, she will not see it as
> helpful; in fact she may see it as an additional threat. She
> will feel like she has lost control and believe that these
> actions of her husband and children have the power to
> compromise her value as a person. She is inauthentic
> insofar as she believes that her value rests only upon their
> acceptance of her power. This belief may be unconscious,
> but it drives the entire sequence of transactions with her
> family (Radpour, 2002, p. 149)

An example of a more authentic mode of interaction is offered as an alternative:

> If the mother were behaving out of an authentic
> understanding of reality, the problem would not be her
> value as a person. The problem would simply be their
> behavior. If she were authentic and effective as a parent,
> she could explain to them what she expected, offer
> encouragement about how to achieve it, reward it when the
> children succeeded, and be clear about the consequences.
> She could punish them if they misbehaved…even if she did
> not have the skills to do this, she could be authentic and
> truthful with them that she felt helpless and needed their
> cooperation. She could be emotionally detached, know that
> her value as a person is not threatened. She could be
> authentic and autonomous. She would experience her inner
> freedom and not be coerced by anything her children or
> husband did, and she would not feel the need to coerce
> them (Radpour, 2002, p. 149)

<u>In Closing</u>

To summarize, the fulfillment of human potential requires an increase in one's ability to become aware of the patterns we are using, in meeting our needs. To the degree that the motivations behind them are not authentic we are called - through universal moral and spiritual laws of cause and effect - to ongoingly refine our valuation of self and others, and to carry out actions based on this understanding.

This is the process of conscious growth towards greater relational authenticity within oneself self and others, and fostering the ability for self-development leading to an increase in moral autonomy and authentic well-being (Hatcher, 2002).

<u>Part B: Towards a Synthesis</u>

Key Commonalities in the Works of Hatcher and Assagioli

1) The first of these commonalities is that Hatcher and Assagioli agree that human beings share a common need for authentic relationships with others; a related commonality is that the fulfillment of individual human potential takes place though fostering one's development in such a way that one also fosters the development of others (Hatcher, 2002; Radpour, 2002; Assagioli 2000, 2002).

What Hatcher calls the development of "moral autonomy" is what Assagioli calls the "personality" becoming increasingly aligned with the Transpersonal Will through the ongoing process of personal, inter-personal, and transpersonal psychosynthesis. Through this process of development the innate attraction (love) the human heart feels to authentic value (the qualities of our essential human spiritual reality, or virtues such as generosity,

service, friendliness, justice, forgiveness) is kindled, and this kindled heart is able to perceive, within the other, this same value (Hatcher, 2002). "Love" Assagioli agrees, "being attractive, magnetic and outgoing, tends to link and unite" (2002 p. 96).

Although Hatcher is the only one to explicitly speak of human fulfillment in terms of morality, Assagioli's conception of personal, interpersonal, and transpersonal psychosynthesis definitely (if implicitly) seeks to support moral development. Assagioli is in agreement with Hatcher that, lacking the capability for the moral use of the power to choose (will to good) our fulfillment (Self-realization) is not possible (Assagioli, 2002).

In Assagioli's view human fulfillment calls for the sacrifice of the attitudes, attributes, and skills on the lower end on the spectrum of human development (personal, self-centered, limited) in exchange for the actualization of latent, higher (transpersonal, world-embracing, expansive) potentialities, in the course of one's lived interactions with other human beings (and through our relationship with the Transcendent/Ultimate Reality) (Assagioli, 2002).

The following quote makes these inter-relationships and their ideal outcome in Assagioli's view, very clear. Here Assagioli calls for, "[t]he offering of all practical activity to God, or to the life of the Spirit, and the inner attitude of considering it as training," holding that this "enables us to utilize our daily tasks and responsibilities as exercises of will, self-control, patience, harmonization and skill in action" (Assagioli, 1975, p. 27),

> Great are the fruits of outer activity when kept within due bounds and illuminated by the light of the Spirit. Besides its practical utility, it provides, especially for the young, a wholesome outlet for their energies, a valuable means of gathering experience, and an arena in which the virtues acquired by the inner disciplines can be put to the test and the steel of the will become more finely tempered. But there is more to it than this. The spiritual significance and effects of any action depend primarily on the kind and purity of the motive that actuates it. The motive might be called "the soul of the action." This fact points out a marvelous possibility. Whatever action one may perform, even the commonest and most humble, if it is accomplished without personal attachment and offered with pure intention to the service of God and humanity, it becomes a spiritual act (Assagioli, 1975, pp. 22-3)

The actual term - "sacrifice" - is used by Assagioli, who explains that "…rather than meaning a painful, self-inflicted asceticism" the word "sacrifice" means "to make holy," "to make sacred (*sacrum facere*)" (Assagioli, 2002, p. 167). This said, Assagioli also recognizes the challenges inherent in conveying this term, using psychological language, to people who have not consciously committed to the development of their innate potential for growth towards the full realization of human nature (self-realization),

> The very words "renunciation" and "sacrifice" excite intense aversion. Various causes are at the root of these reactions: 1. Hedonism, i.e., the fundamental desire for pleasure and for the avoidance of suffering, which is innate in human nature 2. The exaggerated emphasis placed in the past on duty and sacrifice, and the excessive insistence on the value of suffering, often for wrong and needless reasons 3. An erroneous conception of liberty, which has been interpreted as the right to follow every impulse and satisfy every desire without concern for the consequences to ourselves or to others, with complete lack of restraint or sense of responsibility (Assagioli, 2002, p. 167)

The above is generally true regarding the level of commitment towards individual development called for in Hatcher's work. Hatcher assumes that the ability to generate an authentic response in the face of powerseeking behavior - that is, to uphold the spiritual principles of love and justice, instead of reciprocating in kind and engaging in an inauthentic competition for value – is only possible through our ongoing relationship to the Transcendent/Ultimate Reality as given by universal, moral and spiritual laws of cause and effect (Hatcher, 2002).

Both Hatcher and Assagioli are thus light years apart from modern humanisms' secular, materialistic conception of a higher human nature which naturally unfolds towards the full realization of one's innate potential according to an innate, biologically-given blueprint, as long as the environment does not interfere. (Crain, 1992; Hergenhahn, 1992; Maslow, 1987, 1982, 1971; Rogers, 1993, 1961; Sahakian, 1984).

The understanding shared by both Hatcher and Assagioli, of the existence of intrinsic impulses of both a higher, and a lower nature, keeps us from falling into romantic, humanistic views regarding the acquired origin of need to fully develop the power of choice. For both Hatcher and Assagioli this need is universal, and it has an ethical component (strong, skillful, and good will) (Assagioli, 2002; Hatcher, 2002).

2) Hatcher and Assagioli both agree that our motivations determine whether our actions are transformative or not - which is to say, whether they serve the reality of our inner spiritual essence or not. Awareness of the motivations underlying our choices is therefore key to fostering one's self-development.

Here Hatcher and Assagioli are also in agreement that understanding the precise nature of one's motivations is far from simple in light of complex, unconscious mechanisms which exist within the psyche towards ensuring self-preservation and protection from pain.

3) Assagioli and Hatcher are likewise in agreement that repression and suppression are antithetical to authentic relationships within one's self (intrapersonal) and with others (interpersonal), and thus for fostering one's ability for self-development and authentic well-being. They also agree that the tendency towards hypocrisy (lack of truthfulness) has both an acquired origin and an innate origin.

The innate origin is the tendency towards pleasure/stasis and away from pain, which is inherent in the (amoral) impulses of an infant's lower nature. Regarding the acquired origin, Hatcher notes that the heart can develop an unnatural repulsion away from the qualities which are inherent in human spiritual reality (virtues or qualities of our character) in an effort to numb out the pain arising from the inauthentic perception of oneself, as one who's value is conditional. Within psychosynthesis this configuration is known as repression of the sublime (Haronian, 1967; Assagioli, in Keen, 1974).

4) In the process of actualizing our latent potential for authentic connection with others Hatcher and Assagioli are in agreement that we cannot ignore (repress and suppress) needs which are calling to be met whether these needs are legitimate, or not. In fact repression and suppression are a way to ensure that we will be compelled to coerce others into meeting them for us (powerseeking).

What is needed is discernment regarding how we are choosing to meet our needs in our interactions with others, as well as the ability to implement our intentions (inhibition towards a higher purpose). Assagioli in particular, is clear that *acknowledging* a need exists does not mean we must *enact* it (Assagioli, 2002).

5) Hatcher and Assagioli both agree that the ability to transcend - to "sacrifice" our attachment to (love for) an inauthentic portion of our self-image towards increased authenticity - requires an attitude of self-acceptance.

6) While *necessary* Hatcher and Assagioli are also in agreement that self-acceptance is *insufficient* for fostering one's ability for self-development. Self-acceptance must be followed by conscious choice, leading to using one's will towards meeting needs in ways which are increasingly authentic because they actualize, in an increasingly refined manner, our capability for upholding the essential qualities of human spiritual reality in our interactions with others.

Both Hatcher and Assagioli are clear that simply "releasing" bound up energy tied up in a limiting, or inauthentic portion on one's self-concept is not sufficient for the transformation of patterns. In this regard Assagioli holds that if the power of choice is not engaged (strong and skillful will) and action is not carried out towards another, higher purpose (will to good) the individual remains, "a dreamer instead of the doer of willed action" (Assagioli, 2002, p. 150).

7) Hatcher and Assagioli clearly agree that personal growth and development towards the full realization of human nature is challenging. Along with acquired reasons for avoiding growth in the course of our interactions with others Assagioli points out the, "prevailing tendency" towards "inertia, to let the "easy-going" side of one's nature take control, to allow inner impulses or external influences to dominate the personality",

> It may be summed up as unwillingness to "take the trouble," to pay the price demanded by a worth-while undertaking. This often holds true for the development of the will; but it cannot reasonably be expected that the training of the will can be accomplished without the expenditure of effort and persistence required for the successful development of any other quality, whether physical or mental. And such effort is more than worth while, because the use of the will is at the basis of every activity (Assagioli, 2002, pp. 10-11)

8) In Assagioli's view human fulfillment moves along a vertical I-Self axis, and develops continuously. This is analogous to Hatcher's understanding that growth towards autonomous self-development and authentic well-being takes place continually as we develop and ongoingly refine, our ability to meet our need for value without resorting to competition for value with another. That is, human fulfillment takes place ongoingly as we actualize our ability to uphold the qualities that are inherent in essential human spiritual reality in our interactions with others - and this is an ongoing development.

Today's generosity (or honesty, or patience) is tomorrow's lack of the same, calling for new levels of self-development. Because it is based on the actualization of a latent, spiritual potential, Hatcher and Assagioli are both in agreement that there is no end to the process of refinement of one's capability for authentic connection with, and caring for others (and thus for self-development and authentic well-being).

9) Hatcher and Assagioli both articulate principles that reflect their assumption that psychological and spiritual development are mutually reinforcing.

Key Differences in the Works of Hatcher and Assagioli

1) While Assagioli recognizes that motivation is paramount, the discipline of psychosynthesis does not provide the criteria by which we can say, "this is the direction towards which we should be heading". For example, what does "beneficent and constructive" mean in the below quotation? And what is "the good" that "the good will" should will, regarding others?

> We are constantly influencing others, whether we are
> conscious of doing so or not. And the more we are aware of
> this, the more we can see to it that our influence is
> beneficent and constructive. It all hinges on our
> *intention*…the good will is a will to do good; it is a will
> that chooses and wants the good (Assagioli, 2002, p. 90)

Whether or not this is sufficient for clinical work, it does not work for adult education since there are no means to implement the ethical, interpersonal dimension. How are we to "direct and regulate" our own "*becoming*" in such a way that one takes into consideration our "*responsibility*…for the beneficent or harmful influence [one] has on other people"? (Assagioli, 2002, p. 90, emphasis in original). Assagioli tells us that the individual will must do more than merely "discipline itself" - s/he must also choose, "such aims that as are consistent with the welfare of others and the common good of humanity" (2002, p. 86). But what are these aims?

What is needed, to enable us to implement the perspective of psychosynthesis in community-based adult education, is a clearly articulated moral goal that is sought. It would be unfair to expect Assagioli to provide this. Assagioli was not a professional

philosopher. He was trained in medicine and psychiatry and his goal was to develop a holistic approach not to moral philosophy, but to a psychology that is inclusive of the spiritual dimension within innate and essential human reality.

