

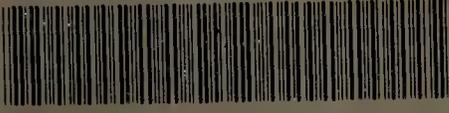


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Miracles with counselors : a clinical training application of A course in miracles, and the principles of attitudinal healing.

Item Type	Dissertation (Open Access)
Authors	Osgood, David Aldrich
DOI	10.7275/14754896
Download date	2025-10-03 06:55:01
Link to Item	https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14394/15167

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**MIRACLES WITH COUNSELORS:
A CLINICAL TRAINING APPLICATION OF
A COURSE IN MIRACLES
AND
THE PRINCIPLES OF ATTITUDINAL HEALING**

A Dissertation Presented

by

DAVID ALDRICH OSGOOD

**Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of**

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

FEBRUARY 1991

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

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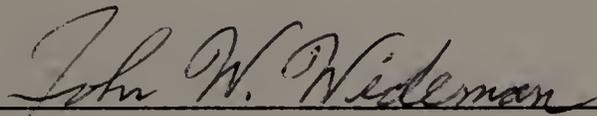
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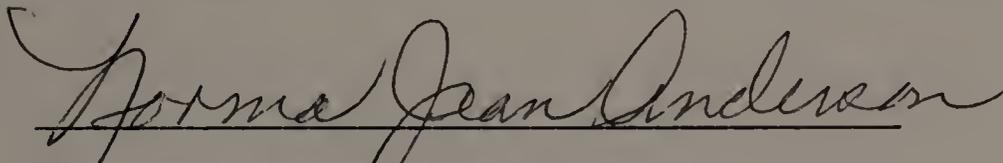
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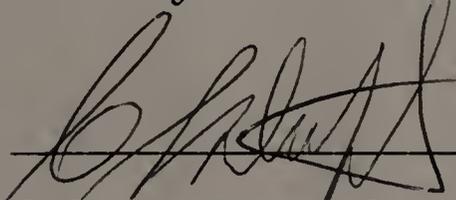
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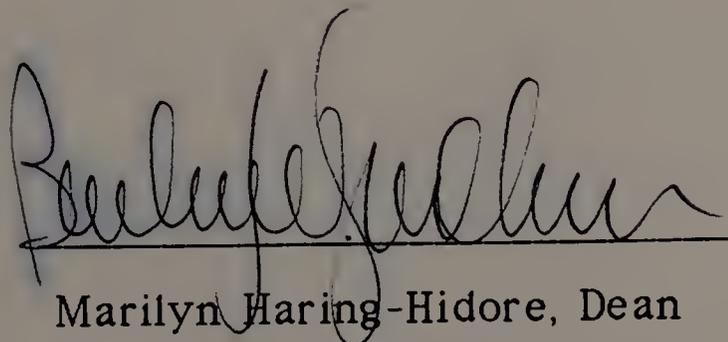
John W. Wideman, Chairperson of Committee



Norma Jean Anderson, Member



C. Sam Dietzel, Member



Marilyn Haring-Hidore, Dean
School of Education

For

Carla Newman Osgood

and

Adam Edward Osgood

The two great teachers of love in my life

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of this dissertation could only have been accomplished through the willingness of many wonderful people to join with me on this healing journey.

Throughout my doctoral program, Al Alschuler was in my life with a level of challenge, support, and love that carried me through many dark hours. His home on Juggler Meadow Road became a safe haven for me to explore both the depths of my fears as well as the heights of my joys. His on-going friendship is a gift for which I am forever grateful.

To my mentor, colleague, friend and brother, Sam Dietzel. Sam, we've been joined together in so many ways for almost 20 years. Throughout it all, your unconditional love for me has never wavered. I feel so blessed to have you in my life.

To the members of the Attitudinal Healing study group. I am forever honored at your willingness to trust your stories with me. Your openness, honesty, and search for self and community through service made this thesis possible.

To Susan Trout, her staff and volunteers at the Washington Institute for Attitudinal Studies. Your center, and the commitment you demonstrate to extending love to those in pain, is a message to the world that healing into love is inevitable. Thank you all so much for welcoming me into the heart of your work.

To my Mom, Muriel Lane. You and Dad joined in love and gave me life. Your energy, sense of adventure, wisdom, and acceptance continues to guide me toward the light.

To my sister Susan Osgood, and brother Marc Kessler. Your work and lives have been an inspiration to me in countless ways. May our families continue always to play in the sun.

To Jack Wideman and Norma Jean Anderson. Because of distance and time we were often physically separate, but I never doubted your emotional and spiritual support. May this time of transition in your lives move with peacefulness and grace.

To all of my many clients and friends who so lovingly encouraged me to keep moving, opening, and softening to this process. I am forever grateful for your undying loyalty. Thank you so much for allowing me to be a part of your life.

And finally, to Toni Messuri. Your willingness to join my journey last May was what made this final product possible. Much more than your exceptional editorial skills, it was your unwavering belief that I could express my heart through writing that held me safely all these months.

ABSTRACT

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FEBRUARY 1991
DAVID ALDRICH OSGOOD, B.A., UNIVERSITY OF
VERMONT
M.P.H. YALE UNIVERSITY
ED. D., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS**

Directed by John W. Wideman

Attitudinal Healing, a psycho-spiritual application of the text, A Course in Miracles, is being used throughout the world to assist people who have life threatening or chronic illnesses, as well as people who are in need of emotional or spiritual support. Attitudinal Healing may be viewed as a meta-theory that is inclusive of other psychological and spiritual thought systems. It empowers individuals to explore universal psychological and spiritual themes in non-dogmatic ways.

The intent of this research was to gain an understanding of how a six month study of Attitudinal Healing would affect the personal and professional lives of a group of mental health workers.

A phenomenological perspective was used. In-depth unstructured interviews were conducted over the course of the study. Findings were related to each of the Twelve Principles of Attitudinal Healing.

Shifts in consciousness, belief systems, and individual behaviors occurred as a result of the six month study group. These personal shifts, in turn, affected the professional lives of the mental health workers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
ABSTRACT	vii
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	3
Background to the Problem	4
Purpose of the Study	7
Significance of the Study	8
2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	11
Historical Context of Attitudinal Healing	11
Sigmund Freud	12
Neo-Freudians	16
Alfred Adler	16
Harry Stack Sullivan	17
Carl Jung	20
Erik Erikson	21
Ego Psychologists	22
Organismic Theory and the Humanists	24
Abraham Maslow	24
Carl Rogers	26
Phenomenology and Existential Psychology	28
Cognitive Psychology	31

	Neo-Cognitive Psychology and Attitudinal Healing	33
	Transpersonal Psychology	39
	Transpersonal Psychology and A Course in Miracles	43
	A Course in Miracles and other paths	49
	A Course in Miracles and Attitudinal Healing	54
3.	METHODOLOGY	57
	Design of the Study	57
	Structure of the Six Month Training Course	58
	The Buddy System	66
	Participants	67
	Interview Process	67
	Observing	70
	Recording	71
	Outcomes and Analysis	71
	Limitations of the Study	72
4.	OUTCOME	74
	Thomas	74
	Peter	75

Jack	77
Joyce	78
Jo	79
Sarah	82
Sally	84
Carla	86
Jim	91
5. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS	94
Principle #1-The Essence of Our Being is Love . . .	94
Principle #2- Health is Inner Peace. Healing is Letting Go of Fear	94
Principle #3- Giving and Receiving are the Same .	95
Principle #4- We Can Let Go of the Past and of the Future	96
Principle #5- Now is the Only Time There is and Each Instant is for Giving	97
Principle #6- We Can Learn to Love Ourselves and Others by Forgiving Rather than Judging	98
Principle #7- We Can Become Love Finders Rather than Fault Finders	100
Principle #8- We Can Choose and Direct Ourselves to be Peaceful Inside Regardless of what is Happening Outside	100
Principle #9- We are Students and Teachers To Each Other	101
Principle #10- We Can Focus on the Whole of Life Rather than the Fragments . . .	102
Principle #11- Since Love is Eternal, Death Need Not Be Viewed as Fearful	103
Principle #12- We Can Always Perceive Ourselves and Others as Either Extending Love or Giving a Call for Help	104
6. FINAL THOUGHTS AND IMPLICATIONS	105

Personal Reflection 109

APPENDICES 114

A. PRINCIPLES OF ATTITUDINAL HEALING 115

B. FACILITATOR GUIDELINES 116

C. COURSE COMMITMENT 117

D. GROUP AGREEMENTS 119

E. WRITTEN CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH
PARTICIPATION 121

BIBLIOGRAPHY 123

**the last of the human freedoms
... to choose one's attitude in
any given set of circumstances,
to choose one's way.**

Viktor E. Frankl

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“Teach only love for that is what you are.”

We are born lovable. We are born into and through a Universal Mind that is a mirror of our own true, Great Natures. We cannot be separated from this Source. At the same time, we are born to human parents who reflect and project onto us all of the fears and mistaken beliefs that were passed on to them by their parents. We did not and could not know that these fears were not statements of our true identities, but rather the projected illusions of generations of human beings who believed that they were, in some essential way, separated and doomed to a life of guilt and fear with only occasional glimpses of love. Often, when our loving natures were acknowledged, this was seen as a reflection of what we did rather than who we were.

As children, we had no personal boundaries and had to believe that our parents were gods. We had to believe because of survival. There was no other option. We were totally dependent on them for everything. If we were lucky, we had parents who extended love to us along with their projected fears, but even with the most loving parents, we all came away from our childhoods with lingering beliefs that there was something inherently wrong.

As we grew into adulthood, we developed our egos or our senses of self. The ego was built as a way of protecting ourselves from this essential belief that we were unlovable and unworthy. We

learned to separate in order to survive. We feared that if we joined with another, s/he would uncover the hidden truth of our inadequacy and react with horror and abandonment. Our protection lay in our ability to maintain the illusion of control by leaving our loved one before s/he left us.

The process of healing and growth is a process of releasing the illusions that block our awareness of our own Great Natures. It is not a process of struggling to become lovable; rather it is an awakening into the truth through letting go and forgiving our erroneous beliefs and perceptions. Only these beliefs, opinions, and prejudices, formed through historic fear and re-created through our present thinking, keep us separate from one another and the loving Source in which we are all held. Healing is about shifting our attention from the constant agitation of the mind to the inherent peacefulness of the heart, from the voice of fear and separation that is the ego, to the Inner Voice of loving kindness that continually reminds us of our connection with all things and our moment to moment need to be merciful and forgiving of ourselves.

These opening reflections best describe my current understanding of human personality development and the process of phenomenological and personal change. All of these concepts and principles are rooted in the psychological literature dating back at least to Freud, and can be found in the writings of early philosophers, spiritual leaders, and the continual stream of mortals who have attempted to understand, and give meaning to, the human experience.

These remarks are linked to a current model for understanding personal growth entitled A Course in Miracles (ACIM)

and its application in the Principles of Attitudinal Healing. This transpersonal/psychological/spiritual model will be discussed in Chapter 2. Terms and concepts will be defined as well.

Attitudinal Healing is one way of moving along the universal pathway; a path to releasing the ego delusions of the thinking mind and returning to the unchanging truth of the heart. This dissertation explores the growth process of a small group of helping professionals as they use the principles of Attitudinal Healing to accept and understand their own Great Natures while joining their hearts with others.

Statement of the Problem

Many individuals and groups are asking important questions about the meaning of human existence. Historical and contemporary theories of personal development, and the processes that contribute to personal change, seem woefully lacking. Some are exclusively biological; some are too mechanistic; some are conceptually limited; nearly all fail to speak to the limitless dimensions of human consciousness.

Many psychologists and other mental health professionals have been reluctant to speak to the phenomenon of human spirituality. This is in spite of the fact that many individuals (including my own psychotherapy clients) are asking sincere questions about this aspect of their own conscious thoughts. It is timely that we, as mentors, teachers, therapists, and fellow seekers, examine a conceptual model that has the capacity to disclose all areas of human consciousness as we now understand them. The application of ACIM and the Principles

of Attitudinal Healing was examined in order to determine how this model assists helping professionals acquire vocabularies and conceptual frameworks that promote further spiritual/psychological exploration and development. There are other models that explore these phenomena, and a number of them will be examined in Chapter 2.