The same is generally true of more recent developments in psychosynthesis theory. While it has many applications, the greater amount of theory and practice developed is client-therapist based and/or focuses on supporting individual growth and development within the inner psychological world; as such the current body of psychosynthesis theory focuses on supporting the personal, idiosyncratic level of learning and growth towards the full realization of individual potential (Brown, 1993, 2004; Ferrucci, 1982; Firman and Gila 1997, 2002; Parfitt 2003; Whitmore, 2004).

The universal level of change which is essential for community-based adult education is not clearly articulated - although as we have seen Assagioli calls for, "education in right human relations" (inter-individual psychosynthesis) as an integral aspect of "the spiritual education", leading to "communion of thought and love" and "harmonious collaboration with all fellow-creatures" (Assagioli, n.d. b, p. 3)**.**

Hatcher on the other hand, articulates the moral principles governing the development of the capability for self-other relational authenticity in terms of inauthentic social relations, in which the systemic denial of innate and universal human value feeds a universal search for self-valuation, leading to widespread competition for value (inauthentic denial of the principle of the oneness of humanity). Hatcher thus succeeds in establishing a universal context which expands the understanding of one-on-one wounding in the work of Firman and Gila (1997).

The point Hatcher makes here is that because substitutive value is not based on something that is intrinsic to essential human nature (qualities of the human spirit) it is not possessed universally by every human being; as such it fosters jealousy, envy, etc. and keeps the group of people who covet it in a state of competition and disunity. The psychospiritual dynamic arising from the inauthentic perception of one's need to compete for value appears as the illegitimate need for powerseeking in one's relationships with others. That is, for using one's power to coerce the other into affirming one's value at the expense of their own, instead of serving the genuine development of oneself and of the other (Hatcher, 2002).

There are clearly parallels in the views of Hatcher and Assagioli on this point. "One of the principal causes of today's disorders is the lack of love on the part of those who have will" and the lack of will "on the part of those who are good and loving" Assagioli (2002) maintains, further noting that "[t]his points unmistakably to the urgent need for the integration, the unification, of love with will" (p. 91).

2) Assagioli develops at length, theory and practices in support of the intrapersonal approach to the Transcendent/Ultimate Reality along a vertical axis. While his conception of interpersonal psychosynthesis clearly supports the establishment of increasingly harmonious interactions among wider and wider groups of human beings, he is relatively silent regarding the need for justice in carrying out structural change – it is there, but implicitly so.

Hatcher's framework explicitly brings in the moral need to challenge social structures that are rooted in an inauthentic denial of the principle of the oneness of

humanity as an integral aspect of education, which seeks to support right relations within the world of human social relations. Here Hatcher provides the principle that, since love cannot flourish without justice and since the inauthentic devaluation of groups of people is at the root of systemic injustice, education which seeks to support the full realization of individual human potential should call upon individuals to make efforts to dismantle unjust social structures, contributing to the conditions in which authentic love can flourish between the members of the group (justice + love = unity) (Hatcher, 2002).

Part C: Goals, Principles, and Practices for Community-Based Adult Education Through the Lens of a Hatcher-Assagioli Synthesis

Introduction

Both the depth and the breadth of Hatcher and Assagioli's work are truly impressive. Developing a proposed synthesis of their work for use in community-based adult education applications has also been made challenging by the fact that neither Hatcher nor Assagioli specifically apply themselves to this particular setting. In light of the exploratory nature of this undertaking, what follows is what I consider to be a preliminary set of goals, principles, and practices as viewed through the lens of a Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis.

Goals for Community-Based Adult Education

Through the Lens of a Hatcher-Assagioli Synthesis

Community-based adult education, as viewed through the lens of a Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis, seeks to support learning and growth towards the full realization of the essential nobility of human nature by fostering a person's ability to interact with others in ways that uphold essential human qualities such as justice, kindness, compassion, honesty, courage, patience, forgiveness and service.

In particular community-based education, as viewed through the lens of a Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis, seeks to foster learning and growth which supports a person's ability for self-development by fostering movement from self-centeredness, towards increased relational authenticity with others, through cultivating skills and attitudes which nurture the ability and the desire, to establish relationships with others that are characterized by reciprocity, mutuality and symmetry rather than asymmetry and dominance.

Principles for Community-Based Adult Education

Through the Lens of a Hatcher-Assagioli Synthesis

The below principles represent an attempt at introducing to community-based adult education two mutually-reinforcing dimensions of relationships: 1) relationships with others (interpersonal dimension) and 2) relationships within the self (intrapersonal dimension) as follows:

130

1) Interpersonal Dimension

Within the group, a person's ability for self-development is fostered through interactions that call people to their best efforts and full capacity by:

1.1) Providing opportunities to experience oneself as being one among a community of moral equals, through cultivating skills and attitudes required for relationships based on caring and connectedness (mutuality, reciprocity and cooperation) and

1.2) Providing opportunities to experience oneself as capable of making a positive difference in the lives of the people in one's community and beyond, and of contributing towards an increase in the justness of the social structure.

2) Intrapersonal Dimension

Within oneself, a person's ability for self-development is fostered through an increase in self-knowledge in three overlapping areas:

2.1) Self-knowledge, in terms of the dynamic interactions that are ongoingly taking place within one's inner world (impulses/desires, sensations, emotions, thoughts/assumptions and feelings) and of one's needs which underlie these

2.2) Self-knowledge, in terms of the qualities of one's true nature (virtues or qualities of character) and of one's inherent need to uphold these qualities in one's relationships with self and others

2.3) Self-knowledge, in terms of the experience of oneself as a "center" within one's inner world, yet distinct from it.

Practices of Community-Based Adult Education

Through the Lens of a Hatcher-Assagioli Synthesis

Below are examples of representative practices that could be used to implement the above goals and principles in the context of community-based adult education settings. For ease of presentation and clarity these practices are placed within the three overlapping, intrapersonal areas of self-knowledge that were outlined in the second principle, above. Brief vignettes drawn from real world, community-based education interventions provide examples of the implementation of these practices.

Self-knowledge, in terms of the dynamic interactions that are ongoingly taking place within one's inner world (impulses/desires, sensations, emotions, thoughts/assumptions and feelings) and of one's needs underlying these

Depending on the objectives of a particular group, this area of self-knowledge can be fostered more, or less directly.

Participation in dynamics and processes that foster the ability for reflective dialogue is an approach for supporting this area of self-knowledge, through nurturing a stance of reflection on one's lived experience, as well as providing participants with a perspective of oneself as a source of knowledge; it also provides opportunities for clarifying one's own thoughts, views, and feelings; for cultivating the skills of thinking about what one wants to say, before saying it; for expanding one's point of view, etc.

Participation in reflective dialogue processes can also support this area of self-knowledge through nurturing self-acceptance, by providing the opportunity to learn from

the experiences of others, for seeing the world through the eyes of others, and for listening before judging.

As well as fostering dialogue, the use of visual and expressive arts - such as drawing, drama, body sculpting and self-expression through music - are all ways to make visible, and to bring awareness to, that which is "inside". These modes of individual and group-based self-expression have the additional advantage of allowing for the release of energies, safely and harmlessly and for fostering both empathy for others and self-acceptance, through validation of one's experience.

Self-knowledge, in terms of the qualities of one's true nature (virtues or qualities of character) and of one's inherent need to uphold these qualities in our relationships with self and others

Nurturing this area of self-knowledge can be compared to "holding up a mirror" from various angles, seeking to convey to participants an understanding of oneself in light of one's true nature. The examples of representative approaches that could be used to foster this area of self-knowledge are loosely grouped into five categories: group atmosphere; sense of self as a source of knowledge; sense of self as directing agent; attitude of self-care/self-acceptance; cultivating the practice of the virtues/awakening the qualities of our character, as follows:

Group atmosphere

As the energetic "holding space" in which learning and growth takes place the atmosphere of the group (human environment) should be able to hold both the "heights"

and the "depths" of human experience, as needed; it should be encouraging, conveying the perspective that life is an opportunity for learning, and that we are more than our life's experiences.

The group environment should likewise honor the human spirit by upholding the principle of the oneness of the human family; it should foster a sense of reverence for all people, through providing the experience of being one among moral equals; towards this end the holding place of the group should model kindness, courtesy and respect for all, as well as attending to the well-being of all through establishing and enforcing mutually agreed upon boundaries for participation, which foster respect for all.

The physical environment in which the group takes place should support this general psychological atmosphere through being clean and orderly; it should foster an appreciation for beauty, including the beauty of nature as a means of supporting the cultivation of space within the inner world, into which the human spirit can expand.

Sense of Self as Source of Knowledge

The learning environment should provide opportunities for people to talk as equals, including across group boundaries, about problems facing them and their families; it should nurture a sense of meaning and purpose that is rooted in the experience of oneself as a caring person who is capable of contributing to fostering the development of others; it should inspire tolerance, concern, and empathy for others through providing opportunities for listening to each other's experiences, for reflection on the underlying causes of social problems and for fostering awareness of systemic injustice.

Sense of Self as Directing Agent

The learning environment should provide opportunities for making choices, including those with moral impact (moral decisions); for consultation with others, leading to developing and refining the skills of planning, executing, and evaluation through reflection on the outcome of the planned activities, and by fostering the mindset of "what can I do differently, next time?"; for shared ownership in the context of collaboration on projects which serve the greater good, especially those which bring people of different social groups together to work towards a common purpose

Attitude of Self-Care/Self-Acceptance

The learning environment should provide the experience of balancing the need for self-care with the need to demonstrate concern for others, and also for balancing the need for self-acceptance with the need to uphold empathy for others.

Many of the above-mentioned practices contribute to nurturing this attitude of self-care/self-acceptance, such as: providing the opportunity to see oneself as being one among moral equals; cultivating the ability for knowledge of one's needs, and fostering awareness of choice regarding how one meets them; providing opportunities for self-expression in the group; fostering a perspective of oneself as a source of knowledge and nurturing a perspective of oneself as learning from one's experience.

Cultivating the Practice of Virtues/Awakening the Qualities of Our Character

This practice comes from *The Virtues Project*, a global grassroots network of individuals, organizations, schools and communities in over 95 countries. *The Virtues*

Project has trained thousands of facilitators in supporting the cultivation of the virtues - the "spiritual wealth linking people of all cultures" – through fostering their ability to speak "a common language that every community around the world instantly recognizes as their own" (Kavelin Popov, 2004, p. 81).

The Virtues Project is not affiliated with any particular faith. It draws from all of the sacred traditions, including the oral traditions of First Nations. During the International Year of the Family it was honored by the United Nations as a "model global program for families of all cultures". In this role it seeks to provide life-skill strategies that enable people of all cultures to call on their innate qualities of character, on the assumption that all people are born with all of the human qualities, or virtues in potential (http://www.virtuesproject.com/homepage.html).

The Virtues Project further assumes that every human being has "strength" virtues that are already well established in one's character and "growth" virtues, which are the challenges of one's character. At any moment we can cultivate or "awaken" a virtue by choosing to live it, and make a positive contribution to society. Acting in a way that upholds a virtue is a choice that can be implemented in other situations. Towards this end *The Virtues Project* has developed definitions of 52 virtues, together with materials that can be used to stimulate reflection on their relevance and application, for use by individuals and in groups (Kavelin Popov, 1997).

From the perspective of a Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis, cultivating awareness of one's self in terms of one's virtues has the potential to nurture the innate desire for developing more authentic ways of relating to others, and to nurture healing from

136

inauthentic self-concept. Below one of the founders of *The Virtues Project* shares her

personal experience with the practice of consciously cultivating the virtues,

> Over the years that I have been learning about and
> practicing the virtues, I have come to treasure them as the
> most sacred gifts in my life. They are mysterious and
> powerful, both within us and beyond us…They are the
> purest expression of human will because to develop them
> we must consciously cultivate them. While they are innate
> in all of us, they don't come to us by chance. They grow as
> a muscle grows – by being exercised. They awaken as we
> put them into practice (Kavelin Popov, 2004, p. 82)

The following vignette took place in a Virtues workshop in Fiji where the strategies of

The Virtues Project are being taught in many villages,

> …a group of elders were asked to draw self-portraits of
> themselves as children. They all drew stick figures with
> large ears. The facilitator noted that they did indeed have
> quite pendulous ear lobes. "What does this depict?" the
> facilitator asked. The elders replied, "When we were quite
> small, our ears were pulled so fiercely and so often that
> they are quite oversized." There was laughter at that
> moment, but later, an elder began to weep and said, "How I
> wish I could raise my children over again, with the virtues
> instead of violence. All they really need is clear
> boundaries" (Kavelin Popov, 2000, p. 61)

Two strategies of The Virtues Project that are taught in Facilitator trainings and

other community-based workshops, and which have special relevance for this study are:

"Speak the Language of the Virtues" and "Practice the Skill of Spiritual Companioning."

"Speaking the Language of the Virtues" is the process of naming and thus bringing

awareness to, or "awakening" our innate qualities of character when acknowledging,

guiding, or giving feedback to others (Kavelin Popov, 2004, 1997).

Some examples of how this can this can take place in community-based adult

education settings include: acknowledging an individual's contribution to the group using

virtues (examples are given in chapter 7). Also in holding expectations and setting

boundaries which call participants to demonstrate respect and courtesy; by drawing

awareness to the fact that assertiveness - an easy quality for some - is challenging, for

others; by inviting group members to hold compassion for a person whose experience is

different from one's own, etc.

Participation in open-ended discussions, which encourage problematization of the

challenges in human relationships in light of the virtues, is another way to foster this

dimension of self-knowledge. This is a potentially interesting approach for fostering

awareness of traditional cultural values in terms of how they serve (or don't) the needs of

a group of people at a particular point in time. Kavelin Popov explains that, "the spiritual

practices of the virtues almost always need to be in balance" adding that "…to stand on

our holy ground requires us to put one foot in one virtue and one foot in another" (2004,

p.181),

> For example, forgiveness and justice are balancing virtues.
> If you go on forgiving someone and allowing them to
> continue hurting you, that is not just and it does not serve
> either of you. Tact and truthfulness go together, as do
> determination and discernment, helpfulness to others and
> assertiveness to seek help when we need it. Setting
> boundaries…is having one foot in assertiveness and the
> other in acceptance. Without acceptance of the things we
> cannot change about one another, assertiveness becomes
> rigidity. Without assertiveness, acceptance gives us no
> stopping place, no solid sense of what is acceptable and
> what is not. Spiritual and emotional abuse, as well as
> physical abuse exist in many relationships in which these
> two virtues are out of balance (Kavelin Popov, 2004, pp.
> 181-2)

Such discussions lead naturally to discussions on the topic of restorative, rather

than punitive justice practices, and on the authentic value of a human being. These are

other potentially useful topics of discussion for community-based adult education settings. In Kavelin Popov's understanding, restorative justice is the process where a consequence is given that restores, "the virtue that was missing" (such as respect, justice, or unity) with the goal of restoring, "the offender back to the family…or the community" (Kavelin Popov, 2004, p. 179).

"Spiritual Companioning" is another skill taught in community-based Virtues Project educational programs. Briefly, it is the process of entering another's world through being present to their experience, whatever it is. It involves compassion for another, and the will to meet people where they are, and to bear witness to whatever they are feeling. This practice calls for balancing the spiritual quality of compassion for others, and the spiritual quality of detachment, so that one does not take on the other's experiences as one's own. Kavelin Popov uses the metaphor of a "shield" to teach this concept to lay people in her workshops. First she defines the virtues of compassion and detachment using a group discussion format, and following this discussion she invites participants to place an imaginary "shield" of compassion and detachment over their hearts (Kavelin Popov, 2004).

Self-Knowledge, in terms of the experience of oneself as a "center" within one's inner model of reality, yet distinct from it

Practices that support this dimension of self-knowledge include exercises such as relaxation, meditation and visualization, which have the potential for contributing to diminishing polarization and reactivity within and for nurturing an inner condition that favors deeper insight, as well as benefiting physical health.

Heifer International's "Values-Based" model for planning and management of sustainable community development

Professional writer Barbara Kingsolver interviewed staff and participants during her visit to a Heifer International sponsored, women's development project in a rural Nepalese village. Here Heifer's training program for helping communities develop self-reliance through raising livestock (Aaker, 2007) addresses what a Heifer staff member described as "mental poverty", mostly in the context of the women coming together in meetings, working on goals (Kingsolver, 2009, p.74).

An elderly widow belonging to the lowest caste, the "untouchables" had been a participant in this project. As is the custom in this region, she would never let her shadow fall on anyone; in shops, payment for items was made by throwing rupees into the owner's hands, avoiding touching them. This same widow described her experience in the women's group explaining,

> I am the lowest of untouchables, so of course I was afraid
> to go to a meeting, at first. Where would I sit? But the
> women who helped organize us were very open-minded
> about untouchable people. They spoke right to me! And
> little by little, high caste women would share their feelings,
> and even take food together with me. This was beyond my
> imagination. We had a long talk about spiritual values that
> stayed on my mind afterward. I thought, "Maybe that's
> why the others are nice to me" (Kingsolver, 2009, p. 74)

As the women in the group tackled sanitation and nutrition, then gender and caste, the discussions began to revolve around how women treat other women. The social stigma accorded to widows - who never remarry, and are held to carry shame - came into

question. Another woman who was part of these discussions and had been responsible for enforcing traditional customs on her young, widowed daughter-in-law, decided that the girl should also attend the meetings.

This mother-in-law explained that "[t]alking about unspeakable things" in the context of the group "had caused her to think about what was hers to keep or to let go". As a result she concluded that, "…being happy is not just a privilege of marriage. My son is dead. But my daughter in law is not" (Kingsolver, 2009, p.74).

During the crowning event of the day, known as the Women's Togetherness Ceremony, the women who had earned income from the goats they had raised passed the offspring on to newer members. The whole village watched as the "untouchable" widow carrying her gift of a lop-eared goat, walked towards her chosen recipient - another poor widow belonging to the highest caste,

> Last year Bishow-Karma couldn't have entered the woman's home. Today she gave her good fortune, In the embrace of the two women I saw the architecture of human grace. How astonishingly simple: mental poverty ends in this way. A person's status can change not by receiving, but by giving (Kingsolver, 2009, p. 74)

Kingsolver describes the scene that followed, as the young widowed girl stood up together with her mother-in-law, and how the other mothers came forward carrying,

> …a plate piled with red teeka powder, the adornment forbidden to widows. By the handful they scooped up the color red, giving it back to this daughter, rubbing it onto the crown of her head, covering her hair and face in a cloud of vermillion. She fell backward as the older women passed her from hand to hand, wrapping her in a red shawl. They had made a decision: Menuka should walk forward into her life, wearing color. Tears streaked scarlet tracks down her powdered cheeks. Schoolgirls and mothers cried for her joy, which was also theirs…Now Menuka thinks her mother-in-law should wear red, too. Young people will

141

change she says, when the older ones do (Kingsolver, 2009, p. 74)

The Institutes for the Healing of Racism

This approach to addressing systemic racism assumes that every human being living in a racist society is "infected" with the "disease" of racism, and that this disease is best understood as a "psychological, emotional and spiritual" "disorder". While the approach of the Institutes for the Healing of Racism was developed in the United States and it speaks specifically to the racism that is inherent in the American cultural mindset which gives more value to Whites, and less value to African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics and other social groups that are perceived to be "people of color" its framework can be adapted to any society, which holds that one social group has greater value than another group (Newkirk & Rutstein, 2000).

The Institutes for the Healing of Racism recognize and address racism as a systemic human problem – a disease – arising from the denial of the oneness of humanity. The perspective of The Institutes for the Healing of Racism is that everyone looses in a society infected with racist values: human beings are not able to develop properly, since the reality that all human beings are equal members of a single, human family is denied. While the Institutes do not promote any particular religious creed they are spiritually centered, and they emphasize love and unity instead of tolerance (Newkirk & Rutstein, 2000).

On the perspective of the Institutes for the Healing of Racism, the "poison" of racial prejudice is passed down through the generations through social inheritance, conditioning White Americans to feel superior in relation to their fellow citizens of color,

142

and nurturing an inherent feeling of inferiority in non-Whites. While some Whites are aware of harboring feelings of superiority (such as openly declared racists), many others in the general population are not aware of their feelings of superiority, which exist at the sub-conscious level (Newkirk & Rutstein, 2000).

Much psychic energy is wasted in an attempt to keep the underlying assumption of inauthentic valuation, based on racial discrimination, out of conscious awareness through "carefully concealed mental maneuver[s]". Feeling ashamed of a thought or feeling leads to its repression and gives rise to the impulse to convince oneself, "that you don't really think or feel that way". This lack of truthfulness keeps people from healing, and moving towards further and deeper development (Newkirk & Rutstein, 2000, p. 109).

The process developed by the Institutes for the Healing of Racism for promoting individual healing from the disease of racism and the eradication of racism within the social structure makes use of videos, reflective meditation, dialogue and structured exercises using statistics in seeking to cultivate awareness of underlying thoughts and feelings, which contributing to the disease of racism in both Whites and People of Color (Newkirk & Rutstien, 2000).

This process was developed on the assumption of the need to educate both, "the mind and the heart" fostering a "shift in consciousness that takes place over an extended period of time" (Newkirk & Rutstein, 2000, p. 129). This is done through a format of a two-day workshop which optimally is followed by ten weeks of 1.5 hour sessions which establish an ongoing mechanism for healing, whereby participants come together on an equal basis, committed to helping one another heal the "infection and wounds of racism in a safe, non-confrontational environment" and to "engage in social action" (p. 84).

143

The two-day workshop is designed to begin the healing process and to "generate hope and optimism that the disease of racism can be healed" (Newkirk & Rutstein, 2000, p. 155). During the ten-week series, each session is divided into three phases. In the first phase (the education of the mind) group leaders and participants research, and present information to the group, on the structural origin of the super-valuation of Whites (and White culture) and on the de-valuation of People of Color (and their culture). In the second phase (dialogue of the spirit) participants are divided into pairs, and given a set time to reflect on a question followed by one-on-one sharing. In the third phase, the group comes together, and the same question is addressed through group sharing.

According to Newkirk and Rutstein (2000) this process of transformation supports participants in becoming more "heart-centered" rather than "head-centered", and thus more "sensitive to others feelings". It also supports participants in becoming "more focused more on the 'real' as opposed to the superficial"; to "place greater credence" on a person's "values, his or her spiritual qualities such as trustworthiness, compassion, love, truthfulness, and courtesy" rather than on, "his or her skin color, clothes, and social or economic status'"; to distinguish "between fact and fiction", and to be more capable of "sensing the reality of others" and more aware of "the true essence of a human being" (p. 129).

The Virtues Project

The Virtues Project was already introduced above. Although the following intervention was carried out in a high school setting, it has relevance also for community-

144

based education, as it is not difficult to envision adaptations of this particular project in other community-based settings.

A Virtues Project facilitator developed, and implemented what she calls the *Hand in Hand Project* in high schools in Australia. Many of the students in the population attending the High School are refugees and have suffered extreme trauma, grief and loss, as a result of violent conflicts in their homelands; some have come from refugee camps and have "lost respect for self, for one another and for authority, and have not experienced peaceful resolution to problems" (http://www.virtuestraining.com/16_hand_in_hand_project).

The project duration was 10 weeks and weekly sessions lasted 40 minutes. Every 10 weeks a new group commenced the course. The course focused on the specific human virtues of kindness, friendliness, respect, unity and service. During the sessions the students learned more about these virtues through group discussion, interactive games and conflict resolution exercises. At the end of the program the students decided to do an act of service for someone else, and present it to the class. Students received a certificate of achievement at the end of the ten-week course (http://www.virtuestraining.com/16_hand_in_hand_project).

Quality Parenting Parent Education Program

The "Quality Parenting" parent education program is a psychosynthesis-inspired approach to parenting education developed by licensed Marriage and Family therapist Ilene Val-Essen, Ph.D. (Val-Essen, 2010). Several foundational assumptions of Val-

Essen's approach to parent education are based on Assagioli's description of the energetic levels within the human psyche, as represented in his "Egg" diagram.

Val-Essen describes what she calls "three levels of self" noting that that this is a way of viewing behavior that, "parents in our classes find especially valuable" (2010, p. 13). To parents, she offers the explanation that, as we move through the day distinct aspects or "parts" of our personalities "become active", which she calls "lower self", "centered self" and "higher self" (p. 13). And that we move back and forth among these three levels "sometimes several times a day" (p. 14).

Parents also learn that the lower self, "is often an automatic response to stress" arising from our more primitive emotional brain. "Physiologically, when we feel threatened, our more primitive 'emotional brain' takes charge" as if "our survival were at stake, sending signals to attack and run", she explains. A primary goal of the Quality Parenting program is to remove "a central obstacle to parenting" by helping parents develop skills for choosing different courses of action. Parents gain "the awareness and the ability to shift, when appropriate, from lower self to centered self" (2010, p. 14).

Val-Essen's approach to teaching parents about the three levels of self begins with recognition of patterns of behavior (sub-personalities), which they commonly enact in their worst moments as parents. In the first phase of this process participants are invited to ask themselves a series of questions: "Who or what is that part of me that most interferes with a positive relationship with my child?"/"Who is my subpersonality?" Next each participant draws a simple picture of the image which comes to mind in response to this question, whether a character or an object.