Jampowski (1983) indicates that little has been studied about the psychological and spiritual changes of a student of A Course in Miracles. Nothing has been written about how being a student of "Attitudinal Healing," that is the clinical application of ACIM principles, impacts on personal and professional belief systems. Learning theory suggests that behavior change is due to the discovery of personal meaning within new information (Combs, 1982, Hills & Knowles, 1987). We did not know what personal meanings individuals attribute to the 12 Principles of Attitudinal Healing, or how those meanings might change over time.

Background to the Problem

Many training models do not include theoretical perspectives that prepare helping professionals to explore clients' spiritual questions. The most recent data suggest that training and dialogue around spiritual and religious issues are almost nonexistent in most traditional clinical psychological training programs (Shafanske & Gorsuch, 1984). This is true despite the fact that the majority of consumers of psychological services say that religious or spiritual beliefs play important roles in their lives. Although there seems to be an effort to bring an awareness of these issues into psychological

training (Bergin,1980), there remains a concern that without specific education in the transpersonal aspects of human development, mental health clinicians will be unable to empathically join their clients to aspects of their lives that have a deep and abiding significance to them.

In his spectrum model of consciousness, Wilber (1984) suggests that traditional developmental theory, psychodynamic approaches, and transpersonal orientations must be integrated into a new developmental perspective. He believes that such a comprehensive model of consciousness, one that includes both ego and transpersonal perspectives, is vital both to understanding the crisis of normal personal growth as well as to improving the diagnosis and treatment of more profound mental illnesses. In his model of transpersonal development, Washburn (1988) asserts that the ego can be transcended, but it also must remain rooted in the "Dynamic Ground" or "Universal Consciousness." Our egos must become servants to a higher wisdom rather than remain separate entities struggling for individual expression. Both Wilber and Washburn agree that human potential far exceeds the capability of the separated ego, and that psychology needs to continue to encompass transpersonal reality.

In traditional psychiatric and psychological training, any non-ordinary state of consciousness is considered pathological and given a diagnostic label. Groff and Groff (1986), Assagioli (1986) Maslow (1964), and James (1961) look at human experiences that are labeled "mental illnesses," and suggest that clear distinctions can be made between mystical and psychotic experiences. Groff(1986) uses the term "Spiritual Emergency" to describe a frightening and

transcendent experience. He writes that therapists must learn to join with, rather than separate from, clients who are experiencing “non-ordinary” states of consciousness. Therapists must learn therapeutic methodologies that facilitate healing rather than suppress the growth process through the perjorative uses of labels and psychotropic drugs.

As the fields of psychology and counseling reach deeper in human development and expand the vision of what is possible, more training in transpersonal perspectives of human growth is vital.

Since its publication in 1975, a metaphysical text entitled A Course in Miracles has been described as an example of a comprehensive model of both psychological and spiritual development by transpersonal psychologists. This is a model that fits both Wilbur(1984) and Washburn’s (1988) call for a perspective that covers both ego and transpersonal aspects of the human experience. A Course in Miracles allows one to look at a cross-section of human development without the limits of previous, more restrictive models.

Attitudinal Healing is a direct, clinical application of the psychological and spiritual perspectives written about in A Course in Miracles. In over 70 centers around the world, mental health professionals as well as lay people are now using the Principles of Attitudinal Healing (see appendix A) to work with individuals who are experiencing life-threatening or chronic illness, as well as others who are in need of help.

This dissertation will review the history, principles, and therapeutic/training applications of A Course in Miracles, and then describe and analyze the application of the Principles of Attitudinal Healing to a group of mental health and human service clinicians who met over a six month period.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this dissertation is to review the history, principles, and therapeutic applications of A Course in Miracles, and then report the personal beliefs/attitudes that have emerged for a group of individuals who have worked with the 12 Principles of Attitudinal Healing through participation in a 12 month study group. The dissertation will also explore how these principles affected the personal and professional lives of the group members. The research was guided by the following questions:

- 1) What drew the participants to study Attitudinal Healing?
- 2) Which of the 12 Attitudes have particular relevance to the participants' personal and professional lives?
- 3) How do these attitudes change over the course of the study?
- 4) What feelings, thoughts, assumptions, and world views are generated through a study of Attitudinal Healing, and how do these change throughout the training course?
- 5) How does this study of Attitudinal Healing affect behavioral change in the personal and professional lives of the students?

Each question addresses one or more of the components that Combs (1982) and Hills & Knowls (1987) claim are necessary for the discovery of personal meaning (see Chapter 3).

Significance of the Study

Since its onset in 1977, A Course in Miracles has influenced the lives of thousands of people throughout the world. Many hundreds of weekly study groups have emerged where people come together to understand the teachings and share personal meanings that are generated through application of the Course principles. This particular study is significant because, although some popular books have been written on the Course (see Bibliography), little research has been conducted regarding how the principles of the Course influence the attitudes and behaviors of its students.

Centers for Attitudinal Healing directly apply the principles of ACIM to the lives of individuals struggling with physical, emotional, and/or spiritual issues. This study will focus on one particular training program developed by The Washington Center for Attitudinal Healing (renamed The Institute for Attitudinal Studies in 1990). What happens to the belief systems of program participants? How have their beliefs and behaviors changed as a result of participation in the training? These questions were to be addressed.

As mental health professionals, we need to expand our research in the area of how cognitions affect feelings and behavior.

Cognitive therapies is one of the most researched areas in contemporary psychology (Beck, 1979 ; Burns,1982 ; Ellis,1975; Kline, 1974). According to this research, by reframing the thinking process, feelings and behaviors can change. Few psychologists have examined how personal meaning systems are affected by cognitive reframing. Little has been written relating cognition to transpersonal themes.

Although research in the area of transpersonal psychology is growing, there is only a limited number of scholars who are bridging the gap between the psychological and spiritual worlds. A number of these researchers have suggested that ACIM and Attitudinal Healing are two of the most important modern-day teachings in which integration of these perspectives is accomplished (Wilber,1984.; Vaughn, 1983; Walsh 1989) .

This study is also significant in that graduate counselors and counselors-in-training need to gain increased exposure to transpersonal issues. As mentioned earlier, greater numbers of clients are wishing to explore spiritual themes in their therapies, and therapists need to become comfortable with their own spiritual journeys before they can go deeply along these paths with clients. Training in Attitudinal Healing offers counselors very specific tools to use both in their own healing and in the healing work of others. This study will show how this training can affect both beliefs and behaviors.

Personal note: I believe that we need to create ways in which we become more open and accepting of one another. We must move from world views and teaching methodologies that create fear, distrust, and distance in our lives.

In order to arrive at a more peaceful outer world, we must first come to a place of peace within our own hearts . The study of ACIM and Attitudinal Healing is one way in which to return to inner peace and extend that peace outward.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Historical Context of Attitudinal Healing

Prior to detailing the concepts of A Course in Miracles and the applied Principles of Attitudinal Healing, The historical antecedents to this model for understanding human development will be reviewed.

How do our private beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions shape our respective world views? What drives and builds these beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions? Many psychological concepts emerge in response to these questions. Personality theorists can be divided into two groups: those that assume a very scientific, reductionistic view of the human condition, and those that ascribe a more open, holistic stance where interpretation and intuition are key to understanding the limitless aspects of the human psyche.

Most personality theories stem from clinical practices and zero in on the whole person, nevertheless each theorist has put limits on what it means to be human. Over time, the theories seem to have moved from a limited to a more open perspective.

In all theories, motivation has been defined as an underlying drive in the human psyche. Each theory, too, has been integrative, i.e., the whole person is more than the sum of many parts. The reader will note that each theorist has built on previous theoretical assumptions; some through challenging and criticizing earlier formulations, and others, by refining and expanding prior help.

Sigmund Freud

Sigmund Freud developed the first comprehensive personality theory with behavior viewed as a complicated product of the dynamic interaction between three systems: the id, the ego, and the superego (Hall & Lindzey,1987.).

Freud's id was defined as the power that drives the self-system. Completely subjective and irrational, the id is unaware of any external reality. The id is run by a series of instinctual drives that focus on obtaining pleasure and avoiding pain. Freud, who was a physician, believed that the id's power came from the body's biological metabolism.

Since the id only focuses on irrational processes, the ego translates these processes into the reality of the physical and social worlds. The ego is the "executive," with the final control over all cognitive functions. The ego integrates the functions of the id, the superego, and the external world, and acts as both creator and protector of a self-survival system. The protective, i.e., suspicious nature of the ego, perpetuates a feeling of separation by constantly trying to mediate the instinctual demands of the id with the moralistic and perfectionist strivings of the superego.

The superego component represents the parental and societal values that are internalized by the child's psyche. The superego is constantly searching for perfection while avoiding pleasure at all costs. This part of us can never quite get anything right, always needing the approval and validation of others to confirm our legitimacy. The conscience, with guilt used as a punishment, is the major controlling factor of the superego.

Freud saw the energy of the human psyche as a primarily unconscious series of drives that had to be constantly kept in check by a mediating and limiting ego. This ego was forever being pulled back and forth by the unending drive toward pleasure and sensual satisfaction (the id), and the moralistic and perfectionistic pull of the superego. Freud believed that human motivation (and thus behavior) were totally based on instincts that were derivations of basic sexual drives.

Freud hypothesized that human beings grew psychologically as a direct result of having to find new ways of reducing the natural tension that was created by the need to reduce instinctual drives. Learning methods to limit tension was seen as the core method of personality development. He was the first theorist to assert that personality was formed in infancy and childhood, and that barriers to healthy adult relationships were created by unresolved childhood issues.

One way in which the ego reduces tension and anxiety is through the defense mechanism called projection. With projection, the source of fear is seen as originating in the external world rather than within the internal, unconscious battle between the id and superego. In Attitudinal Healing, the concept of projection is defined as a central way in which the ego protects itself from having to deal with internalized fear. When we experience any of the fear-driven emotions, such as guilt, our instinctive response is to project them out onto others (i.e., blaming others) rather than face them as creations of our own basic feelings of inadequacy.

Attitudinal Healing goes one step further, however, and claims that when we are in connection with our true loving nature, we have a natural tendency to extend that love to others and often experience love as being reflected back to us.

Freud was the first to suggest that one way that we deal with fear in our lives is to project its source outward onto another person or situation. Rather than look within and deal with our own internalized anxiety, we protect ourselves from imagined punishment by defending against a perceived external attacker. Attitudinal Healing says that it is the illusional belief that we have somehow separated ourselves from our Source that keeps us in fear of punishment, maintaining a defensive world view. Attitudinal Healing principles teach us to accept the reality that we have always been, are now, and always will be joined with others. As we look outward, we are simply seeing reflections of the internal perspective that we are holding at that moment. If we are seeing through the eyes of fear, we see a terror-filled world that is on the attack. We must do everything within our power to defend ourselves. If we are viewing the world through loving and peaceful eyes, we see the same reflected back to us in the actions of those around us.

According to Principle #12 of Attitudinal Healing: "We can always perceive others as either extending love or giving a call for help" (see Appendix A). In that we are projecting outward our internal experience at each moment, we can choose to see a fear-filled person as someone in need of love and not allow our fears to be caught up in the mistaken perceptions of others.

Attitudinal Healing sees that our fear is caused by a mistaken belief; that we have separated ourselves from our Source and that

we will be punished for our transgressions. This fear really speaks to the perceived omnipotence of our ego, feeling that somehow we have the power to separate from something of which we are an integral part. This illusion, and the consequences of our anxiety, can be healed, i.e. forgiven, by a simple shift of mind back into the present moment.

All fear is created by the mind thinking of the past or future, and by giving mistaken interpretations to experienced or illusional events. For instance, as children, we project onto our parents the belief that they can do no wrong. We set them up with god-like qualities because we cannot distinguish appropriate boundaries for ourselves. In reality, our parents are projecting onto us all of the mistaken beliefs of their parents and we accept their projections with no questions. Our whole sense of ourselves is formed by these erroneous projections, and we act in the world as if they are completely true.

According to Principle #3 of Attitudinal Healing, "Giving and receiving are the same." This is a variation on the familiar theme "We get back what we give" or "What goes around comes around." The world will validate any projection that we place upon it, and we will reject any perspective that does not fit our internal world view. I see this "universal truth" played out every time I speak to a client's strengths and capabilities when their internalized view of themselves is one that is weak and inadequate. A client will reject my positive perspective with great power, and often defend their position with anger and denial. After years of accepting at face value the projected fears of others, it is not easy to let them go and try on a more life-affirming perspective. With loving understanding and

persistence, however, a mistaken world view can change, and the natural tendency of humans to move toward the light and away from the dark can be reestablished. This brief discussion of projection points out the most important concept from Freud that is addressed and re-framed by the model of Attitudinal Healing.

Neo Freudians

Alfred Adler. As sociology and anthropology began to separate as individual and unique disciplines in the latter part of the 19th Century, personality was not examined simply in response to one's biological drive to survive, evolve, and reproduce. How personality is shaped by social interaction was studied. The interpersonal conditions that shape personality were described by a number of theorists including Karen Horney, Erich Fromm, and Harry Stack Sullivan.

Unlike Freud, who saw humans as motivated by deep, instinctive sexual urges, and Jung, who saw psychological growth and development as a result of historic, inborn archetypal thought forms, Alfred Adler spoke to the social nature of human beings, and their need to relate, cooperate, and place the interests of others above purely self interest (Ansbacher, H.&R., 1964). Adler also defined individual awareness as being the core of personality. Human beings were fully capable of making conscious choices. They could be aware and responsible for the consequences of their choices. This was antithetical to Freud's theory that humans operated much more like unconscious machines, driven by instincts, desires, and fears.

Adler also spoke for the first time to the power that belief plays both in personality development and how our future is formed. He used the philosophical perspective of "idealistic positivism" to suggest that present attitudes and beliefs about ourselves and visions for the future play a much more powerful role in shaping our lives than either our conscious or unconscious histories. Thus, it was not so much the accumulated content of our lives that shaped our destiny, but rather how we chose to perceive present and past events that determined behavior and future outcomes.

Attitudinal Healing speaks very strongly to this perspective: All healing or movement forward in mental health is accomplished by a shift in perspective (towards love and away from fear), a shift that can only be accomplished in this moment. Attitudinal Healing does not deny the power that our history has in our lives, yet it suggests that when historic pain can be brought to conscious awareness, this pain can be recognized for what it is, namely, past trauma that is being recreated by the thinking mind in this moment. At the moment of recognition, the choice "to see differently" can be made (Trout, 1990, p.35), and the mind is brought into the heart. This is not something that happens once and all is forgiven. Rather, this as an ongoing shift of perception, one that must be constantly remembered and practiced. This is a shift that requires a lifetime commitment. Because the ego-mind is inherently judgmental, protecting, and limiting, and because during most of our lives we are caught up in the content of our thoughts, we must practice moment to moment forgiveness where we can once again soften our critical minds and relate to the expansiveness of our hearts.

Harry Stack Sullivan Sullivan believed that an individual could not be truly understood outside of a relationship with another (Hall & Lindzey, 1978). What is most unique about being human is that we are a product of social interaction. Sullivan felt that personality per se could not be studied. What could be examined were patterns of interrelationships with different situations. Thus, while nothing could be said about the individual, much could be said about the person's situation. Sullivan believed that we build pictures in our minds as children that grow out of our needs to feel satisfied and to avoid anxiety. We "personify" the people who are closest to us, assign them very structured, stereotypical roles, (e.g., the "good father" and the "bad father") and then unconsciously project these roles onto all people who might remind us of our models. For example, if we had a critical and demanding father, we might transfer these qualities onto all authority figures, thus greatly limiting our potential for authentic experiences with them. Like other social psychological theorists, Sullivan looked much more to the external situation as the cause of emotional response. Mistrust, anxiety, and anger are the natural responses to a world that is unpredictable and unjust. They are feelings generated in order to help us survive in an unsafe world. Negative feelings are not a "natural" part of human beings; rather, they are learned responses to an environment that is often cruel and untrustworthy.

Sullivan spoke clearly to the human being in relationship with another, and felt that an individual could not really be viewed outside of a relationship. "No matter what kind of social organization there is, everyone who is born into it will, in certain ways, be adapted or adjusted to living in it" (Sullivan, 1953.). Attitudinal

Healing claims that all healing comes through relationship; our relationship with others and ultimately our relationship with a Universal Source. We look beyond ourselves toward the heart of another. We can see more clearly our own Great Nature within a perspective that is often hard to reach with introspection alone. When we do look within, we are often caught up in the irrational racing of our thinking mind, a mind that keeps us separated from another by reinforcing the belief that it is the content of our mind that is real. The inner relationship that we need to establish is with the all-knowing guidance that Attitudinal Healing calls our "Inner Teacher" or "Holy Spirit." This is the voice within us all that establishes our connection with our all-loving Source. This relationship can only be felt once our critical and separating ego-minds can be momentarily stilled. Like all experiences of peacefulness in our lives, true relationship with the essence of another and with the loving qualities of our own hearts can only come out of this moment.

According to Principle #5, "Now is the only time there is and each instant is forgiving," as we bring our attention back to this moment, it is possible for us to see how our lives can be viewed as gifts to ourselves and one another. Each instant gives us another opportunity to return to the peacefulness of the heart and away from the fear-filled ego-mind. "Each instant is for giving" and "each instant is forgiving." Meaningful relationship with another and ourselves can only be established through the moment to moment process of forgiveness. Forgiveness literally means "letting go." Forgiving means a releasing of the judgmental mind, and a realization that the critical and fear-filled perspective that I believe about another is simply a

reflection back to me of the state of my own heart. Thus, in the final analysis, even though I am looking outward and assessing my relationship with another, in reality I am always talking about myself and my relationship with God.

Carl Jung Jung broke with the traditional Freudian perspective because he believed that personality was much more a product of ancestral history than the constant re-running of sexual themes (Hall & Lindsey, 1978.). In his theory of personality development, Jung took into account destiny and purpose as well as creative process and the need to investigate the meaning of life. In his search for the origins of personality, he studied ancient cultures, universal myths, dreams, and religion. He was the first of the classical personality theorists to explore the spiritual roots of the human psyche.

In Jung's thinking, the ego is both the center of consciousness and the center of personal identity. From the ego comes a sense of permanence and continuity to life, and it is guided by thoughts, feelings, and memories. The ego is closely connected to the personal unconscious which is the repository of past experiences that were repressed or forgotten. Communication between the ego and the personal unconscious is ongoing, although the dialogue is not in awareness much of the time.

One of the most controversial aspects of Jung's theory is that of the transpersonal or collective unconscious. It is seen as "the psychic residue of human evolutionary development" (Hall & Lindzey, 1978, p. 119).

Our ability to access intuitive, non-rational thought as well as our ability to “know” the nature of a Universal Consciousness is all grounded in our connection with the collective unconscious.

The structures that make up the universal unconscious are called “archetypes”. One archetype is the “persona.” This is the mask that we show to the world that often hides our true nature. In Attitudinal Healing, the concept of the ego is closely related to the persona and it is seen as a false self keeping us separate from one another because of our guilt and fear over rejection and abandonment. In some ways, Jung’s persona resembles Freud’s superego with its drive for unattainable perfection and its inability to feel any sense of congruence or peacefulness.

Jung’s concept of the Self is really his description of the soul. He defines the Self as a point midway between the conscious and unconscious mind that connects us with all things. His description of the self was developed through his study of Eastern philosophy and religion. He saw our search for the self as a drive for peacefulness and a sense of completion in our lives, as a continuing movement toward an ideal that can never be completely realized. In these early writings, Jung was clearly a pioneer for the later transpersonal theorists and ACIM.

Erik Erikson One of the most influential figures in contemporary psychoanalytic theory is Erik Erikson (Hall & Lindzey,1978.). He expounded upon psychoanalysis to include a psychosocial stage theory of development.

He felt that the social environment of an individual needed to be integrated with the psychological and biological aspects if a complete picture of personality was to be drawn.

In Erickson's stage theory, the ego is imbued with such positive qualities as industry, initiative, and competence, and the ego is defined as able to find innovative solutions to life's problems at each stage of development. In all of his writings, Erickson focuses on the positive and resilient nature of the ego while not denying the guilt and anxiety that can be created by developmental crisis. Through his writings about his own personal development and the psychohistorical studies of famous people (Erikson, 1958 & 1969.), he expanded the concept of the ego to be a positive and growth enhancing process rather than simply a mediator between unconscious sexual drives (the id) and moralistic, self-serving limits (the superego). In his writing, Erickson speculates that a "new ego" perspective might begin to bring people together rather than keep them in isolation from one another. He calls this new dimension "actuality," and defines it as " a new way of relating to each other, of activating and invigorating each other in the service of common goals" (Erikson, 1974, p.33).

Ego Psychologists

The ego psychologists that expanded on Freud's theory after his death considered the ego as a separate identity from the id and superego. These theorists, interested in the adaptive and cognitive aspects of the ego, worked with more "normal" individuals than did Freud. Ronald Fairbairn (1952) postulated that the ego's main

function was to develop a healthy relationship with the outside world and that it is present at birth as a separate, identifiable system.

In the post World War II years, Freud's personality theory and the more scientific and experimental aspects of psychology began to come together. Psychology had always been more concerned with consciousness (memory, the thinking process, sensation, and perception), than psychoanalysis which focused more on unconsciousness (dreams, motivations, feelings, etc). The new field of clinical psychology began to grow with a coming together of the two orientations and an increased emphasis on motivation and personality.

George Klein (1970) was one of the most important investigators to break down the barriers between psychology and psychoanalysis. He was not interested in the formulation of a new theory, but was more concerned with the application of theory to the individual and how s/he perceives the world. "Our focus has been 'the perceived' and how he organizes experience in his own way" (p. 142). Klein spoke to the uniqueness of the individual and how experience of external reality was created by personal "cognitive style." Development of behaviors and effectiveness in dealing with external stressors is directly tied to how an individual's thinking structure is formed. It should be evident that the integrative work of the Ego Psychologists contributed significantly to the subsequent development of the "Third Force" and the "Forth Force".

Organismic Theory and the Humanists

Organismic theorists see the mind and body as a unified whole, and do not believe in reducing the complete organism into pieces to be studied. Although a psychological perspective of a human being is different from a physiological one, a true picture can be seen only when unity and integration of body and mind can be achieved.

Organismic theory is based on the argument that all organisms consistently move toward wholeness with an intrinsic need to experience their highest potential. Humans are neither drawn by instinctual, libidinous drives nor by external, environmental forces; instead, humans are motivated by innate, natural needs to move toward integration through achieving their highest potential.

Abraham Maslow. Maslow expanded upon organismic theory and coined the term "Third Force" or "Humanistic Psychology" (Maslow, 1968 & 1976.). Unlike most personality theorists who focused their studies on clinical populations, Maslow looked at creative individuals who were functioning in the world at a normal or above normal level. He wanted to explore the positive steps that people take to become active and happy in their lives rather than focus only on the avoidance of pain, fear, and anxiety. He wrote that they must be willing to make clear, conscious choices:

We have talked. . . of making the growth choice rather than the fear choice, of listening to the impulse voices, and of being honest and taking responsibility. A person who does each of

these things . . . will find that they add up to better choices about what is constitutionally right for him. One cannot choose wisely for a life unless he dares to listen to himself, his own self, at each moment in life (Maslow, 1976, pp. 45-46.).

Maslow believed that people are inherently good and that they are not run by dark internal drives. Fear, pain, and anxiety are created when the natural striving toward creative potential is blocked by external physical, social and psychological barriers. He studied groups of people who achieved high levels of creative competence in their lifetimes, and found a number of common denominators (Hall & Lindzey, 1978). People with high levels of creative competence:

- 1- realistically accepted the world and other people for what they were and did not try to manipulate or change others;
- 2- rather than resisting the flow of their lives, choose to see each situation as an opportunity to act with spontaneity and with internal wisdom;
- 3- often acted in the world with a level of detachment that kept them separate from the content of another's life, while being available to support in a nonjudgmental way;
- 4- could value people for who they were and did not place stereotypical beliefs between themselves and others;
- 5- looked at problems in living as opportunities to be creative rather than obstacles to be overcome;
- 6- most saw life as more than a mechanistic mental or physical

process, and most experienced a mystical or spiritual awakening where they had come to see the universal nature within themselves and others.

Carl Rogers. The primary focus for Carl Rogers was the internal, subjective experience of the person. Like other humanistic psychologists, Rogers rejected the pathological perspective of the Freudians and neo-Freudians, and instead spoke to the potential for growth that is inherent in each individuals' true nature. He believed that transcendence of historical pain and environmental barriers was possible once a person took responsibility for all aspects of their life.