When the picture is finished, participants write down answers to the following questions: How does it look and act? How does it feel? How does it think? What does it need? In the ensuing discussion parents are helped to arrive at deeper ramifications of what they have learned; they also draw a picture of their child's lower self sub-personality and reflect on it, in light of their insight into their own patterns (Val-Essen, 2010).

With this process the Quality Parenting program takes participants through two fundamental steps discussed by Assagioli, which contribute to fostering a person's ability for self-development. It a) provides participants with the opportunity to practice the principle of disidentification and b) fosters their self-knowledge in terms of a psychological center that can serve as a directing agent both within the self (intrapersonal) and without (interpersonal).

The Quality Parenting program also successfully conveys several other fundamental assumptions of Assagioli's framework in a manner which supports conscious choice towards mutuality, cooperation, and reciprocity instead of blaming and criticizing others, conflict, competition, and powerseeking:

1. That our patterns of behavior were developed in the context of our lived experiences, because this was the best approach we were able to find at the time, towards meeting a given need

2. That we, who developed our patterns, are *not* our patterns

3. That some of these patterns are more, and others less, effective when enacted in our present circumstances

4. That there exists within us a "center" towards which we can choose to move, if we recognize that a dysfunctional pattern is being enacted

5. That this "centered self" offers us a "calmer, more level-headed state of mind" from which we can choose a different course of action (Val-Essen, 2010, p. 14).

CHAPTER 5

CASE STUDY: THE INTEGRATED AND SYSTEMIC COMMUNITY THERAPY APPROACH

Program Background

Psychiatrist, anthropologist, and theologian Adalberto Barreto developed the Integrated and Systemic Community Therapy approach. Barreto - a native of the state of Ceará, located in the arid region of Northeast Brazil - entered the seminary but did not complete his studies. In the fourth and last year of his training to become a priest Barreto traveled to Europe. There he completed his medical studies obtaining dual degrees in psychiatry and anthropology, and a certificate in theological studies (Barreto, 2008; Barreto & Boyer, 2003).

After his return Barreto took a position as a professor of Community Health at the Universidade Federal do Ceará in the city of Fortaleza, the capital of the state of Ceará and the fifth largest city of Brazil. It was in the context of his efforts to integrate "university-based" knowledge and the knowledge of traditional healers within the community of Canindé that Barreto slowly conceived what has become the *Movimento Integrado de Saúde Mental e Comunitária* (MISMEC) [Integrated Movement Towards Community Mental Health] (Barreto, 2008; Barreto & Boyer, 2003).

His research and work within MISMEC gradually led Barreto to develop a practical, community-based therapeutic model with the aim of countering the psychological effects of poverty and social exclusion, promoting health and preventing

disease, through nurturing the formation of human connections which he called *Terapia Comunitária Sistêmica Integrativa (*TCI) or simply *Terapia Comunitária* (TC) [Integrated and Systemic Community Therapy (ICT) or simply "Community Therapy" (CT)] (Barreto, 2008).

Aírton Barreto - Adalberto's brother and a human rights lawyer who had been working in the urban slum community of Pirambú (population 200,800) - would often send the residents of the slum, who were his clients, to Adalberto's care at the University. However not only was the demand for psychiatric care simply too great, but the treatment provided (medication) did nothing to address the underlying causes of the insomnia and the "nervous crises" which lead people to see psychiatric help, such as "stress" (negative emotions such as anger, revenge, feeling hurt, not feeling able to initiate change); family issues; violence; drugs and alcoholism; loneliness; broken social ties, and hunger) (Barreto, 2008, Barreto & Boyer, 2003).

Feeling compelled to accept the challenge presented by his brother, one day Adalberto Barreto took his students directly into the Pirambú slum located on the periphery of the city of Fortaleza, to see what might be done there. This experiment gradually developed into the Community Therapy approach for supporting the mental health, and the individual and community autonomy, of populations which live in the context of social vulnerability and exclusion - often aggravated by forced migration[25] - in which, "economic poverty is joined by cultural poverty and a weakening of social ties"

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[25] The forced migration of masses of poor "*Nordestinos*" who leave the arid and barren Northeast, and typically end up residing in slum communities around large cities throughout Brazil, was an important source of Barreto's inspiration for his approach to overcoming human suffering, which is addressed by the CT approach in Brazil.

and, "a devalued self-image and low self-esteem, that often culminates in a loss of one's identity and dignity " (Barreto, 2008, p. 34).

Philosophy of the Community Therapy Approach

Barreto's original vision for Community Therapy is that it would create collective spaces where people can come together to listen and to share their experiences, and to learn from each other. It is primarily a preventive approach that promotes mental health through fostering people's self-confidence in their ability to overcome adversity and psychosocial difficulties. CT does not intend to generate social action or to help people solve problems, but rather to support the development of resiliency. It assumes that every person, no matter what their socioeconomic or cultural status, has resources and knowledge that are useful to others as the result of a) one's experience in having overcome the day-to-day difficulties of life, and from b) cultural resources (such as folk remedies for self-care, and others). As such, it also has an impact on physical health, through the reduction of stress and its negative effects (Barreto, 2008; Barreto, et. al., 2011).

While recognizing that the curative work of specialists which focuses on treating individual pathology has a definite place, Barreto (2008) holds that much good can be done by focusing on the human causes of suffering rather than pathology in the context of carefully structured, and supportive groups of lay people.

It is not just the lack of trained professionals sufficient to address the needs of the masses seeking psychiatric care which is the problem; equally problematic, in Barreto's view is the fact that the "bio-medical model" and its "psychotropic arsenal" foster

"dependency" (p. 24) on the knowledge of those who are seen as "miracle workers" and

"saviors" (p. 59), and who are held to be the only ones qualified to provide answers to the

problems encountered in one's day-to-day lived experience:

> It is not difficult to see that our social model is based on a
> hierarchy of values. This hierarchy sets down a scale
> wherein those are 'on top' are those who know; these are
> the ones who should speak, teach, tell others what to do.
> Below them are those who 'know nothing or almost
> nothing', and for this reason should limit themselves to
> listening, to following teachings and orders (Barreto, 2008.
> p. 154)

Given its unique focus, Community Therapy positions itself as an approach that works

along side other institutionalized public health care services, complementing these and in

this way, "amplifying their potential to prevent and promote health at the primary care

level." It does not diagnose or treat pathology (Barreto, 2008, p. 340).

Theoretical Foundations of the Community Therapy Approach

Barreto's proposed alternative to this "dependency" on a "specialized and

limited" (i.e., clinical) approach to promoting mental health (2008, p. 24) and on the

interventions and "promises" of "others" (p. 25) is grounded in his synthesis of five,

broad theoretical frameworks[26]:

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[26] While he doesn't mention it here Barreto's Christian faith, as interpreted though his understanding of the Liberation Theology movement, is an underlying framework which informs the Community Therapy approach. This is readily noticed in his book (Barreto, 2008) which is the primary resource used in training community therapists throughout Brazil. In it there are many instances in which Barreto directly or indirectly speaks to a moral obligation to uphold Christian solidarity with one's brothers who are suffering. This book also quotes passages from the Bible, and includes biblically inspired drawings and metaphors throughout such as "carrying one's cross"; pictures of Jesus on the cross, etc. This is not out of place in Brazilian culture since Christianity predominates as the official religion, and given that religious syncretism is integral to Brazilian culture - many of the deities of African religions have been incorporated in Christian beliefs, for example; making reference to a Christian worldview is an effective means to reach the masses, and this is the precise aim of the CT approach. Another example is Barreto's bio on the inside flap of this same book which states that his formal "theological training" gave him, "the means to dream of building a

Systemic Thought

Holds that the biological dimension of reality (human body) is connected to the psychological dimension (emotional and mental) and to society as a whole. Everything, and everyone, is inter-connected. Problems can only be understood as integral parts of a complex "net" that branches out in countless directions, connecting and establishing relationships between all people.

Theory of Communication

Individuals, families, and wider social groups are united through the element of communication. This communication takes place in the context of actions (behavior) and it can be both verbal and non-verbal, and both inter-individual and group. Through the medium of communication every individual ongoingly seeks confirmation and recognition of her or his status as a person and as a citizen, fulfilling the need to belong, as well as to grasp the reality of one's existence

Cultural Anthropology

Culture is one of the fundamental elements of one's identity, and contributes directly one's self-concept both as an individual ("who am I?") and as a member of a wider group ("who are we?"). Valuing and respecting the socio-historical knowledge base which is rooted in traditions and popular culture, and appears in the cultural diversity within a country (or a group), contributes to support individuals whose sense of

world that upholds the dignity of the oppressed" and that his graduate studies in anthropology, "enabled him to comprehend the various relationships which human beings weave with nature, with their own dreams, and with the divine" (Barreto, 2008).

sense of self is devalued and increases collective potential for growth, for solving social problems, and for building a more fraternal and just society. Modern scientific knowledge (the knowledge of those who have formal degrees) clearly has its place, but it does not have a monopoly over truth.

The Pedagogy of Paulo Freire

A relationship with Freire's work is seen through the "horizontal" nature of the communication between group members, emphasizing the fact that each possesses knowledge and respecting the contribution of each, allowing for a new reading of the same problem. By listening to the words of another I recognize my own history, and as we become closer we find that we are human, imperfect, unfinished. Another idea which comes from Freire's work is the valuation of personal resources, and of a person's cultural knowledge-base; liberating learning takes place where there is respect for socially constructed knowledge, acquired in the context of lived experience. Discrimination is immoral, because it harms human beings and denies the possibility for democracy that upholds the right for difference.

Resilience

Knowledge developed through lived experience, as the result of facing life's challenges, is what has enabled the poor and oppressed to survive throughout the ages. Every individual has knowledge which comes from lived experience, and awareness of this knowledge should be encouraged and stimulated (Barreto, 2008).

From these theoretical underpinnings Barreto (2008) determined the objectives of the methodology of Community Therapy, as follows:

- Reinforce the internal dynamic within the individual so that each may discover their values and potentialities, becoming more autonomous and less dependent.

- Reinforce individual and collective self-esteem.

- Rediscover and reinforce the individual's confidence in her/his ability, in light of the ability of each to evolve and to develop as a person.

- Uphold the importance of the role of the family and of the "web" of relationships that connect each family with the surrounding environment.

- Awaken, within every person, family, and social group, a feeling of oneness and of one's identification with her or his cultural values.

- Support community development by preventing and resisting factors, which contribute to disintegration within individuals and families, by restoring and strengthening social ties.

- Promote and uphold the value of traditional social institutions and practices as guardians of cultural identity, and which serve as holding spaces of practical knowledge.

- Foster communication between the different forms of popular knowledge and scientific knowledge.

- Stimulate - using dialogue and reflection – participation, as a fundamental pre-requisite for infusing life into social relations, for fostering increased critical consciousness, and for stimulating the individual's desire to take initiative, and to become the agent of one's personal transformation (Barreto, 2008. p. 39).

155

Methodology of the Community Therapy Approach

The above objectives of the Community Therapy approach are implemented through a methodology that seeks to:

- Create human "spaces" wherein day-to-day suffering can be shared, fostering the individual's ability to "digest" paralyzing anxiety, which is a risk factor among the general population and particularly among the excluded

- Support people in acknowledging, embracing, and reflecting on day-to-day suffering as the result of stressful situations of daily living

- Prevent and promote health (positive attitude) in collective spaces rather than combating pathology (negative attitude) individually

- Value and strengthen the role of the individual, the family, and the wider web of social relations so that these may discover their values and potentialities, becoming more autonomous and less dependent[27]

- Nurture community development, preventing and combating situations that exclude individuals and families by restoring and strengthening, social and affective ties (Barreto, et. al., 2011).

The specific methodology of the Community Therapy approach which implements these objectives and goals, is carried out in sessions called "*rodas*"

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[27] Barreto's conception of autonomy will be discussed in chapter six. Briefly, by becoming more autonomous the individual becomes less dependent on specialists and specialized institutions, and increasingly able to overcome daily challenges, moving away from a mentality of "assistentialism" and towards a mentality of "co-participation" in overcoming challenges. It implies gaining freedom from the oppression of one's problems (Barreto, 2008).