He is most widely known for his method of psychotherapy known as "person centered therapy" (Rogers, 1951.), where the processes of growth and change are facilitated by a perspective of "unconditional positive regard" on the part of the therapist. He believed that when the therapist joins with the client's internal frame of reference without judgment, then the natural process of the person to move toward full mental health is facilitated. In the following quote, Kirschenbaum and Henderson (1989) distilled the essence of Roger's perspective on psychotherapy:

All individuals have within themselves the ability to guide their own lives in a manner that is both personally satisfying and socially constructive. In a particular type of helping relationship, we free the individual to find their inner wisdom and confidence, and they will make increasingly healthier and more constructive choices (p. xiv).

When a person's internal, subjective experience, with all of the attendant positive and negative responses, comes together with expressed behavior, then a sense of overall well-being or "congruence" is attained. A person who is congruent with both feelings and actions trusts their own inner awareness as their primary life-guide. They are more open to and less judgmental of the experience of others, and have a much greater opportunity to live fuller. Rogers took his own personality theory and applied it to groups, organizations, and even conflicting political and ethnic divisions such as those in Northern Ireland (Rogers, 1977). His respect for individual differences and his belief in the basic goodness of human nature emerged throughout all of his work. Rogers challenged people to speak from their own experiences and modeled a supportive and loving presence that gently encouraged each individual to open to their own true nature. His "unconditional positive regard" and Attitudinal Healing's "non-judgmental joining" are virtually synonymous. Each perspective holds that our own internal wisdom is the ultimate guide toward wholeness and healing.

Rogers also challenged psychology to go beyond the individual psyche and investigate the transpersonal:

There may be a few who will dare to investigate the possibility that there is a lawful reality which is not open to our five senses; a reality in which present, past, and future are intermingled, in which space is not a barrier and time has disappeared. . . It is one of the most exciting challenges posed to psychology (Rogers, 1973, p. 386.).

Phenomenology and Existential Psychology

In Phenomenology, the substance, activity, and behavior of life are described as they are, within the present moment.

Phenomenology seeks to understand the human condition rather than explain why we do as we do. Existential psychology uses the process of phenomenological investigation to study the human condition.

Rollo May(1969), one of today's most influential existential psychologists, believes that we create meaning in our lives through an act of will that is neither dependent on unconscious drives nor historical patterns. We know who we are through action that is always demonstrated in the moment. This is a key theme of existential psychology: All meaning is created out of the present. May speaks to the "passionate immediacy of experience" (p.6) and defines existential psychology as "the endeavor to understand man as experiencing, as the one to whom the experience happens" (p. 9). Human beings must be seen as verbs, not nouns; as a process rather than a product.

In existential psychology, there is a deep respect for the unfolding of the human experience and all that entails. We make meaning from our lives out of the actions we take in the present, not from cognitive process alone.

In commenting on the place existential thinking holds within the humanistic movement, May insists that identity is the essence of human nature and that this cannot be studied outside of a relationship with another. He believes that understanding, rather than technique, is the essence of the healing process.

Existential analysis is a way of understanding human existence, and its representatives believe that one of our chief (if not the chief) blocks to the understanding of human beings in Western culture is precisely the over-emphasis on technique, an overemphasis which goes along with the tendency to see the human being as an object to be calculated, managed, "analyzed" (May, 1976, p. 76).

This perspective also speaks to the power of choice we have at each moment within the parameters of what it means to be human. We are born, we live our lives for a finite amount of time, and then our bodies die. This is the reality of the physical human condition. Within this reality, however, we have a moment by moment opportunity to make choices as to how we perceive our life's experience. Attitudinal Healing says that we always have the choice to perceive life through the eyes of fear or the eyes of love. Our personal truths are developed out of our conscious willingness to actively participate each moment in life rather than stay one step removed by remaining in our thinking minds.

"There is no such thing as truth or reality for a living human being except as he participates in it, is conscious of it, has some relationship to it" (May, 1969, p.14).

The existential perspective is an ontological one, i.e., it is concerned with the "science of being." It is open to and values all of life's inner experiences: our fears and anxieties as well as our joys and senses of abundance. Each aspect of one's experience is valued within the context of the whole person.

"We must not only study a persons' experience as such, but even more, we must study the man to whom the experience is happening, the one who is doing the experiencing" (May, 1958, p.14)

James Bugental(1965) writes very personally on how the existential/humanistic perspective has helped him in his work as a psychotherapist.

1-Existentialism moves us away from a reductionistic orientation.

Within the existential/humanistic context, human beings are not examined in a piecemeal fashion. Physiological drives are not seen as sources of all psychic energy. Instead, motivation, intention, and will are the key forces underlying behavior.

2- Existentialism is not focused on mental illness alone.

Health and pathology are held within a larger context that defines humans as more than physical or psychological. It respects a person's present mental perspective, but acknowledges the power that each individual has to see the situation differently.

3- Human awareness is the core of all psychological change.

Our moment to moment awareness of our existence and the power this awareness provides is essential to the existential/humanistic perspective.

The person is more than a “skin encapsulated ego,” but is recognized as being always in relationship with another. We have the power to be aware of this reality and make conscious choices from this awareness.

4- Existentialism is open to the world’s great philosophical and spiritual teachings.

Bugental suggests that existentialism “restores our divinity” (Bugental, 1965, p. 20) and is not willing to see humans from a fatalistic or mechanistic viewpoint. Even the word “organism” is not appropriate because it tends to lump the unique human experience in with other creatures who do not have conscious control over their minds. We are more than simply a body-mind continuum. We have a spiritual essence that transcends soma and psyche.

Cognitive Psychology

Although the cognitive perspective on psychological growth is not a personality theory, it has had an enormous impact on modern psychological thought. Rather than focusing on unconscious drives or early childhood experiences, Cognitive Psychology looks at the content of our thoughts and how this content affects our feelings and behaviors (Werner, 1982). Change in people’s lives comes directly from a change in thinking, and it is possible to consciously change thinking at each moment.

Although certainly not true in all cases, pain and fear in people’s lives are often the result of distorted and mistaken observations of the external world. Once these erroneous interpretations can be identified and corrected through more realistic

and congruent thinking, fearful affective responses can disappear. The cognitivist sees all emotions as involuntary responses that are triggered by mental interpretations of external events. An individual's interpretation of an event determines whether an emotion will be positive or negative. All emotion is viewed as conscious phenomena that can be observed through very specific bodily sensations. Unconscious drives and feelings have no relevance since they are not being felt by a conscious individual in present time. Anything that is unconscious has no effect on present behavior.

The cognitive perspective does not value insight, awareness, or intuition. Most cognitive therapists believe that behavior is much more important than feelings, and that when behaviors change, feelings change. Infact, perceptions, emotions, thoughts and behaviors are all seen as reciprocal agents to one another. When an individual's thoughts about a situation change, their behavior will also be affected. Reciprocally, when a person is challenged to try on a new behavior, their perception is altered.

The cognitivist is also very concerned with the stated goals that a person has in any situation. These goals spark the thinking process that drives a person's behavior. When goals can be realistically addressed and clarified, what a person wants out of life can be verbalized and appropriate thinking can be initiated. Although antithetical to much of the affective and depth perspective of Attitudinal Healing, Cognitive Psychology does speak clearly to the power of thought and how thought effects beliefs and attitudes

Neo-Cognitive Psychology and Attitudinal Healing.

Since we spend most of our waking hours within the content of our thoughts, it is safe to say that from one perspective, our thoughts form our reality. When the content is negative, our level of consciousness or mood is low and we generate emotions such as anxiety, sadness, anger, fear, etc. When we can let go of our thinking mind (which can only happen in this moment), we can return to a state of “mental health” or “wisdom.” Through our awareness that our thinking minds create our perceptions of reality, we are able to raise our “moods” .

Neo-Cognitive Psychology goes beyond the contents of the thinking mind and focuses on our ability to think (Suarez, Mills & Stewart, 1987). We have created many personal belief systems (organized groups of thoughts) through mentally organizing our past experiences and giving meaning to these experiences. We hold onto these beliefs and solidify them to make sense of the world. We see our thoughts as reality rather than simply what we think about what is real. We use our thoughts to generalize, analyze, remember, and compare each consecutive thought to the “agreed upon “ ideas that are stored in the brain. Thoughts that fit our belief systems are retained, “thought about”, and acted upon, and thoughts that do not fit are rejected and dropped.

Our ego self is invested in dwelling and acting on thoughts that keep us fearful, anxious, and separated from one another. A common ego thought is that we are not worthy of happiness and peacefulness in our lives. Our thoughts become our experiences of the world, and

the external world validates our thoughts and beliefs. If we believe that we are somehow less than adequate, we choose to act in ways that demonstrate our insecure feelings and the world will give us feedback that demonstrates the truth of our beliefs. We spend all of our time focusing on both the content of our thoughts and the external world onto which our thoughts are projected. Neo-Cognitive Psychology says that “mental health” or “wisdom” occurs when we focus not on the external reality or screen onto which we project our thoughts, but rather on the projector itself, namely our thinking process (Suarez, Mills, & Stewart, 1987). Neo-Cognitive Psychology suggests that we have a natural, “common sense” wisdom that is separate from our thinking mind. This is the part of us, the “Witness Self” that can watch over our thinking process without becoming caught up in the content of the thoughts. The Witness Self is our connection to the Universal Mind and in many philosophies and spiritual paths it is cultivated through meditation, which is the practice of stepping back from the content of our thoughts.

The principles of Attitudinal Healing can be viewed as a combination of Cognitive and Neo-Cognitive concepts. The twelve Principals are listed below and linked to these two models.

1. The Essence of Our Being is Love.

Our essential nature is one of being mentally healthy. We are born with “Common Sense,” e.g., natural wisdom that will guide us if we get our conditioned thinking out of the way.

We connect with this wisdom automatically when we see how our mental functioning creates our reality. When insecure thoughts are dropped, the natural, loving being of our essential nature emerges.

2. Health is Inner Peace. Healing is letting go of Fear.

The agitation of the thinking mind, and the content of the negative thoughts that the mind generates and re-generates, keep us stuck in fear. When we let go of fear-filled thoughts, which we are fully able to do at each moment, we return to a place of inner peace. This place is called "health" or "mental health."

3. Giving and Receiving are the Same.

When we project thoughts of fear or anxiety onto the world, we receive validation of these thoughts through negative responses. If I extend love, I am held lovingly by the world. What I give and receive is a reflection of my own state of consciousness.

4. We Can Let Go of the Past and of the Future.

When we are thinking about the past or future, we are automatically at a lower level of consciousness. We are wrapped up in the content of our thinking and act as if this is reality. Our level of consciousness and mood is automatically raised when we choose to see with "common sense," realize that both the past and future are illusions, and that it is my thinking that keeps me stuck in pain. In this moment, and at every moment, I can forgive myself, release my thoughts, and return to the present where all peace of mind and "mental health" resides.

5. Now is the Only Time There is and Each Instant is for Giving.

As we extend our love to others and thus forgive ourselves, we realize that it is the content of our thinking that is creating our “low mood,” and that we have momentarily forgotten our Essential Nature. When we forgive we let go of negative thoughts and return to the present where we naturally experience compassion for ourselves and others.

6. We Can Learn to Love Ourselves and Others by Forgiving Rather than Judging.

When we judge another we are projecting our fear-filled thoughts outward rather than realizing that it is the content of our thinking that is creating our “low mood.” When we forgive, we let go of negative thoughts and return to the present where we naturally experience compassion for ourselves and others.

7. We Can Become Love Finders Rather than Fault-Finders.

We reconnect with our loving essence every time we re-direct our attention inward toward our hearts rather than outward with a judgmental mind toward others. This is a choice that we can make at each moment as we realize that it is our thinking and the content of our thoughts that create our level of consciousness and thus our mood.

8. We Can Choose and Direct Ourselves to be Peaceful Inside
Regardless of What is Happening Outside.

Our perception of reality is totally contingent on our state of mind at any moment. Once we realize that it is our interpretation and perception of external events that create our states of happiness or unhappiness, we can choose peace over fear no matter what is happening in the external world.

9. We are Students and Teachers to Each Other.

In reality, we are joined with one another through a Universal Mind. It is only our negative thinking, formed by years of layers of mistaken perceptions, that keep the illusion of our separation in place. When we see our brothers and sisters as mirrors of our own mind, with separate realities created by unique life experiences, we can choose to see them as teachers with lessons that offer us another opportunity to release our illusional identities and point us back to the internal guidance of our own hearts. Our feelings and emotions are used to clarify our "state of mind" and thus clarify our level of peacefulness.

10. We Can Focus on the Whole of Life Rather than the
Fragments.

Life is seen from a place of "common sense," a place of "wisdom." In this place, we can view our moment to moment thinking processes.

We can see how thinking can keep us separate, reducing all experiences to a me vs. them perspective. Instead, we can define all separate realities as simply pieces of a much larger reality; a reality of loving connection rather than separating fear.

11. Since Love is Eternal, Death Need Not be Viewed as Fearful.

When we relate from a place of “wisdom” or “mental health,” we relate from a place of love. This is our essential being and not something that needs to be worked at or proven. It is our essential nature, and it is only through our negative thinking that we continue to doubt our essential, eternal nature.

12. We Can Always Perceive Others as Either Extending Love or Giving a Call for Help.

Our insecure thoughts create our insecure feelings such as frustration, blame, anger, and fear. Neo-Cognitive Psychology calls these thoughts “conditioned states of mind,” e.g., a world view that is formed through accepting the projected fear of others as reality. It is impossible to join with another and experience inner peacefulness as long as our own state of mind is focused on thinking that keeps us operating from a lower level of consciousness.

The therapeutic/helping process is about stepping out of our own state of mind (coming from the “observing self”) long enough to assist the client in removing themselves from their own limited, conditioned thinking. In that we are all born into an essential nature that embodies mental health and natural wisdom, we can perceive that lower mood states and their attendant feelings are simply barometers to point our way home.

Lower mood states need not be seen as reflections of true reality. Instead, lower mood states can be seen as requests for help in raising consciousness and thus opening to a larger awareness.

Transpersonal Psychology

Transpersonal psychology is defined by Walsh and Vaughn (1980) as “an inquiry into the essential nature of being” (p.16). This inquiry takes us much further than that which is studied in most personality theories. Transpersonal Psychology is an exploration of human identity that extends well beyond ego and personality. It includes the study of altered states of consciousness and draws much of its orientation from Western and Eastern spiritual traditions.

The transpersonal perspective does not set off to replace other psychological theories, but rather, seeks to provide an expanded context in which to hold the human condition. Transpersonal perspectives include many of the previously mentioned theories of personality without creating additional restrictive parameters that limit vision of what it means to be human. Walsh and Vaughn claim that each psychology is self limiting and argue that the transpersonal perspective is the most all-inclusive orientation. Even Abraham Maslow, who spoke to human potential and ultimate well-being within a humanistic context, felt that the boundaries that the “Third Force” psychologies set were still too limiting, and that a “Fourth” psychology needed to be explored, one that went beyond self actualization and identity to include a wider perspective that actually included self transcendence (Maslow, 1968).

Much of the focus of Transpersonal Psychology points to altered states of consciousness that are accessed by disciplines such as meditation and yoga. These disciplines are integral to many Eastern spiritual paths and philosophies.

Although some scholars such as William James (1961) began to write at the beginning of the 20th Century on the need for a "psychology of consciousness," most research has centered on observable behavior and physiological change. There has always been a strong need to push for scientific legitimacy.

Robert Ornstein (1977) suggests that changes are taking place and a new blend of perspectives is emerging that mixes the rational and linear with the arational and intuitive.

Current psychology is undergoing the first stirrings of a synthesis of the two modes. These may form the beginning of a more complete science of human consciousness, with an extended conception of our own capabilities. This "new" conception of human possibility is the ancient one of the traditional, esoteric psychologies aligned with the methods and technology of contemporary science (p.14).

Additional support for a transpersonal perspective on the human condition comes from one of the "hardest" scientific areas of all, modern Physics. J. Robert Oppenheimer (1966) wrote about this blending of the spiritual and the scientific soon after he completed his research on the development of the atomic bomb.

The general notions about human understanding. . . which are illustrated by discoveries in atomic physics are not in the nature of being wholly unfamiliar, wholly unheard of, or new. Even in our own culture they have a history, and in Buddhist and Hindu thought, a more considerable and central place. What we shall find is an exemplification and encouragement, and a refinement of old wisdom (p.8-9).

Walsh and Vaughn(1980) believe that only a transpersonal model of the human condition is large enough to hold what is meant to be human. Three aspects of their model include consciousness, personality, and identity.

Consciousness

Our minds are conditioned to only view reality from a waking “normal” state of consciousness. This view of reality is conditioned by the familial and cultural norms within which we were raised. Only when we can step outside these norms and view them from a position of non-attached awareness can we momentarily stop their tight control over our lives. Attachment and desire are two qualities of the mind that are seen in many Eastern paths as the cause of all pain and suffering. We are conditioned to be attached to any number of external and internal desires, and it is only through release of attachment that suffering can be alleviated.

We are powerfully attached to our own self images. Often we become attached to negative views of ourselves. We hold to these views despite the pain.

After all, our great fear is that if we release the image, negative as it may be, there will be nothing there to take its place. We've held to the negative beliefs all of our lives and this is all we know. What else could there be but nothingness?

Personality

Whereas most psychological perspectives view personality as the essence of what it means to be human, the transpersonal perspective views personality as only one way of viewing humans, and a limited way at that. The content of our life's drama is seen as equally limiting. Returning to a more peaceful, connected place means detaching from our life scripts and remembering our essential wholeness.

Identity

We are constantly identifying with the content of our mind. This process defines our sense of self. In mindfulness meditation, both the content and the process of the mind are noted and labeled and thus attachment to content is released. If we are identifying with the thought "I am sad," we are immediately immersed within the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that are equated with sadness. If we can open to and lovingly explore the essence of sadness, we can appreciate its ephemeral nature and simply hold it with compassion within an expanded sense of our being.

Transpersonal Psychology and A Course in Miracles. A

Course in Miracles is a metaphysical text that consists of three books: the Text(1975), the Workbook for Students(1975), and the Manual for Teachers(1975). It was written by psychologist Helen Schucman through a process of “inner dictation” or “channeling” over the years 1965-1972, and it is now in its tenth printing with 500,000 copies in circulation world wide.

For many, the appeal of A Course in Miracles has been the way in which it integrates a psychological world view with a universal spiritual perspective. A Course in Miracles offers a step-by-step way of applying spiritual and psychological principles to daily life.

Although Christian in its terminology, A Course in Miracles (referred to as ACIM or “the Course” from now on) may be seen as a distillation of the “perennial wisdom,” and it has been described as one of the greatest metaphysical teachings of the 20th

Century(Walsh,1987; Wapnick,1985; Vaughn,1987; Harmon,1984).

Most theories of human development (some of which were reviewed earlier) are evident in ACIM. Core terms/words used in ACIM can also be found in traditional psychological theories as well as in spiritual/religious writings. The following is a review of key ACIM terminology:

A. “Miracles”

A miracle is defined as a change of mind (Wapnick,1982). A miracle occurs when we move away from seeing the world through the eyes of separateness, fear, guilt, and sin and finally acknowledge that we have never been separated from the love of God.

The Course is similar to other spiritual teachings in that it asserts that all life is joined with a loving Source (God), and that each of us has the innate capacity to join with that Source and experience total acceptance, love, and inner peace. The Course claims that we are already eternally connected with God and have never really been separated. Only our minds have created an illusion of separateness and separation. In order to experience connection, our minds must be healed (i.e. joined). The Course focuses on correcting our perceptions of reality; our natural godly states are love and inner peace. Pain, loneliness, and separation are viewed as mental illusions.

Correction of perception comes via our ability to make choices; between love, our natural inheritance, and fear, that which stops us from experiencing love's presence. At this point of choice, we experience real power in our lives, power that comes from acknowledging our everlasting connection with a Universal Source. We no longer identify with our finite, perishable egos. This shift in perception is what the Course defines as a "miracle."

B. "Guilt" and "Sin"

A major block to inner peace and a serious obstacle to connecting with our essential Spirit is guilt. Guilt is a major cause of low self esteem, self hatred, and feelings of inferiority (Wapnick, 1983). The Course describes guilt as arising from sin. According to the Course, sin is a "lack of love" (ACIM, 1975a. p.9), a separation from our Creator who is the primary channel of love. The Course claims that our guilt stems from the feeling that we have sinned against God by separating from Him. Through years of accepting the projected fears of others as our own "sinfulness," we have adopted

the beliefs that we are wrong and unforgivable and should expect punishment. We live in fear of a reprisal that will never come because no separation has ever occurred. We have been mistaken and simply need to correct the mistake. "Guilt asks for punishment, and its request is granted. Not in truth, but in the world of shadows and illusions" (ACIM, 1975 a. p.515). Wapnick (1983) suggests that the Course's teachings around guilt and sin are a correction to the Judaeo-Christian's original sin, when humans felt that they were separated from God. The Course makes it clear that there is no original sin, and that separation is mental illusion. The only thing that must change is our perception of reality.

C. "Special Relationships"

Special relationships keep us separate from one another and thus from God by becoming the object upon which we project both our fears and our loves (Wapnick, 1982.). These special relationships also block us from experiencing our true identities. For example, in a special "hate" relationship, we find someone upon whom to project our fear and guilt so that we do not have to deal with who we really hate-- ourselves. Usually, we are uncomfortable with the word "hate," so we use milder words such as "dislike," "annoyed," and "irritated." Keep in mind that we are always talking about ourselves, even as we point the finger at others. In long-term, intimate relationships, we become very close mirrors to one another; we reflect each other's fears and loves .

Special "love" relationships also block our conscious unity with God (Wapnick, 1983). At times we all feel that there is something missing. Egos say that we must look outside of ourselves in order to

fill the void. Sometimes we attempt to fill the void by creating special love relationships with a person, food, alcohol, or money. " My special needs will be filled by the special qualities in you." In all of these cases, we stop short from looking within for the answers. Afterall, if we were to do so, we would come face to face with our senses of guilt and tremendous projected fears of abandonment. We feel rotten about ourselves. We are fearful of abandonment and rejection. Note how frightening it is if our love relationship shifts or changes. Special loves involve comparisons and exclusions, forms of further aggression and separation. Only certain people or products can fill the empty spaces. What we are really missing is the perceived connectedness with God which we try to fill with something or someone else. These special relationships block awareness of our true identities by being pseudo-solutions, by distracting us from what we really need, the conscious contact with God. The aim is to be united with God in love.

D. "Perception", " power of mind", and "the dream"

A Course in Miracles sees the mind is the only source of our experiences. Throughout our lives, we are offered situations and problems referred to as "lessons." We are free to choose how to experience these lessons. Our mistaken thoughts create pain and suffering in our lives. We have the power to change our perceptions, to transform illusion into opportunity, and to reconnect with the reality of love. Perception is choice, not fact. Perception reflects our internal experience; it is not determined by external situations. The choice we make is totally based on the image that we hold of ourselves which is projected outward.

Projection makes perception. The world you see is what you gave it, nothing more than that. But though it is no more than that, it is not less. Therefore to you it is important. It is the witness to your state of mind, the outside picture of an inward condition. As a man thinketh so does he perceive (ACIM,1975,a. p. 415).

Our thoughts create our respective realities. We have the power to either align these thoughts with our Spirit (God) or continue to function in a world where we see ourselves as separate and alone, a world referred to in the Course as a "Dream." A central aim of the Course is to help us wake up from our dreams and illusions (Vaughn and Walsh, 1983).

There is no more self-contradictory concept than that of "idle thoughts." What gives rise to the perception of a whole world can hardly be called idle. Every thought you have contributes to truth or to illusion; either it extends the truth or it multiplies illusions (ACIM, 1975 b. p.26).

I rule my mind, which I alone must rule. I have a kingdom I must rule. At times it does not seem that I am its king at all. It seems to triumph over me, and tell me what to think, and what to do and feel. And yet it has been given me to serve whatever purpose I perceive in it. My mind can only serve (ACIM 1975 b. p.400).

Today I give its service to the Holy Spirit. To employ as he sees fit. I thus direct my mind, which I alone can rule. And thus I set it free to do the will of God (ACIM 1975 b. p.400).

E. "Forgiveness"

Forgiveness is not seen as something that must be done to us, but rather a moment to moment process of choosing love over fear; a choice that can only be made by us. It is a letting go of the illusion that we have somehow "sinned" and separated ourselves from God. God cannot forgive us because He has never condemned us. Our minds have perpetuated this illusion, and through forgiveness, our minds can be rejoined with one another and with God.