("circles") following specific, pre-established stages and procedures which promote

sharing, and the "horizontal" exchange of knowledge among the participants[28],

> In the Community Therapy "circle", the spoken word is a
> balsam, a compass, both for the one who shares and for the
> one who listens. It is this sharing of lived experiences
> between people that provides a path for the relief of pain, of
> suffering, and enables people to envision "clues" for how
> they can overcome their problems. The community
> identifies, within itself, the solutions for its problems which
> alone neither one – individual, family or public institution –
> can solve (Barreto, 20080, pp. 287-8)

While two trained individuals occupy the role of "therapist" and "co-therapist" in

every "roda" or "circle" these roles are merely functional and do not carry authority in

terms of providing knowledge in the form of answers to the questions discussed by the

group. Instead, it is considered that the community is both "client" and "therapist"

(Barreto, 2008; Grandesso, 2003).

A Community Therapy "circle" uses what Barreto calls a "situation" or a

"problem" that is shared with the group by an individual. Examples of problems that have

been addressed in CT circles in Brazil are:

- A young woman is mourning the loss of her mother, who passed away eight

  months ago. She has been attending this CT circle for the past four years, and this

  is the first time she is sharing with the group. She has one child who recently got

  sick. She is lonely, and has had no one to talk to since her mother passed away

  (Bonilla, 2008);

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[28] A "*roda*" is a word in daily usage in Brazil and it has a ready, cultural significance that the translation "circle" does not convey. Literally a "*roda*" is a wheel, and figuratively it is a term used to describe people gathering together; while it is used in children's games and groups in general ("let's make a *roda*"), a "roda" is also an integral element within popular forms of dancing, martial arts, and worship as the result of the combined influence of African (slaves), European (Portuguese) colonizers, and of (native) Indigenous cultures, examples of which are "*roda de samba*", "*roda de capoeira*", and "*roda de umbanda*". A "*roda de terapia comunitaria*" (a community therapy circle) thus has a familiar, natural connotation of individuals coming together for a specific, collective activity.

- A woman is afraid she is falling back into the same depression she had last year. In the previous year she was helped in a TC session following a betrayal, and found the strength to overcome her obstacles. Until now she had considered herself cured (Bonilla, 2008);

- A man is scared, depressed, can't sleep, wants to hide, cries all the time, and feels suicidal; he was referred by a doctor. It is his first time in a CT circle. He left his home seven months ago, because his wife was abusive (Bonilla, 2008).

Two CT "circles" I attended in Brazil dealt with the following cases:

- An elderly woman is going to undergo knee replacement surgery, and is afraid she will die during the operation (this circle was held in a senior center);

- A middle age woman, who is of the primary "bread-winner" and source of emotional support within her family, has recently been diagnosed with a potentially serious disease.

Description of a Community Therapy Circle

Every Community Therapy "circle" has a distinct beginning, middle, and end, and is carried out in the following six specific phases/or stages[29]:

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[29] This description is mostly a translation (with some summarizing, and a few additions of my own) of the account of a Community Therapy session given in Barreto's book *Terapia Comunitária Passo a Passo* (Community Therapy Step-by-Step) (2008, pp. 94-98). This is the main text used for training community therapists throughout Brazil. I have chosen to translate Barreto's descriptive summary of the stages of a Community Therapy session rather than include the one I developed, based on my field notes and other sources, since it conveys the voice of Barreto himself. Within the Community Therapy movement it is assumed that every community therapist will find her/his own words/voice for conducting a community therapy session, following these basic steps.

1. Inclusion/*"Acolhimento"*[30]

2. Picking a Theme for the Session

3. Contextualization

4. Problematization

5. Conclusion

6. Appreciation

    1. Inclusion/"*Acolhimento*" (approximately 7 minutes in duration)

One of the fundamental characteristics of a community therapy session is that it is strives to create a warm, caring, and welcoming atmosphere within the group. This process begins in the first stage of the "circle" – the "Inclusion" phase – and is carried out by the co-therapist, in the following manner:

    a) Welcome to all - those who are new to the group, and those who are returning, are warmly greeted by the community therapist and co-therapist. Often a song which is known to those present, is sung[31]

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[30] The act of "acolhimento" (from the verb "acolher") does not have a direct translation. To "acolher" a person (or group) has various meanings all of which are present, to some extent, whenever it is used: it means to welcome them; to make them feel comfortable; to put them at ease; to tend to their needs; to understand their pain. As such it implies recognition of the humanity of the other, and this appears in actions designed to make them feel regarded, valued. In this sense "acolher" also means to bring them into one's heart and to make them one of one's own. In this text I use different words in an effort to convey this concept.

[31] Songs (both religious and from popular culture) with themes that support those who are struggling with life's problems by acknowledging the pain which accompanies life, and holding out hope/the possibility for a new tomorrow are typically sung in a CT session. Anyone in the circle can start a song including the community therapist and co-therapist. Musical instruments are sometimes used as well, such as drums and guitars; a circle I participated in during the CT training in São Paulo had an electric keyboard and speakers, while another circle used no instruments at all, and only a few songs were sung.

b) The co-therapist asks, "Is anyone having a birthday this month? Raise your hand and let us know", and the song "Happy Birthday" is sung for those who are present as well as for their relatives, friends and/or neighbors who are not present. "Lets sing a song for Francisca, Maria's friend". Those who have had birthdays since the last group are also recognized. Special dates – mother's day, etc. are also honored

c) The co-therapist explains the objective of Community Therapy:

> This therapy is a place to share our suffering, and the worries that are keeping us awake, bringing sadness and consternation, with the certainty that the group here will listen, and understand our pain. But in order for this to happen some rules are necessary (Barreto, 2008, p. 94)

d) The four rules of the session are presented (using appropriate explanations and wording). They are: 1) silence while someone is talking 2) speak only of one's personal experience, in the first person singular using the pronoun "I" 3) avoid giving advice, and of saying "everyone" and "we" or "they" since no one knows what is best for another. Also avoid "preaching" and giving "speeches" 4) contributions of songs which are familiar to others, as well as jokes, stories, related proverbs and sayings which are related to the theme being discussed, are all welcome.

e) Warm up – a game or group dynamic is enacted. The group is invited to contribute one, and the co-therapist will step in with a suggestion, if needed. This warm-up seeks to "warm up" the hearts, getting them ready to share feelings in the next stage, and help people feel at home. The types of dynamics include the "meet and greet" your neighbor type and also those which seek to encourage laughter and relaxation

f) The co-therapist introduces the therapist who will conduct the session

2) Picking a Theme for the Session (approximately 10 minutes in duration)

a) The therapist greets people and says it is time to "share" whatever is causing us to "worry, to lose sleep, disturbing us" whether it is something to do with our "role as a father or mother, work, romantic" (Barreto, 2008, p. 95). The therapist says,

> I want to remind all of us here that when the mouth is silent the body 'speaks' (organs – head and stomach - hurt, for example) but when the mouth speaks, the body is healed. We often open our hearts at the wrong time, with the wrong person, and later regret our choice because there was no (*acolhimento*) recognition of the importance of what we were sharing, nor comprehension. Here you can speak without fear of being judged. We are here to understand you. This is not the place to share important secrets, but it is a place where we can discuss day-to-day difficulties. Because there are so many of us I would ask every one who wishes to share, to raise their hand, to say their name, and to state their problem in a few words. Later the group will choose a single problem, which will be worked on today (Barreto, 2008, p. 95)

b) The community therapist encourages people to share their problems. Those present listen attentively/to the best of their ability. As people speak they sometimes cry, and songs are often sung in support of this person. The therapist is taking note of what is being said, for referral later.

c) The community therapist then asks participants "Which problem, among those presented, touched you the most?" followed by, "Why?" If someone doesn't wish to share, this is respected.

d) After around ten people (out of a group of fifty) have spoken the therapist calls for a vote. The objective is to choose, among all the problems presented, a single one that will be the focus of the remainder of the session. Each person can only vote once, and raises her or his hand to vote. If there is a tie, the vote is repeated.

161

e) Following this vote, the community therapist thanks all those who opened themselves up, and shared their problems, and makes her/himself available to speak with them at the end of the session if they would like. The community therapist also tells these people that they shouldn't shut themselves off from the rest of the session, because others may have things to say, which can help solve their suffering/problem.

3) Contextualization (approximately 15 minutes in duration)

a) At this point the entire group and also the community therapist/co-therapist ask questions of the person whose problem was voted. The goal here is to foster awareness, within the individual who presented the problem and within the group as a whole, of the context in which this particular problem exists, and to understand it better; they also ask questions about the person - such as what dreams and values the person bases their life on, and what her/his aims are. Again, this is a process of forming a human connection, which touches people. During this process the community therapist is taking notes, listening carefully and seeking to identify an underlying theme, in a way that will allow others to connect this person's suffering/problems to their own lives.

b) The community therapist thanks the person who shared, and invites her/him to be attentive to what the group will say next, since often something will come up which can contribute to address his/her suffering. The community therapist next poses a question for general reflection and discussion, which conveys an underlying theme taken from this person's problem.

An example of a "generic" question that can be posed to the group by the community therapist is, "Who here has lived through a similar situation, as Mr. so-and-so

and what did you do to solve it?" Since people will identify themselves with different aspects of the problem, various people will provide answers. A more specific question involves identifying a theme, and asking a question based on it. This is a challenge for the more practiced Community Therapist to tackle.

For example, if the person's problem is that she is depressed over the fact that she has lost her job, the question posed to the group might simply be, "Who has been depressed, and how have you dealt with it?" And if the person's problem is feeling guilty, the question might be, "Who here has felt guilty?" followed by "What did you do to overcome this feeling?"

If the problem is related to betrayal a possible question might be, "What is most painful in a betrayal?" and "What have you done to avoid being betrayed?" And if the problem is in the person's relationship with her/his family, the question might be, "What is your difficulty in your relationship with your (mother-in-law, father-in-law, etc)?

4) Problematization (approximately 45 minutes in duration)

The group reflects on the question that was asked by the community therapist, following the rules of the session; when all those who wish to speak have spoken, the session moves into the last stage.

5) Conclusion (approximately 10 minutes in duration)

a) The community therapist calls the group to stand, to form a circle, and invites them to join hands and place their hands on each other's shoulders while gently swaying. Songs are often sung.

b) The community therapist thanks the person who shared their problem and emphasizes the strengths, which s/he has come to see in this person, through this sharing process. The therapist then invites all those present to share what they learned today/what they are taking away with them. "In today's session I learned…" or "What I admire most about the stories shared today is….". All those present are thus given another opportunity to be heard and seen within the group, to share with the group a glimpse into their own potentialities, and to discover the strength they have within themselves. All of those who are present in the circle have to speak at this point instead of passing.

6. Appreciation

a) The group reflects on the process of their collaboration in the context of the community therapy (such as: "you learn to swim by swimming"); this is an internal appreciation, of the group itself.

Effectiveness and Impact of the Community Therapy Approach

While Barreto's original vision for Community Therapy is that it would serve the mental health of, and stimulate the individual and community autonomy within, populations that live in the context of social vulnerability and exclusion (such as residents of slums and shantytowns) the Community Therapy approach has become widely diffused throughout Brazil. As such it is being used among many different groups and populations, mainly through formal partnerships established between the Universidade Federal do Ceará and various levels of federal, state and municipal health services.

In this wider usage, the Community Therapy approach has been successfully implemented among specific populations such as: psychiatric patients; women who are struggling with depression; women who are victims of violence; families of psychiatric patients; the elderly; clients who are health care workers in public community health clinics, among others (Barreto, 2008; Barreto, et al., 2011).

Currently the Integrated Movement Towards Community Mental Health (MISMEC) is spread throughout Brazil, and it continues to expand. As of 2008 there were 30 *Pólos Formadores* (Centers of Capacitation) in 27 states. MISMEC is responsible for running these Centers, which coordinate the trainings of community therapists. Data from 2008 indicates that 12.500 community therapists had been trained in 27 different states throughout Brazil (Barreto, 2008).

These community therapists are men and women, lay people and professionals, from various areas and walks of life. The CT "circles" they facilitate are held within locations as varied as: reception areas in health care clinics, public parks, community social centers, churches and child care centers (Grandesso, 2003).

A Website under the auspices of the Brazilian Association of Community Therapy (ABRATECOM) offers a virtual space for the exchange of experiences and many Community Therapists have also established their own sites, providing information and seeking connection with others. Internationally, several countries have been opened to Community Therapy: France, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Mozambique, and Chile (Barreto, 2008).

Data obtained from community therapy sessions carried out in the context of partnerships with agencies and programs, within the federally-funded, national public

health care system where it has been increasingly adopted and implemented through in various programs since 2004, indicates that there has been a reduction on the services of the health care system as the result of participation in CT circles (Barreto, et al., 2011).