Look upon the world with forgiving eyes. For forgiveness literally transforms vision, and lets you see the real world reaching quietly and gently across chaos, removing all illusions that had twisted your perception and tied it on the past (ACIM 1975 b. p.329).

F. "Attitudes"

An attitude is a way of thinking, acting, or feeling. It is a "world view," belief system, or outlook on life. Our attitudes are based on our past experiences, and we often anticipate that the present and future will be simply expansions and recreations of our personal history. ACIM teaches us that attitudes can be changed. Past mistakes in perception can be changed in the present to achieve new, deeper, and more loving senses of our selves.

G. "Health" and "Healing"

Health is not viewed as a physical condition, but rather, a state of mind that is peaceful and free from fear. Healing is defined

as the process of removing the obstacles to this place of inner peace. These barriers are created by thoughts that perpetuate the illusions of separation.

H. "Attitudinal Healing"

These and many other terms and perspectives from ACIM have been adapted and applied to the perspective of Attitudinal Healing. The following is the definition of Attitudinal Healing used by all of the 70 centers:

Attitudinal Healing is the process of letting go of painful, fearful attitudes and developing attitudes that promote peace and love. When we let go of fear, only love remains. In attitudinal healing, health is defined as inner peace and healing as the process of letting go of fear. This concept is based on the idea that it is possible for us to move from conflict to peace and from fear to love (Trout,1982).

A Course in Miracles and Other Paths As mentioned earlier, ACIM is not the only model for understanding personal spirituality. When Roger Walsh (1989) compared ACIM to a number of other spiritual paths, he discovered many similarities. Like other means for achieving transcendental states of consciousness, ACIM is characterized by patterns that unite various aspects of the philosophy. Walsh suggested that these patterns could be compared to four of Hinduism's "Yogas."

1) The Path of the Intellect (Jnana Yoga)

Walsh (1989), Wapnick (1983), and Jampowski (1985) and others suggested that ACIM is a very sophisticated form of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is one of the most recognized of the modern psychotherapies, and has been studied extensively. Research by Burns, Ellis, Kline, and others show that negative thoughts create our emotional pain, and these thoughts almost always contain large distortions of the truth (Burns, 1980). One area in which cognitive behavioral therapy has proven to be especially effective is in the treatment of depression (Beck, 1979 ; Ellis, 1975 ; Kline 1974). Depression might be seen by ACIM as an extreme form of fear or separation from God. Like cognitive behavioral therapy, the Course teaches us that our world view and sense of ourselves are totally created by our thought systems, and in order to regain our peace, we must change our thinking.

“Every thought you have makes up some segment of the world you see. It is with your thoughts, then, that we must work, if your perception of the world is to be changed” (ACIM, 1975 p.34).

2) The Path of the Heart (Bhakti Yoga)

Transformation of emotions is the core of this yoga (Walsh, 1989). In many of the Eastern traditions, cultivation of love is practiced through the relationship of a student to his/her Guru or Teacher. ACIM also sees relationship as essential to the transformation of emotions, but says that this relationship is one

between equals and that we are all teachers of love to one another. In On Becoming a Person, Rogers (1961) suggests that an essential component of personal growth is the "unconditional positive regard" (p. 47) a therapist holds for his/her client. ACIM would see this as essential, claiming that all healing comes from this unconditional, nonjudgemental joining. In essence, we are all students, teachers, and therapists to one another.

James Bugental (1987) speaks to the "Path of the Heart" when he refers to his form of existential psychotherapy as "Life Changing Psychotherapy" (p. 5). Like Rogers, Bugental sees that the therapist and client's subjective experiences are essential to any healing work. Only by paying close attention to this relationship can change occur. To Bugental, "subjectivity" means our emotional center or "Heart."

Our subjectivity is our true home, our natural state, and our necessary place of refuge and renewal. It is the font of creativity, the stage for imagination, the drafting table for planning, and the ultimate heart of our fears and hopes, our sorrows and satisfactions (p. 4).

Bugental's definition of "subjectivity as our true home" (p.5) equates nicely to the place of healing in ACIM. When we join our subjective worlds, healing is allowed to happen. As I forgive my client, I can release my own fear. In other words, "The therapist sees in the patient all that he has not forgiven in himself, and is thus given another chance to look at it, open it to re-evaluation and forgive it. No one is healed alone"(ACIM, 1976, p. 13).

3) The Path of Service (Karma Yoga)

Although ACIM is not a path of external action, neither is it a practice that is focused solely on the individual. In great detail, Wapnick (1983) explains the two "levels" of the Course's metaphysics. These two levels include the internal attitudinal shift that moves one from the world of illusion to that of truth, and the practical application of this mental shift to our daily life and work in the physical world. Through the path of service, we have an opportunity to extend love. In that same moment, we have the opportunity to receive love.

ACIM also teaches us that the love we seek can only be released through joining and serving others. If we sacrifice while serving, we generate anger and resentment which only perpetuates our illusion of separateness from those being served. (Walsh, 1989).

Ram Dass (1985) speaks of Karma Yoga. In concert with ACIM, he suggests that this "therapy" comes from an unconditional joining that can only be accomplished by a deep respect for each individual. He feels that a daily practice of clearing the mind is essential so that the illusions of history do not restrict the healing power of service.

4) The Path of Meditation (Raja Yoga)

ACIM is a course in mind training. In order to let go of the illusion of our separation from God, we must find ways to quiet our active minds. Although specific meditation instructions are not given per se, the Course calls for "internal stillness." The following is a loving invitation to let go of our thoughts:

Simply do this: Be still, and lay aside all thoughts of what you are and what God is; all concepts that you have learned about

the world; all images you hold about yourself. Empty your mind of everything it thinks is either true or false, or good or bad, of every thought it judges worthy, and all ideas of which it is ashamed. Hold onto nothing. Do not bring with you one thought the past has taught, nor one belief you ever learned before from anything. Forget this world, forget this course, and come with wholly empty hands unto your God (ACIM 1975 b. p. 350).

Pir Vilayat Khan (1982), head of the Sufi order in the West, offers numerous meditative practices which can take us beyond our thoughts and connect us directly to the "Power beyond our power" (p. 63). Like ACIM, the Sufis teach that this union is available at each moment and that we can use any circumstance in our lives to practice joining with one another.

Buddhist Insight Meditation is another practice that quiets the mind and helps us let go of the illusion of separation. Goldstein and Kornfield (1987) define this practice of meditation as a path of the heart and intellect. Understanding our "True Selves" is accomplished through letting go of thoughts that create fear and separation. These barriers occur in the mind through mistaken thoughts and beliefs. They are felt in the heart in the form of pain and fear. The path of awakening begins with what the Buddha called "Right Understanding." Concentration of mind is practiced through sitting and focusing on the breath as a way to release the illusion of hope and fear and return to open space.

ACIM teaches us that all of our answers lie within us. By gently opening our minds and listening to our "Inner Teacher," "Holy Spirit," "Higher Self," or "still small voice within," we can access this

universal guidance each moment. When we can momentarily let go of attachment to the body, mind; and emotions, we come to a place of "Self-consciousness." "I am I, a center of pure consciousness" (Assagioli, 1965).

In general, ACIM is most closely aligned to spiritual disciplines and psychotherapies that assert that thoughts and feelings must be acknowledged and valued before they can be laid aside and real change can occur. Action or service must then flow from these internal attitudinal shifts.

The Course speaks powerfully to the need to practice love in the world. External change without an internal sense of connectedness is seen as a perpetuation of the illusion of fear and separation. Walsh (1984) argues for a "Global Psychology," and supports the Course's contention that world-wide problems such as nuclear weapons, ecological imbalances, and pollution can only be altered by working with our defenses which are based on fear and separation. By changing our beliefs about ourselves and one another, we lose our solid senses of defensiveness and come to love instead.

A Course in Miracles and Attitudinal Healing When psychiatrist Jerry Jampowski started the first Center for Attitudinal Healing in Tiburon, California in 1975, he had no idea that it would grow into over 70 centers world wide, affecting the lives of thousands of individuals. At the onset, he was most interested in the shortcomings of the medical model in the treatment of children experiencing life threatening illnesses. He wanted to create an environment where children could support one another in their own healing processes, and not simply be the passive recipients of some

“expert” medical technology. The study of ACIM profoundly affected Jampowski's personal and professional lives (Jampowski,1989) . He felt that its principles, if practiced in an atmosphere of loving acceptance, could have a profound effect on the children's healing processes. Not only did he find this true, but he also found a need for parents and siblings to be involved in some way. Thus, groups for parents, brothers, and sisters were established at the Center. Since the California Center opened, many other groups have emerged. Each center started in its own unique way.

The Washington Center for Attitudinal Healing began in 1980. Initially, its founders assumed that, like Tiburon, they would be working primarily with people experiencing life threatening illnesses. Instead, the Washington Center (now known as the Institute for Attitudinal Studies) evolved into the country's largest training center in Attitudinal Healing, offering a wide range of individual and group trainings as well as eleven different types of support programs.

Since its inception, those involved with the Institute assert that commitment to a high quality training program is essential if lay volunteers are to be effective in both applying the principles of attitudinal healing to their own lives, as well as becoming skilled facilitators in the healing process of others.

By 1987, the Institute had offered twelve, 6 month Facilitator Training Courses. Dr. Susan Trout, the Institute director, documented these trainings. The result is a twenty-six week Facilitator Training Course in Attitudinal Healing (Trout,1987.) , a collection of lessons and procedures developed through seven years of programming experience. This book is used to train facilitators and

support those who start their own centers in other parts of the country and the world. This training manual was used in this study as the core curriculum for the six month course in Attitudinal Healing that was offered at The University of Vermont. Didactic and experiential materials as well as processes in which course participants could practice facilitation and presentation skills were employed. Changes in participants' "personal meanings" were studied and reported in Chapter 4 and 5.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Design of the Study

This study examined the phenomenological patterns in personal meanings that were expressed by each individual in the group during the six month exposure to the principles of Attitudinal Healing.

“ The phenomenologist views human behavior- -what people say and do- - as a product of how people interpret their world. The task of the. . . qualitative methodologist is to capture the process of this interpretation” (Taylor & Bogdan ,1984, p.9).

I was interested in studying the process of the development of personal meanings as well as testing changes in attitudinal content. Therefore, a qualitative, phenomenological approach was used. I was not interested in reducing the data learned about Attitudinal Healing into a series of statistics. The participants in the study were whole and equal partners in the process.

The methods by which we study people of necessity affects how we view them. When we reduce people's words and actions to statistical equations, we lose sight of the human side of social life. When we study people qualitatively, we get to know them personally and experience what they experience in their daily struggles. . . We learn about concepts such as beauty, pain, faith, frustration, and love whose essence is lost through other research approaches (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984, p.7).

In Mishler's (1979) excellent review of various phenomenological research approaches, he cites Carini(1975) and Patton (1975), and compares and contrasts a positivistic scientific method with phenomenological educational evaluation. In positivistic research, the research is always separate from the phenomenon being observed. In phenomenological research, the subject being studied is not isolated and objectified, but rather the relationship between the researcher and the subject is a valuable part of the study. I conducted a phenomenological, educational evaluation. Group member's phenomenological experiences were obtained by conducting (and audiotaping) interviews during various stages of group development. By keeping an ongoing journal of my thoughts and feelings throughout the training, as well as weekly, informal contact with each participant, the relationships between researcher and subjects was an important aspect of the work. In phenomenological research, phenomena are seen to have multiple meanings, and shifts in research perspective and method are often required at various points in the study. Throughout the study I tried to stay open and flexible to unexpected areas of interest.

Structure of the Six Month Training Course

The following is a description of the structure and content of the six month Attitudinal Healing Course. All quoted material is taken from the text: A Facilitator Training Course in Attitudinal Healing (Trout, 1987).

The objectives of the course are as follows:

1. to prepare individuals to become facilitators for persons having emotional, spiritual, and/or physical needs, including those with life threatening illness.
2. to provide a context in which one can actively participate in his/her own healing process using the philosophy and techniques of attitudinal healing (Trout,1987).

The course on which the study was based was structured as closely as possible on the curriculum described in detail by Trout (1987). The group began on September 8, 1989, and ended on March 5, 1990. We met for 2 1/2 hours for 24 weeks every Monday evening from 6-8:30 P.M. The only weeks that we did not meet were the weeks of December 25th and January 1st.

Before the course began, an interview was held with each perspective participant where the course objectives, content, process, and commitment were discussed in detail (see Appendix C and D). Each student had at least a beginning understanding of the spiritual and psychological principles upon which Attitudinal Healing was based. A number of participants had been students of A Course in Miracles or other spiritual paths, and five of the members had been introduced to Attitudinal Healing through a six week training program at our University counseling center which was offered for graduate students in a clinical internship.

Understanding the agreements and making a commitment to all aspects of the six month course were discussed in both the initial interview and subsequent follow up talks. Susan Trout and her staff at the Institute for Attitudinal Studies found that making a clear

commitment was one of the largest determinants of whether or not a participant completed the full six months. After discussion, each member was asked to sign a Course Commitment Statement before the start of the group (Appendix C).

In order to clarify their commitment to the group, each member was asked to write a "letter of intention" to the leader describing the goals they had for the course and how they chose to achieve these goals (Appendix D). Members were asked to focus on both inner and outer directed goals, and to see if each goal could be written with both perspectives in mind. For example, one student's inner goal was to let go of her fear of death and to complete her grieving over a close friend who had died a few years earlier. Her outer goal was to communicate more effectively with her alcoholic father. Another student wished to become more open and accepting of her feelings. To do this, she wanted to give up a number of chemical dependencies that were denying her access to these emotions. Most of the group members found that writing this letter of intention was really the start of the group for them. The letter helped them clarify and take responsibility for their own learning over the course of the six months.

We began the course with a two day retreat from 6-8:30 P.M. on a Friday, and Saturday from 9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M. The purpose of the retreat was threefold:

1. to continue to clarify each group member's purpose and commitment;
2. to present an overview of the principles of Attitudinal Healing and demonstrate how an individual principle could be explored through an experiential process.; and

3. to help members begin to get to know one another and create a group context for openness and trust.
(Trout, 1987, p. m-2.).

During the Saturday workshop, participants chose times in which to present principles and guidelines to the group over the six months, as well as dates to take responsibility for certain openings and closings. Thus, everyone knew at the beginning which week their presentation was expected.

Regular class sessions began immediately following the weekend retreat. Each 2 1/2 hour meeting had eight components :

- 1- Opening- Through meditation, guided imagery, music, or inspirational reading, a participant led us in a "centering" process that helped focus the group for the evening.
- 2- First Presentation- Lasting about fifty minutes, a participant presented either one of the twelve "Principles" or eight "Facilitator Guidelines". (Appendix A and B). Members were asked to speak personally about the Principle or Guideline, and to be creative in their use of experiential exercises, meditations, or readings.
- 3- Announcements- Ten minutes were set aside each week to share changes in the course schedule as well as community events or workshops that might be relevant to Attitudinal Healing.

4- Sharing- Each week the group spent about twenty minutes sharing personal experiences that came from studying the Principles and Guidelines. As mentioned in Chapter 4, some members felt that we did not have adequate time for this sharing. In a few instances, this time was extended, and the second presentation was shortened to accommodate the group's need.

5- Second Presentation- This fifty minute presentation was given by the group leader. As with the participants' presentations, the second presentation was most often related to a Principle or a Guideline. In addition, it often expanded upon a metaphysical principle or facilitation technique that was relevant to Attitudinal Healing.

Examples of topics covered in the leader's presentations were as follows:

- 1- Facilitating a Group
- 2- Effective Communication
- 3- Leading Visualization and Body Relaxation Techniques
- 4- The Mind and its Projections
- 5- Forgiveness
- 6- Problem Solving and Inner Guidance

6- Closing- Meditation, music, and inspirational readings were used to bring the session to a close.

7- Focus Sheets- Given to each participant at the end of each session, these sheets contained a number of questions that helped participants review the ideas covered in the previous session as well as prepare for the next session through reading assignments and questions that focused on the purpose for the coming week.

8- Healing Circle- For 5-10 minutes at the end of each session, the group focused "healing light and love" on family and friends that were in need. The group stood silently in a circle with hands joined and minds focused on the absent loved one.

The Course content included the following topics:

1. Eight facilitating guidelines
2. Twelve Attitudinal Healing Principles
3. Communication and listening skills
4. Facilitation by questioning
5. Guided visualization for body relaxation, pain, forgiveness and release of fear, anger, and guilt

6. Mind and its projections and the dynamics of the ego system, including the relationship among guilt, anger, and fear
7. Role of forgiveness, problem solving, and inner guidance in the healing of the mind
8. Meditation
9. Spontaneous drawing and dream interpretation
10. Group facilitation and dynamics of group process
11. Death and dying
12. Being of service in person-to-person or group work in Attitudinal Healing (Trout, 1987, p.M-4).

Books and Materials Used in the Course:

1- Love is Letting Go of Fear (Jampolsky, 1979)

This is one of the first books written on Attitudinal Healing. Psychiatrist Jerry Jampowski took his experiences working with terminally ill children and described in clear and simple terms ways to shift the mind away from fear and back to love.

2- Mini Course for Healing Relationships and Bringing About Peace of Mind (Jampolsky, 1979).

A set of 18 cards were used in conjunction with other course materials. The cards helped group members focus their minds daily on beliefs and perspectives that aided them in the healing process. Many of the cards were similar to the daily lessons in A Course in Miracles. Here are some examples:

- 1- "I am determined to see things differently" (p. 2)
- 2- "I am not the victim of the world I see" (p. 4)
- 3- " I could see peace instead of this" (p. 6)
- 4- " Today I will judge nothing that occurs" (p. 13)

3- Who Dies? An investigation of Conscious Living and Dying.
(Levine, 1982)

Steven Levine has worked with the dying for over thirty years using the Buddhist perspective of "Mindfulness Meditation." Levine's perspective on pain, suffering, and control were particularly helpful when the group studied meditation, the mind, and death and dying. His book had a strong impact on all group members. Many of them wished to spend more time discussing his ideas. Three members chose to attend one of his weekend workshops, and a number chose to read his other books.

4- How Can I Help? (Ram Dass and Gorman, 1985)

The concept of service to others was wonderfully described in this book. Topics such as "Burnout," "Who's Helping," and "The Way of Social Action" helped the group apply the principles of Attitudinal Healing to their work as a professional or non-professional "facilitator."

5- Workbook for Participants

Each group member was given a three ring binder at the beginning of the group in which to keep course administrative materials, focus sheets, journal notes, and hand-outs from the various presentations.

By the end of the six months, members had created an important personal notebook that could be easily used for future reference.

The Buddy System

During the third session of the course, participants were randomly matched with a group member who was to be their "buddy." The purpose of this relationship was as follows:

- 1- to give each participant an opportunity to understand and apply the guidelines, principles, communications skills and visualizations with a partner;
- 2- to provide participants with opportunities to witness their reactions and attitudes while in a supportive role for purposes of examination, acknowledgement and letting go;
- 3- to experience practicing attitudinal healing guidelines and principles in a two-person relationship as preparation for future participation in a person-to-person support situation (Trout, 1987, pp. M11-12).

Participants were encouraged to keep in regular contact with their "buddies" and use them for ongoing support.

This process was one of the least successful aspects of the group. For many reasons, few of the partnerships worked out. Logistics and time commitments were the main reasons expressed for not tending to the relationship.

In some cases, group members did meet between sessions, but it was usually with a member other than their buddy, and it was not done on any regular basis.

Participants

The participants in this study were drawn from the 10 members of the Attitudinal Healing group that ran from September 1989 to March 1990 at the University of Vermont's Counseling and Testing Center. All were actively involved in some aspect of mental health work, and all were either full-time therapists, human service workers with strong professional orientations to mental health, or graduate students training to be counselors. In addition, each participant expressed a strong personal interest in training that would facilitate psychological and spiritual growth. All participants were committed to full participation in the six month program (see Appendix C), and all had signed an informed consent form that was consistent with the Human Subjects Review Committee form (see Appendix E). The only member of the group who was not included in the final outcome summary was a foreign undergraduate student. Because of health and family problems, she had to leave the group prematurely and was unable to complete the interview process.

Interview Process

Gordon (1975) suggests that interviewing is the best technique for the collection of subjective data on attitudes and attitudinal

changes. I used the "general interview guide approach" as outlined by Patton (1980, p.200), and interviewed participants at the beginning, middle, and one month after the end of the six months. It was my intention to identify, document, and analyze what personal meanings are attributed to the 12 Attitudes and how those meanings changed for the participants over time.

Open-ended questions were used to explore the respondents' impressions, feelings, beliefs, and changes in personal and professional behavior. These questions were loosely framed around three components that have been found by Combs (1982) and Hills and Knowles (1987) to facilitate the discovery of personal meaning. I wanted to be free to word questions spontaneously, and to probe for unexpected answers within a general, pre-set theme.

Combs defines the discovery of personal meaning in the following way: "Any information will affect a person's behavior only in the degree to which he has discovered its personal meaning to him." (Combs, Avila & Purkey, 1978, p. 56).

Hills and Knowles (1987) suggest that the discovery of personal meaning has three components, namely: "(1) the process of comprehending the relationship of events to the self, (2) the judgment that this relationship is relevant to a perceived personal need or consistent with a belief, and (3) the awareness of the feelings associated with the events" (p. 159). I expanded these components somewhat, and suggested that these three components related to the discovery of personal meaning within attitudes in the following ways:

- 1) How is a particular attitude related to a person's sense of self?

- 2) How relevant is an attitude to a perceived personal or professional sense of purpose, intentionality, or will? How do changes in any one area evoke changes in the other(s)?
- 3) What feelings, thoughts, assumptions, or world views are associated with the attitude?

One of the major schools of thought that falls within the phenomenological perspective is symbolic interactionism (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). This perspective serves to reinforce Comb's learning theory as follows:

- 1) Great importance is given to the social meanings people give to their worlds.
- 2) Personal meanings are seen as products that come from personal interactions.
- 3) People attach meanings to themselves and others through a process of interpretation , and this interpretation is constantly being re-interpreted as different situations arise.

Carini (1975) suggests that although there is no standard format for the documentation of phenomenological research, it consists essentially of observing, recording, describing and analyzing human action. My fellow graduate student, Linda Blake (1989), modified Carini's list slightly and divided the documentation process into three simple steps: observing, recording and theorizing. This was quite adaptable to the needs of my own study.

Observing Through an open-ended interview process, using guideline questions, I looked for the development of personal meanings in relationship to the 12 Principles of Attitudinal Healing. I conducted the interviews in a comfortable and informal setting, where the respondents were most likely to express their genuine feelings. "Real expressions of attitude or overt behavior rarely occur under conditions of sterility which are deliberately structured for the interview situation" (Deutscher, 1973, p.150).

According to Taylor & Bogdan (1984, p.94-95), there are four points that help to create a successful interviewing atmosphere. I have added some brief comments to each point.

1. "Being nonjudgemental": I worked at remaining open to all of my respondents' ideas and feelings without prejudicing them with my own world view, particularly when that view was colored by my historic fears that somehow I might be "losing control" of the interview.

2. "Letting people talk": During the initial interview, the respondents talked about a number of areas that may not seem to have direct relevance to Attitudinal Healing. It was my experience that within an atmosphere of acceptance and genuine interest, the focus of any conversation could always be held, even if on the surface the subject seemed to wander. Often, through "digressions", a richer and deeper understanding of the topic was reached.

3. "Paying attention": Sincere interest and respect for the respondents' world views seemed to be the key to holding attention in the interview. This consisted of a loving self-consciousness that honored both the respondent and my own internal reactions to the questions and answers.

4. "Being sensitive": In many ways, the skills of the interviewer are similar to the skills of the therapist. I had to know when to ask and probe and when to listen and appreciate the unfolding of an idea or belief. Even before the first "official" interview, I had already conducted at least an hour and a half interview with all of the group participants, where class expectations were defined and personal growth needs were discussed.

Recording I used a tape recorder to transcribe each interview, and used personal quotes to illustrate the development of personal meanings (see Chapter 4). Participants were interviewed three times over the course of the study: once before the group started, at the mid-point of the group, and a final interview approximately one month after the group's completion. I also kept a journal during the interview process that outlined the topics discussed as well as my personal reactions to the sessions. In the final summaries, names, genders, and some details were changed to protect confidentiality. Peshkin (1988) believes that researchers should "systematically seek out their own subjectivity" (p.17), and that personal reactions to the interview process should not be reviewed retrospectively, but rather, pursued and analyzed throughout the course of the study. Taylor and Bogdan(1984) suggest that notes of personal interpretations, intuitive hunches, and developing themes should be taken regularly.