Of particular importance in these evaluations is the data indicating that people are making wider use of other available forms of supports[32], rather than relying exclusively on the health care system. A general conclusion is that this data confirms the idea that Community Therapy circles serve those whose suffering arises from day-to-day, lived experience. This in turn, reduces the number of those seeking specialized care, freeing up the specialists to care for pathologies (Barreto, et al., 2011).

Many suggestions for alternative modes of addressing problems, which lead to a decrease in the use of medication and in specialized mental health services, arise in the context of CT "circles". Some examples of strategies that are widely shared among participants in a community therapy "circles" include: herbal teas for insomnia; massage for physical pain; the support of ALANON for the family of the alcoholic; try talking to different people; talk to God; feed my spirit with prayer; ask God to put forgiveness in my heart; face my problems instead of avoiding them; I left my husband; went back to school/work; I didn't give up in spite of the difficulties; I had surgery and the problem was solved; I registered a complaint with the police; I listen to music; when I feel like smoking, I drink water (Barreto, 2008).

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[32] Often in a CT "circle" someone will cite a specific social support service s/he has used to overcome a personal problem such as AA and ALANON. Informal social supports often mentioned as strategies include: talking with friends and neighbors and laughing; calling friends; talk with different people; participate in CT "circles" (Barreto, 2008).

According to Barreto (2008), participant's views of the benefits gained through participation can be grouped into three major categories:

a) Development of personal connections – "…in Community Therapy I have found friends"; "it is good to have friends".

b) Sharing and belonging ("acolhimento") – "…it is good to be part of a group"; "it is good to be able to talk to someone" .

c) The expansion of personal and social consciousness – "We have to be more united"; "I learned that we have similar problems" and "it is necessary to think before acting" (Barreto, 2008, p. 355). Improved interactions within the family is a frequently reported outcome, and participants have shared the following: "I speak with my children more"; "I have tried to bring unity to my family"; "I understand that my children are not an extension of myself"; "I spoke frankly with my sister" (Barreto, 2008, p. 345).

Personal accounts of the impact of participation in Community Therapy sessions are limited within the literature. One of a few examples Barreto provides in his book (2008) is of a man who was helped to find a measure of acceptance and peace following the death of his mother. Within the circle this man shared,

> My mother was the worst mother in the world. She would beat us. One time she tied my younger brother by the feet and left him hanging upside down from the mango tree for the entire night. In the morning she hit him on the head with a stick, cutting his head. The cut later became infected with vermin. Today she died and hell is not enough for her, after all she did to us (Barreto, 2008, p. 188)

Following this statement, a man who was generally held to be "crazy" announced: "I am your mother". While others laughed at one more eccentricity from the "crazy one", this man went over the first man and keeling before him said,

> My son, forgive me for what I did to you. How could I give
> you love if I never received it? I could not give you what I
> did not have…(Barreto, 2008, p. 188)

The room became silent and the first man began to cry. A week later, at the start of the Community Therapy circle this man said,

> I want to thank you, Domingos, whom everyone thinks is
> crazy. You said something I had never thought of: that my
> mother did not give me love, because she had never
> received it. After last week's Therapy I began to think
> about her. Her mother died when she was just three months
> old, and she was raised by several stepmothers, who were
> very harsh. She never received tenderness, and she cared
> for us the way she had been cared for. I want to tell all of
> you that I regret that I never told my mother I understood
> her suffering, and the way she treated us, before she died.
> I am not the same person I was last week. I realized that I
> have been doing to my children what she did to me. I am
> going to gather my older children who are married and ask
> them to forgive my harshness, and the way I raised them
> (Barreto, 2008, p. 188).

Psychologist, family therapist, and past vice-president of the Brazilian Association of Community Therapy (ABRATECOM) Marilene Grandesso (2003) notes that in well-established community therapy circles, where there is consistent attendance on a long-term basis, relationships are formed among members of a community and the therapeutic process has the potential support transformation and change not only in the individual, but also in the community.

In Grandesso's experience it is "common" to hear participants make comments such as "The problems at home haven't changed, but I am not the same person. My life

has changed, for the better". Grandesso notes that long-term participation leads to a deepening of the group dynamic, in which "the relationships between people become increasingly oriented towards a welcoming, open stance in relation to others" (Grandesso, 2003, para. 19).

Grandesso (2003) also relates that "long-term participation leads to greater sensitivity when listening to others, as well as greater respect for the suffering of the other"; to the "development of an increasing generosity of giving of oneself, and also of the ability to receive from the other"; of "learning from each other"; of fostering "a loving atmosphere which legitimizes differences, while honoring the competencies of every individual" (Grandesso, 2003, para. 10).

Another success of the Community Therapy approach can be seen in the fact that "circles" are often frequented by people of different a) age groups - ranging from young children, to teens, and to the elderly b) social and economic circumstances - ranging from people who are extremely poor, to those who are well-to-do and c) people of different ethnic backgrounds (Barreto, et al., 2011).

Psychiatric patients also attend Community Therapy circles, with or without their families. A study carried out by Ferreira Filha and Carvalho (2010) on the benefits of participation in Community Therapy, for clients within the CAPS system (a federally funded program for providing mental health care) indicated that participation in Community Therapy sessions contributed to their social inclusion, and fostered changes in their interpersonal relationships. Statements obtained from participants in the closing phase of the Community Therapy "circle" in this study include:

- "I feel like someone important when I come here, because people listen to me and respect me when I have something to say"

- "I like to come to Community Therapy because I feel lighter when I leave. Everything bad, that I brought with me from home, gets left here"

- "I have suffered a lot in my life and since I became sick I don't have anyone to help me. I like to come here because I have friends"

- " When I come here everyone is happy to see me, and welcomes me. This helps my self-esteem!"

- "After I began coming to Community Therapy I became more patient with my husband. I stopped hitting him, because I learned to listen to people better"

- "Community Therapy helped me with my shame because I learned from others that my sickness is not shameful. Before I even used to avoid leaving the house."

(Ferreira Filha & Carvalho, 2010, pp. 237-8)

Another indicator of the effectiveness of the Community Therapy approach can be been in the effectiveness of the training process itself, for those who become capacitated as community therapists.

Participation in the capacitation program for community therapists encourages personal transformation and change for the community therapists in training (Barreto, et al., 2011). The below quotes are from newly graduated community therapists, who are health care workers occupying various capacities within the national health care system:

- "I learned to know myself better, how to value myself…That I should love myself, that I need to forgive and understand others more, to be more human, listen more,

respect another's "space", try to understand the pain of another, open my heart, that I am an "unfinished" being, a being in construction" (community health agent)

- "I learned to care for myself better, so that I can care better for others…to reflect more and not simply accept things…" (community health agent)

- "I discovered that by listening to another, I listen to myself, and CT helps me to grow" (physician)

- "I learned that there is a difference between hearing and listening. I need to try to understand what the other is trying to tell me, and not simply assume that my fantasies represent the reality of the other" (sociologist)

- "I learned how to accept my suffering by listening to the suffering of others (community health agent) (Barreto, et al., 2011).

Limitations and Challenges Faced by the Community Therapy Approach

The Community Therapy approach has been in existence for just some twenty years. While it has begun to be researched more intensely I was not able to locate in-depth qualitative studies that followed participants in CT circles to investigate which areas of their lives have been affected by their participation. As noted above, several wide-scale evaluations have been conducted on the impact of the implantation of the community therapy approach within the national health care system, and these are generally positive regarding the effects of the CT approach.

The following challenges are based on a combination of my review of the literature and the contact I had with the community-therapists-in-training I associated with in São Paulo, Brazil:

171

1) While anyone who fulfills the given criteria can become a community therapist, the Community Therapy approach assumes the need for training and supervision. Much of this training will require the trainee to be absent from work and family responsibilities for several days at a time [33].

Through conversations with trainees in the community therapist training I attended, I learned that people were concerned with the extra amount of work the training required and the extra hours of responsibilities which came with it. Although these people had been released from their jobs in order to attend the live-in trainings, the ongoing, extra work of running the CT circles, along with the need to evaluate and collaborate with a supervisor also concerned some.

These difficulties are no doubt concerns of many since the CT approach is being increasingly implanted through federal and state policy, within the national health care system in Brazil. ABRATECOM is aware of this and prospective community therapists are urged to take this into consideration, in making their decision to undergo training (Barreto, et al., 2011).

2) Running a group is challenging and while formal education is not a requirement to be a community therapist, there is much that is expected from a community therapist within this approach.

For those who do not have previous related or therapeutic experience, becoming a community therapist requires the development of skills and abilities required for running a group such as: time management; group building dynamics and ice-breakers; the ability

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[33] The training is carried out in four modules which are "residential" and do not allow for participants to leave. Two of these modules are four days in duration, and two are three days in duration. The current total number of hours required for training to become a community therapist (including 48 sessions carried out with supervision) comes to 360 hours (Barreto, et. al., 2011).

to move a group through the specific, progressive stages of the session in a sensitive and inclusive manner, attending to the quality of the human interactions and to the inclusiveness of all participants.

Specifically in relation to the CT approach, Barreto (2008) emphasizes that the abilities required to "run" a "circle" well are developed through practice:

> Practice is what makes it possible to learn how to implement Community Therapy. It is necessary to train, exhaustively, each stage of the Community Therapy approach since this is the structure, the skeleton of the circle. It is necessary to know how to elaborate a synthesis-reconstruction, how to select a theme to be discussed by the group, how to ask questions, and how to give a positive closure to the experience – all of these are indispensable to a helping a circle run well… (Barreto, 2008, p. 377)

3) Along with the required time commitment and the skill level, there also are high standards of expectation regarding the person of the Community Therapist.

Barreto (2008) variously notes that s/he has to be "mature" (p. 41); "open to diversity" and should not have "major personal issues that would interfere with her ability to serve the interests of the group" (p. 84). Given that the role of the community therapist is to serve the group, s/he he should have the profile of a "midwife of solutions" and be "a midwife of a collective birthing process that awakens the desire and the opportunity to participate" (p. 154). S/he should be an educator in the "tradition of Paulo Freire", including "respecting the knowledge of the other" and being "humble", "curious" and secure" while also demonstrating, "tolerance", "professional competence and generosity", "the understanding that education is ideological", "consciousness of one's incompleteness", "happiness and hope" among others (Barreto, 2008, p. 280).

Becoming a community therapist additionally calls for, "a true re-education and re-discovery of one's role, of one's function" as someone who "desires to break out of the authoritarian model, and to free others, as well as for recognition of the value of the other" (Barreto, 2008, p. 155). As well, community therapists should ideally be chosen by the community, based on one's previous leadership within it (Barreto, 2008) but this can't take place in the case of most of the workers of the SUS health care system.

4) Within the methodology of the "circle" is understandable that certain problems, and not others, will tend to be "voted" by the participants to become the focus of a community therapy session.

During my participation in the training program in São Paulo, a "circle" was held with the community therapists in training. During the "voting" point of the session there were three problems that could be voted on:

- A young woman was unhappy with the quality of the food served at the convent where the training was taking place (since the requirements of the training did not allow participants to leave the training location, participants had to eat what food was provided there)

- A middle-aged woman explained that her room was not only the smallest, but that it also was the only one that had a single, very small window which was high up and did not provide adequate ventilation in the summer's heat. This participant was Black and she wondered whether racism had been a factor in the room distribution

- The third problem was that of a woman who was both the primary bread winner and the primary source of emotional support within her family, and who had

recently been diagnosed with a potentially debilitating disease. This third problem was the one that was voted by the group for discussion in that particular "circle".

5) Evaluations carried out in 2007 and 2008 showed that the majority of the Community Therapists throughout Brazil are women, and that throughout Brazil the majority of those attending Community therapy circles are also women. While this is not discussed in the literature, this leaves room for wondering how inclined a man would feel to participate and share in the group (Barreto, et al., 2011).

CHAPTER 6

APPLYING THE HATCHER-ASSAGIOLI SYNTHESIS TO THE INTEGRATED

AND SYSTEMIC COMMUNITY THERAPY CASE STUDY

<u>Introduction</u>

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the Integrated and Systemic Community

Therapy approach (CT) using the elements of the Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis.

<u>Summary of the Community Therapy Approach</u>

The Community Therapy approach aims to provide warm and caring "sharing

spaces" which provide connection with others, and where participants are supported in

gaining perspective on, and in implementing action which addresses daily difficulties

imposed by life's circumstances and society.

A Community Therapy "circle" is place where one can share one's lived

experiences and one's suffering with others, receiving support. It is also a space where

one can support others though sharing the strategies one has used to overcome the

challenges of daily living, and by witnessing their lived experiences. Pathologies are not

diagnosed in the Community Therapy "circle".

The general methodology is to "open the floor" for people to speak within

carefully set boundaries and to share the challenges they are facing in their lives, and the

strategies they have used to overcome these. The envisioned outcome of this process is

that participants will come away with an increased sense of their resources and of their ability to initiate change in their lives, in the family, and in the wider community.

Trained individuals from any walk of life can implement the Community Therapy methodology - formal education is not a pre-requisite. In a Community Therapy "circle" the community therapist serves the group process. S/he is not there to provide answers or specialized knowledge (Barreto, 2008).

The Community Therapy Approach in Light of the Goals of the Hatcher-Assagioli Synthesis

To recall, the goals of the H-A synthesis are: a) to support learning and growth towards the full realization of human nature by fostering a person's ability to act in ways that demonstrate the inherent nobility of human nature through upholding essential human qualities (qualities of our true nature) such as justice, kindness, compassion, honesty, courage, patience, forgiveness and service in our interactions with others and more specifically b) to foster learning and growth which supports a person's ability for self-development, by fostering movement from self-centeredness towards increased relational authenticity with others, through cultivating skills and attitudes which nurture the ability and the desire, to establish relationships with others that are characterized by reciprocity, mutuality, and symmetry rather than asymmetry and dominance.

In the Community Therapy case study these goals are met in the following ways:

The Community Therapy approach is a methodology which seeks to foster movement from dependency on the knowledge of experts, towards an increase in one's perceived ability to initiate change in one's life which contributes to addressing a

problem that is causing a person to worry, loose sleep, have difficulty interacting with others, etc. (Barreto, 2008). However the main focus of this approach is not on solving problems; instead, the goal is to develop "resiliency" understood as, "the capacity to transform suffering into learning, to transform challenges into opportunities for growth, and development of autonomy" (Grandesso, 2003).

The similarity between Barreto's understanding of "autonomy" and the understanding of "self-development" in the Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis is of particular relevance. The Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis assumes that mental health and overall well being are positively affected when the ability for self-development is nurtured in the context of one's relationships, through fostering movement from self-centeredness, towards increased relational authenticity with others. This approach to fostering a person's ability for self-development in the Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis has many parallels within the Community Therapy understanding of fostering the autonomy of the person; Barreto similarly places autonomy within the individual, while connecting her to others.

For Barreto, autonomy does not imply independence from human contact. The autonomy of a Community Therapy it is not autonomy from others, but rather from the oppression of one's problems. In Barreto's mind autonomy is fostered in the context of contact with others through social connections which support a person in overcoming the attitude that one cannot improve one's life (Barreto, 2008). To be autonomous is to be able to mobilize one's personal resources and competencies to improve one's life, through strengthening the ties of solidarity that bind all people to each other. The autonomy of Community Therapy is the "*I can*" that enables a person to serve another,

through walking in solidarity with another. It is achieved through fostering a person's resiliency, which confers the ability to rise above the challenges presented by the environment/the circumstances of one's life (Barreto, 2008).

The Community Therapy Approach in Light of the Principles and Practices of the Hatcher-Assagioli Synthesis

To recall, a Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis seeks to support movement and growth towards the full realization of human nature, within two mutually reinforcing dimensions: 1) With others (interpersonal dimension) and 2) Within the self (intrapersonal dimension).

Interpersonal Dimension

In the Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis, the interpersonal dimension is implemented through a) providing opportunities to experience oneself as being one among a community of moral equals, through cultivating skills and attitudes required for relationships based on caring and connectedness (mutuality, reciprocity and cooperation) and b) providing opportunities to experience oneself as capable of making a positive difference in the lives of the people in one's community and beyond, and of contributing to an increase in the justness of the social structure.

With regards to the interpersonal dimension of learning which supports the full realization of human nature, Barreto's vision for a more humane and just society calls for making whole, and strengthening, the ties that bind all people. While it does not propose to initiate social action, it calls on the ability of each to contribute to an increase in the

179

justness of the social order through providing an interactive experience - the CT "circle" - which challenges limiting conceptions of others' value, and of the value of oneself (Barreto, 2008). Towards this end, individuals are provided with opportunities to uphold the spiritual principle of the oneness of the human family in a number of ways within a Community Therapy session:

- The value of each is affirmed through inviting a sense of belonging - "Welcome, welcome to you, who came to participate…" is a song that has been sung since Barreto's early "circles", and it is one which continues to be used in CT circles today. Following the welcoming portion of the "circle" the co-therapist explains the purpose of the Community Therapy session, together with the rules, which apply to all. This attitude has a healing function as well as a learning function. Grandesso explains that, "…people whose family lives are torn, and destroyed by violence, find in the group a second family. In the group people take care of each other" (Grandesso, 2003, para. 13).

- Barreto's vision for fostering mental health and overall well-being provides the individual with opportunities to enact actions that make a positive difference in the lives of others, through listening to their stories and witnessing their struggles, as well as by sharing one's own experiences, and the strategies one has used to overcome life's difficulties. The stated assumption within the CT "circle" is that everyone can benefit from each other's experience, irrespective of one's social status or level of formal education. Here Grandesso observes that:

> Because material poverty carries a social stigma of devaluation, the opportunity to belong to a group that gives legitimacy to, and values, every person and which recognizes her/his competencies independently of race, appearance or social circumstances - a group which calls one by one's name - is in itself transformative and supports self-esteem, and the dignity of the person (Grandesso, 2003, para. 14)

- Acceptance of those whose views and life experiences are different from one's own is encouraged through nurturing an attitude of concern and empathy for others, while listening to each other's experiences. Barreto defines Community Therapy as a therapy that favors social inclusion (Barreto, 2008).

- Sympathy and compassion for the suffering of the other often arises in the context of a Community Therapy circle and has a healing quality for both parties, since it implies recognition of the humanity of each, and provides the experience of oneself as a caring person, who is capable of contributing to fostering the development of others.

- The relationship of the community therapist and co-therapist to the group - horizontal, non-hierarchical - in which the community therapist does not analyze, diagnose or dispense solutions to problems conveys social symmetry, as does the fact that, in a community therapy "circle" every person is equidistant from the center. Two rules the Community Therapy approach are particularly relevant in this regard: a) giving advice is not allowed and b) each person can only share their lived experiences, speaking in the first person singular ("I") instead of "everyone" or "we"; it is assumed that no one knows what is the best approach for another person.

- At the closing each one has to speak, and to say what s/he is taking away as the result of being together in the "circle". This is another way in which those present are given the opportunity to be seen before others, on an equal basis. The message here is: "Because you are equal to others, you also have to give to others - every one has a contribution to make - we need each other" (Barreto, 2008).

- Barreto's vision of the Community Therapy "circle" is that it will foster connection and solidarity between "women, youth, seniors so that together they may explore solutions to day-to-day problems", and in this manner providing "a protective shield for the weaker" through "acting as instruments of social aggregation" (Barreto, 2008, p. 39).

Intrapersonal Dimension

In a Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis, the intrapersonal dimension of self-development is fostered through supporting learning and growth towards self-knowledge in the following three overlapping areas:

Self-knowledge, in terms of the dynamic interactions that are ongoingly taking place within one's inner world (impulses/desires, sensations, emotions, thoughts/assumptions and feelings) and of one's needs which underlie these

Self-knowledge, in terms of the qualities of one's true nature (virtues or qualities of character) and of one's inherent need to uphold these qualities in one's relationships with self and others

Self-knowledge, in terms of the experience of oneself as a "center" within one's inner world, yet distinct from it.

With regards to the intrapersonal dimension of learning which supports self-knowledge, there are many levels of agreement between the Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis and the Community Therapy approach. The most significant, and also the one which has direct implications for Barreto's understanding of the Community Therapy approach to fostering learning towards the full realization of human nature, arises from their shared assumption of an overarching moral dimension which the individual serves in the context of her relationships within the human world, and within herself.

To Forgive, To Understand, To Transform Pain into Love: Cultivating the Pearls of Daily Living

By determining that any contribution to the group discussion must come from one's lived experiences, and from the strategies one has used to overcome the difficulties in one's life (regardless of whether one is illiterate, or an M.D.) we see Barreto's assumption of the universal power of the human spirit to overcome adversity, and to grow richer and stronger because of it.

Barreto's understanding of resilience is closely related to his focus on "suffering" in a Community Therapy circle. The Community Therapy approach assumes – and participation in a CT "circle" conveys - that the human spirit can overcome any difficulty. Suffering can be transformed, and become learning; challenges can be transformed and become opportunities for growth and the development of autonomy. Furthermore, overcoming suffering can contribute to betterment of the person, leading to a furthering of her ability for action that increases solidarity among all people (Barreto, 2008).

Barreto's understanding of resilience thus calls participants to give a definite,

forward direction to one's life through re-establishing "broken" relationships, both within

(intrapersonal dimension) and without (interpersonal dimension). This can be seen in

Barreto's use of the metaphor of the oyster: "An oyster which has never been hurt cannot

produce a pearl" he says, explaining that our strengths come from areas in our lives in

which we have overcome suffering and trauma, and developed "a competency where

before there was a lack" (2008, p. 104),

> Pearls are the result of pain; an irritating substance enters
> the interior of the oyster…and a shining substance called
> nacre is produced to cover it… A pearl is a wound that has
> healed. Have you ever felt wounded by a person's words?
> Have you ever been accused of saying something you never
> said? Have your ideas ever been rejected? Have you ever
> been impacted by prejudice? Well then, produce a pearl.
> Cover your sadness with several coats of love.
> Unfortunately not many people are interested in this type of
> movement-attitude. Most people learn to cultivate
> resentments, leaving their wounds open, feeding them with
> various types of limiting feelings, and thus not allowing
> them to heal. There are many "empty oysters" walking
> around, not because they haven't been wounded, but
> because they haven't been able to forgive, to understand,
> and thus to transform pain into love" (Barreto, 2008, p.
> 104).

Barreto's vision of the role of the community therapist is that s/he has a

contribution to make, towards fostering the development of "pearls" within the group.

Along with always being ready to re-direct the conversation, ensuring that the views of

all are respected and challenging stereotypes and prejudices which "impede the

reestablishment of the connections, without which understanding and change are not

possible" (Barreto. 2008. p. 73) the community therapist should also be ready to

contribute stories and sayings, and even to tell jokes, with a view to calling people to

their best capabilities and to mutual solidarity (Barreto, 2008).

As an example, below are three stories that were taken from the website of the

Brazilian Association of Community Therapy (ABRATECOM) where they were posted

under the heading "Resources for Community Therapy Sessions":

The Three Sieves
A person who likes to gossip goes over to another person, to share a new tidbit.
Before the would-be-gossiper could speak, the other person asks:
- Have you already passed this through the three sieves?
- Sieves? What sieves?
- The first one is: "is this true?" The second one is: "is it important that I know this?" The third one is: "would you like someone else to talk about you, in the way you are about to talk about them?"

Two Wolves
An Indian elder is talking with a young warrior. The warrior asks the elder:
- "How do you keep your inner peace?"
- "It is easy," answered the elder. "Inside of me there are two wolves. One is peaceful, and the other is aggressive. They are always fighting each other."
- "Which one wins?" the younger man asked.
- "The one I feed most," came the reply.

The Neighbor and the Glass Window
A young couple moved into a new neighborhood and the wife stayed at home, while the man went out. The wife noticed that her neighbor washed a lot of laundry but that it wasn't very clean. When her husband returned she said: "Dear, our neighbor doesn't wash her laundry well." The next day this neighbor washed more clothes. And the younger woman again noted that she did not do a good job. Once again, she gave her husband this news when he returned. And so a week passed. On Sunday morning the younger woman noticed her neighbor hanging up the laundry. This time she was surprised. The clothes were clean. She called out to her husband: "Dear, today our neighbor finally got her laundry clean!" The husband replied: "No, my dear; it was I who cleaned our windows!" (http://www.abratecom.org.br/acervo/historias/index.asp)

Other Similarities

Other similarities the Community Therapy approach shares with the Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis regarding the fostering of self-knowledge, which contributes to the full realization of human potential are:

Self-Knowledge and Catharsis

The Community Therapy approach is based on Barreto's understanding that the ability to think about something (conscious awareness) enables a person to identify the real source of a problem or of a conflict, and this awareness enables a person to make changes in their life, which address this problem.

Merely thinking about something is not where the process of change begins, however. Becoming aware of physical sensations - knot in one's stomach, a heavy feeling in one's chest, general sensation of discomfort - and expressing these (catharsis) is the first step. Following this comes the second step of identification of emotions such as: fear, guilt, and anger. When we are aware of our emotions it becomes possible to reflect on them ("Why am I afraid?"), whereas initially "only sensations could be felt/expressed, through tears and lamentations" (Barreto, 2008, p. 77).

Through speaking, singing, laughing at jokes and stories, and movement – standing in a circle, hugging, holding hands - the Community Therapy approach recognizes the need to discharge energies before they begin to appear in physical symptoms (become somatized). Two popular sayings that are typically shared with the group by the community therapist at the start of the "circle" to encourage sharing are: "When the mouth is silent, the body speaks; when the mouth speaks, the body is silent"

and, "Keeping things inside makes them ferment, and when they ferment they explode, and when they explode it stinks" (Barreto, 2008).

Barreto's vision is that the Community Therapy approach can provide a supportive, life-affirming community since the social groups people are a part of often fail to provide adequate support which every human being needs in order to overcome the challenges of life. Grandesso (2003) observes that there is much to gain from this approach to fostering self-knowledge within the CT "circle":

> For many people, the pain resulting from chronic suffering becomes "transparent" - people live within it so much that they do not feel it any more. Less-than-ideal conditions come to be taken for granted, as if it were natural that life should be lived this way. In the context of Community Therapy people often come to recognize their problems as such when they witness others voicing indignation and resentment when facing similar situations, and seeking to identify solutions. The suffering of the other creates an echo that resonates within the person who shares a similar pain, but lives in an anesthetized state (Grandesso, 2003, para. 15).

Life as Learning: Giving a "Positive Connotation" to Life's Problems

Every Community Therapy "circle" ends by participants coming together in a circle with each participant stating, in positive terms, what they learned/what the are taking away from their participation in the circle. Barreto's intention is not to value "the suffering, but rather acknowledge the effort and the desire to overcome difficulties" (Barreto, 2008, p. 73),

> Giving a positive connotation enables individuals to re-think their suffering in a broader manner, overcoming the immediate effects of pain and sadness, giving a deeper meaning to crisis, and increasing personal resources, and thus reinforcing their self-esteem (Barreto, 2008, p. 82)

Self-Care/Self-Acceptance

Because the Community Therapy approach is based on the assumption that life is for learning, and that we are more than our experiences, it recognizes the importance of fostering both an attitude of empathy for others and for self-care/self-acceptance, without which our ability to meet our needs in increasingly helpful ways is hindered.

In a CT "circle", the ability for self-acceptance is cultivated through providing opportunities for listening to the views of others and fostering the ability to suspend judgment. A CT "circle" also provides opportunities for people to increase their exposure to views and experiences that are very different from one's own, and of learning to accept these. Barreto (2008) emphasizes that seeking consensus regarding the "correctness" of a person's actions is not the objective of the group's discussion within the "circle". In fact, he holds that it is desirable *not to* arrive at a consensus,

> The important thing is to encourage people to reflect, to
> think, to share their doubts and their certainties…
> Pedagogically, it is important to deepen one's ability to
> doubt one's convictions, since every conviction becomes a
> prison (Barreto, 2008, p. 72)

Sense of Self as Source of Knowledge

Participation in a CT "circle" doesn't provide advice. Each person listens to others, and draws from the experience shared in the circle, meaning that, each person has knowledge, which is valuable and useful for others.

Sense of oneself as distinct from one's problems

In gaining insight into the challenges faced by others and how they have overcome these sufferings, the participants in a Community Therapy "circle" often have a

shift in perspective which enables them to arrive at a more detached stance, in which they no longer see the problems they are facing as problems, after all (Grandesso, 2003).

A Notable Difference

A notable difference is the focus on valuing the knowledge of one's culture. The Community Therapy case study highlights the importance of valuing the local culture whenever possible, as a strategy to address systemic devaluation, which the Hatcher-Assagioli "lens" lacks. This is an important point that should be considered for any future exploration or application of the lens of the Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis in community-based settings. The key is to uphold cultural elements that are sufficiently universal in terms of their valuation of others, and this includes seeking culturally appropriate ways to challenge limiting beliefs.

CHAPTER 7

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND FUTURE RESEARCH

If we are to have any deep peace it depends upon the harmonization of wills. Self-centeredness is deeply destructive to the cooperation without which a person cannot live a full life in community. Why should we consider good will an expendable virtue, a matter only for the religious? I can go even a step further. This same principle applies to an individual's relation to nature and the universe. No person can take an arrogant stand and consider himself unrelated to the universe. Like it or not, man is a part of the universal will and he must somehow tune in and willingly participate in the rhythms of universal life. The harmonization and unification of the individual and the universal will—the Chinese identification with the Tao, the Stoic acceptance of destiny, or the Christian will of God—is one of the highest human goals, even if it is seldom realized (Assagioli, in Keen, 1974, p. 7)

<u>The Heart of the Hatcher-Assagioli Synthesis</u>

I was drawn to this quotation while re-reading the other chapters in preparation for writing chapter 7. It struck me that these words of Assagioli portray the heart of what the Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis has to say about how adult education can further its capacity to facilitate learning which supports movement and growth towards the full realization of human nature.

Today, more than ever before in the past, adult learning has to support the development of individual autonomy required to make moral choices. We live in challenging times, which call for people to come together in increasingly wider groups, and to make changes in the way we are living as a global community to ensure the future of humankind. There are many choices to be made in this process. Hatcher and Assagioli

have both reminded us that at every moment, at every instant of our lives, each one of us is choosing a path of action, and in the process is shutting out other paths. The question of how we can support both healthy individual agency and healthy community-orientation is one we cannot avoid.

For social psychologist Ervin Staub (1994) the "full evolution of the self, the full use of the human potential" requires, "relationships and the development of deep connections and community – as well as the capacity for separateness" (p. 269). Staub sees the ideal towards which we should strive as that of "individuals with strong, independent identities who are also supported by their connections to others and rootedness in a community" (1994, p. 270). In order to achieve this, loyalty to one's group must be what Staub calls "critical loyalty",

> It is important that people acquire a critical consciousness, the ability to see their group's imperfections as well as strengths. Then their loyalty to the group may be expressed in attempts to improve it, rather than insistence on its virtues. Such critical loyalty may seem incompatible with the aim of strengthening the group as a community, but it is not. In well-functioning families the members can express their own needs and beliefs without rebellion, and conflicts can be resolved. The same can happen in larger groups. Close ties can provide the security to oppose potentially destructive ideas and practices. The group may come to regard such opposition not as disloyalty but as service to itself (Staub, 1994, p. 266)

How community-based adult education can support an inner attitude of critical loyalty, through supporting growth in both the intrapersonal and the interpersonal dimensions is a fundamental question the Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis sheds light on. In answering this question it places the worldview of modern Western naturalism - in both

191

its romantic and scientific manifestations - at the epicenter of the growing problems facing humanity at the start of the 21st century.

The assertion of Assagioli at the start of this chapter - that human fulfillment is an inherently moral process, which calls every individual to willingly participate in the rhythms of universal life, through harmonizing one's personal will, with a Universal will (and with other human beings as a result) – is foreign to modern humanistic views of fulfillment. As Newtonian physics and Darwinian biology flattened Reality and reduced everything to matter, Freud and his followers took this naturalistic worldview to heart. This first wave was followed by the behaviorists, and finally by the third wave - the modern humanistic orientation in American psychology - which later branched into the humanistic orientation in education.

Sorely missing from the modern approach to human fulfillment within the humanistic philosophical orientation, is the idea that individual fulfillment comes through service to the wider good, which enables one to enter into alignment with a universal, Transcendent Source or Whole. It is this connection, this understanding of human beings as "belonging" to each other, through their common belonging to something greater than themselves, towards which they are called to move, which this study has sought to bring into community-based adult education using the "lens" of the Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis.

The Community Therapy Case Study and Beyond

Based on its many instances of relevance to the expanding Community Therapy case study, it seems reasonable to say that the lens of a Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis, as it

appears through the preliminary principles and practices identified in this study, deserves to be applied and explored further.

Personally, I found it gratifying to see that the socio-cultural reality of 21st century Brazil - with its diverse cultural heritage and its many segments of marginalized populations - was held within the theoretical construct provided by the lens of the Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis. In this study the combined ideas of a Canadian Platonist philosopher and an Italian transpersonal psychiatrist have been shown to have relevance to people whose lives are burdened by crushing material poverty, in 21st century Brazil.

This relevance is no doubt due to several elements, which the CT case study shares in common with a Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis. The first is the "systemic" nature of the CT approach, which assumes the existence of a cosmic order, which holds all things, and which all things are an integral part of. This overarching order appears in the image of the "web" of life that Adalberto Barreto took from his work with the Tremembé Indians, in the early days of the development of the Community Therapy approach. Today a "web" is the symbol that is used as the identifying "emblem" of the Community Therapy movement.

This assumption of an inherent order, which connects all human beings to the social fabric that sustains them, also holds that all human beings are responsible for caring for each other. Developing our ability to be fully human thus becomes a journey which is similarly shared by people everywhere, given that it fundamentally calls for movement away from self-centeredness, and towards the ability to foster the development of another's potential. In the words of Martin Luther King Jr., "Every man must decide

whether he will walk in the light of creative altruism or in the darkness of destructive selfishness".

There are two suggestions that I would make for the Community Therapy approach in Brazil, based on the "lens" of the Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis:

1) The CT movement occupies a unique position that enables it, should it choose, to spearhead a wide scale movement within Brazil, addressing the social ill of racism. This could be a systematic program involving training of facilitators, in an approach that could be somewhat similar to the Institutes of the Healing of Racism that was described in the key practices. An adaptation of this program could begin quite easily within the already existing training programs for community therapists.

The rationale behind this suggestion is that not every topic of importance will naturally come into a community therapy "circle"- either because no one will bring it up, or it will not get "voted" on. I believe racism is one of these topics and my personal experience within the context of a community therapy circle showed this, also. Racism is generally known to be a widespread, crippling social ill in Brazil and its denial is equally common (Ciconello, 2008). Taking the lead on such a program is clearly in line with Barreto's overall vision of fostering solidarity among all people.

2) The methodology of the Community Therapy approach actively seeks to convey the view that people are separate from their problems, and that problems are circumstances of one's life. Drawing on Barreto's contextualization of resiliency theory, the CT approach encourages people to see oneself as an agent who has choices, by

194

affirming that "a lack generates competency" - meaning that, through facing life's challenges/difficulties/problems we develop the knowledge of how to overcome the same, and can become better because of it. In chapter 6 we saw that an expression Barreto is fond of using in this context is that: "An oyster which has never been hurt cannot produce a pearl" (Barreto, 2008, p. 104).

Along with using the image of a pearl, it seems that the idea of "jewels" (virtues) which are lapidated in the course of one's lived experience, could make a positive contribution within the community therapy methodology. This would have the advantage of reinforcing the message that life provides us with many opportunities to develop our inner qualities. The virtues are universal, whereas a person's individual experiences (a "pearl") are hers alone. The work of "lapidating" qualities of one's character calls on agency towards a specific purpose and puts the individual more in control, which is lacking in the pearl metaphor. It also encourages a person to perceive the same "jewel" within another, in potential (all that is required for it to become apparent is "lapidation").

Using the approaches developed by The Virtues Project would be a simple way to do this. For example, acknowledgments at the closing could be virtues based, where people name the qualities they recognize in each other; or there could be a CT "virtues song" which could be widely sung, having been taught in trainings. Awareness of the virtues in light of our will to choose could also be fostered in the process of setting boundaries within the group - e.g., "those who find it easy to be assertive, please take care so that you don't drown out those whose strength may be in patience, with listening" and "those who find it easy to be patient, our group will benefit from your courage in sharing your experiences", etc.

In these and many other simple ways which are readily applicable to the Community Therapy methodology, the general purpose of the approach - to foster resiliency - understood as the capacity to "transform suffering into learning, to transform challenges into opportunities for growth and the development of autonomy" (Grandesso, 2003, para. 19) could be enhanced.

In Closing: Personal Statement

For myself personally, re-encountering the Community Therapy approach after the seemingly never-ending work of delving into the Hatcher-Assagioli synthesis brought me back the field of community-based adult education, which is the place I started this journey from. I look forward to traveling on the road with this old friend again, back in the world of human beings, after having isolated myself in the world of ideas during this study.

In re-integrating myself with the world of practice I will be looking for ways to support systemic shift, through supporting caring and connection within human relationships, in community-based settings. I am specifically interested in furthering my understanding of how we can foster self-knowledge in the psycho-spiritual-biological dimensions which fosters an increase in the justness of the social structure, and which cultivates skills and attitudes which support people in establishing relationships with others that are characterized by mutuality, reciprocity, and symmetry.

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