Outcomes and Analysis The analysis of data was guided by the common themes that arose from an ongoing review of subject interviews. I also was drawn to Glasser & Strauss's (1967)

"Grounded Theory" approach, and saw this study as having the possibility to generate my own theory. The analysis was ongoing, and not simply left as a task for the end of the study.

Limitations of the Study

This study was a beginning, a first look at what happens to people's systems of meaning-making through a structured exposure to the Principles of Attitudinal Healing. There were a number of factors that impacted on the validity of the study. They are:

1. The number of course participants was small. In that the focus of this initial study was to identify and understand the development of personal meanings, it is not suggested that the data is immediately generalizable. Further studies will have to be done for this to be possible.

2. Eight women and two men comprised the study group. Men were very underrepresented in the sample.

3. No attempt to represent cultural or ethnic minorities in the study was made. All of the participants are white, middle class, with university level training.

4. Study participants all had some level of formal counseling training, and many spent years exploring various spiritual paths. In that the Washington training program was specifically geared to the training of lay people, study results are not generalizable to another population with different backgrounds.

5. My contact with the class members prior to the course varied greatly. I had a previous supervisory as well as therapeutic relationship with some of the respondents.

CHAPTER 4

OUTCOME

Thomas

Goals: Thomas set four goals for himself when he began the group. First, he wished to make some progress on his spiritual journey; he wanted to define what the journey was all about, and discover if he could make changes in his life that would lead him to greater peacefulness. Secondly, he wanted to gain a clearer sense of the essential aspects of Attitudinal Healing and how they could be related to his own spiritual practice. Thirdly, he was feeling isolated and alone in a graduate program. He felt that the Attitudinal Healing Group could be supportive to his process, encouraging him to keep focused. Finally, Thomas was struggling with some distressing physical symptoms, and he wanted to see if practicing the principles would have a positive effect on his health.

Outcomes: Thomas felt that the group was helpful to him in clarifying all of his goals. The group exercises, meditations, and discussions helped him create space for a regular spiritual discipline that he worked with each morning. Although many of his physical symptoms persist, he feels that this practice has had a beneficial effect on his healing process. He feels that the regular support and nonjudgmental listening of the group helped him create the space for this daily practice.

I now believe that it's love that really provides the context of meaning in our lives, that it underlies our cognitive construction within the framework that we survive. If I am not

connected to it (love), then the world seems empty. The meaning doesn't seem to be there.

Thomas feels that he is now much more able to suspend judgment in his life. He is more open to individuals who he would have categorized, stereotyped, and "written off" in the past. He says that he is much more aware when he begins to pass judgments, and can make a conscious choice to move toward joining. He found the presentations of others as well as the preparation that he put into his own presentation (Principle #10) very helpful in his opening and accepting process.

With some hesitation, Thomas finds that he is much more willing to accept that a regular connection with a personal God is essential for his spiritual development. The word "God" is still difficult for him to use, but the concept of turning his life over to a power greater than his ego-self has become a regular part of his spiritual practice. He is becoming more comfortable with expressing appreciation for the times of peace and joyfulness in his life. He is more willing to see that life's problems and barriers are lessons that point him back toward his path.

I need the comfort and companionship that this relationship brings me. I'm still a bit embarrassed by it though. Maybe I will change over time to see that God is really within me, but for the time being, this is the way I can let go of control.

Peter

Goals: Peter entered the group at the end of a graduate program in social work. He had been out of work for a number of

years. He wanted to use the group to become more accepting and less judgmental in his personal and professional lives. He was looking for a supportive environment in which to become more conscious of his own spiritual journey. He also wanted to finish grieving the death of his alcoholic father and understand the survival modes he adopted growing up in a dysfunctional family. He was particularly concerned with his need to control, and how that need was often projected onto his family. "I can even be uptight in a productive way and look like I am getting a lot done. What I am really doing is taking it out on the people around me."

Outcomes: Peter felt that the group helped him with all of his goals. He let go of many of the major judgments that he was holding against his family and continued to resolve his father's death with much more openness and acceptance. "I've reached a point in my life where I'm finally realizing that it's all there. I've just got to pay attention. When I stop trying to figure it out, that's when things start unfolding." He also came to appreciate the unfolding process of his alcoholic clients with a greater degree of compassion, and became less self critical when it came time to create his own class presentation. He felt that the supportive and nonjudgmental class atmosphere was essential to his healing.

Peter also used the group to strengthen his spiritual practice and use it as a centering point for his personal and professional lives.

I think I've really been on a spiritual journey my whole life.

When I began meditating, I realized that was the beginning of turning my life around and acknowledging what was mine.

What was really inside of me was very sturdy and very peaceful.

I find that meditation just saves me. It calms me down. I become centered. I feel physically very light where most of the time I feel heavy. The analogy is letting go of those fifty pound sacks of whatever I take on. I can let go. It's just a wonderful, wonderful process.

Jack

Goals: Jack entered the group during an extremely stressful period of his life. A long-term personal relationship had just ended and his managerial responsibilities in a large human services organization were on the rise. He had just been asked to oversee a start-up project to completely re-structure a organization-wide system that handled intake procedures in a much more efficient and accurate manner. He was dealing with a great deal of personal and technical resistance. He hoped to use the group to center himself during this physically, intellectually, and emotionally demanding time.

Jack wanted to use the group in a way that did not create additional demands. He wished to look at his pattern of having to "work hard" at everything, as well as his historical belief that he was only valued if he produced some sort of product. The project at work was extremely technical and "bottom line" oriented. He was missing the people and training aspects of his job. He wanted his group participation to be flowing and self-directed, and did not want to see it as simply more work.

Outcomes: Jack said that the group helped him become more peaceful within his home. He began to use his home as a refuge from

the demands at work, and he let go of a need to always have things in order. "I have never been able to relax within my own home. This was a major achievement for me."

Jack chose to present Guideline #8 and Principle #6 to the class. Each dealt with the quality of forgiveness. He found that through the preparation of these presentations, as well as by listening and learning from other group members, he was greatly helped in his healing. "I can't imagine where I would be [in relation to his pain around the relationship] if it weren't for the group."

Joyce

Goals: Joyce began the group with some very specific goals. She wanted to work on becoming more flexible in her personal and professional lives. On the one hand, she saw the suffering that excessive tight planning can create, but also felt the need to produce and perform within a professional world that values product and structure. She also wished to learn to trust her inner process more and act on her intuitive knowing in more positive and self affirming ways.

Outcomes: The group helped Joyce achieve a greater degree of flexibility and acceptance in her life. The trusting and nonjudgmental nature of the group helped her open to her own inner wisdom more and act in ways that affirmed her inner guidance. She freed herself from her tendency to compare herself with others. She stopped looking at an external source for a sense of her own competence and loveliness. She appreciated the unique contributions that each group member made through their presentations and group discussions,

and felt that she made some significant progress in understanding that we are all teachers and students to one another.

I liked the way you didn't set yourself up as an expert, but rather allowed each of us to experience our own expertise. This helped me a great deal in my work with students. I am more willing for them to experiment with their own power in the groups that I run. I am more comfortable in allowing my students to teach me! I am also much more comfortable with silence in groups. I don't feel that time always needs to be filled with words.

Over the course of the six months, Joyce feels that she became more aware and accepting of her feelings. She also became more cognizant of how her feelings were closely tied to her thinking, and found it easier to let go of harsh judgments around her feelings of pain, sadness, and abandonment. She finds that she can open and soften more easily to her so-called negative feelings, resisting them less, and moving through them to a place of greater inner peace.

Jo

Goals: Jo set two goals for herself at the onset of the group. She wanted to work through the grief that she felt around the death of a close friend. In conjunction with this, she wanted to work with her own fear of death. She also wished to redefine and improve her relationship with her father. She had just moved to Vermont from overseas, and she was experiencing all of the painful adjustment

reactions related to this transition. "I've always been interested in people's transitions because I feel they are so important in creating consciousness. Most people make major changes in their lives through pain. Peak and painful experiences are in fact very similar." Jo hoped that the group would support her during this letting go and re-connecting. She wanted to be able to join with an ongoing support system that was committed to both psychological and spiritual growth.

Outcomes: Jo felt that she made major progress with all of her goals. She completed her grief work regarding the loss of her friend, and reports going beyond simple acceptance of her friend's death. Jo began to see death in a more expansive way, as opening to a broader reality. Six weeks into the course, Jo herself was diagnosed as having a physical symptom that could mean a life-threatening illness. Again, her fear of death was triggered. She found that she could release her terror within the group context without fear of judgment. The healing circle that always ended each week's session played an important role as she chose to move through the crisis with awareness and compassion for herself.

Having that lump was such a tremendous gift. I couldn't indulge myself in worrying. I had to get out of the thoughts of death and dying which I had been in for three years. I had to finish my unfinished grief for my friend very quickly.

Like the other group members, Jo seemed to create a new context for holding feelings that were previously too tender. Her fear of death shifted dramatically over the six months. Attitudinal Healing provided a much larger and more accepting environment where the

fear could be accepted with much more mercy and compassion.

[For so long] I had put pressure on myself to think I should be through this. If I were really a transpersonal person, I would no longer fear death. This is what shifted for me. I can't say that I'm not afraid of dying. I now accept that I don't have to give that one up. It's [now] alright for me to be afraid.

All aspects of the group's structure were supportive to Jo's growth. Because meditation and guided visualization have been integral to her personal spiritual practice for a long time, Jo found that the group's opening, closing, and healing circles were particularly helpful. She established close ties with most group members and found the personal sharing and individual presentations very affirming.

There's a certain amount of discipline in doing it together. People are actually receiving other people's lives with acceptance instead of the usual response that you might get from society. . . . The healing comes through the joining. . . . We are teachers to one another. . . . When we join with one another, we join with God.

Letting go of judgments and opening more to self acceptance were two additional areas of growth for Jo. "I'm not beating myself up so much. It is easier for me to forgive myself now. I am also much more aware of the choices I am making." Jo finds herself in the present moment more since the end of the training, and feels that the ongoing support group is helping her keep her commitment to being in present time. "I'm allowing myself more freedom, taking

greater risks with people, and find myself more loving to myself and others.”

Jo is still struggling with her relationship with a father who is an active alcoholic. Here, Jo has found the Principles of Attitudinal Healing particularly helpful. She tries to stay more connected, without expectations, realizing that she can rarely trust any agreements that are made. At present, her father is very close to death. Through acceptance, Jo is finding it a little easier to join in the process through setting clear and loving limits.

Like a number of other group members, the theme of opening and accepting flows through many of Jo’s new learnings. As she was able to set clearer boundaries in her life, she became more available to the life energy within which she was held. Again, the community context was essential for Jo to feel the support that she needed to open and move through some terrifying historical beliefs.

I am now less of a victim. I am putting out more of what my own needs are and setting limits and boundaries. I am asking for help. In my youth, I was so identified with being a victim. It’s been a thing of boundaries, limits, and basic acceptance. Acceptance of the past, acceptance of the present, and not having to make everything look alright.

Sarah

Goals: Letting go of fear was Sarah’s primary goal. She wanted to explore her fear of intimacy that was historically rooted in her experience with an absent father and a number of painful adult relationships. She also wanted to continue to look at her fear of the

unknown, and her need to feel in control of all aspects of her life.

When Sarah began the group, she had just completed a Masters degree in counseling. At the onset, she had decided to pursue art as a way to deepen her commitment to herself and her profession.

Outcomes: According to Sarah, the Attitudinal Healing group was a primary motivator for her to follow her heart and obtain additional training in Art Therapy. The group's safe context provided the opportunity to gently explore painful feelings. She drew on many aspects of the group's structure to move more deeply into and through a number of layers of historical pain. She felt that all group members were willing to struggle with opening to a wide range of diverse experiences and points of view without judgments or expectations. The assignments, readings, and experiential exercises all supported her in helping to create a weekly context within which she felt safe to explore her "edge."

Sarah spoke clearly and powerfully about how the course had helped, and how she was continuing to use the Principles as an artist and therapist:

The course has greatly influenced my mind and heart, while impacting on my behavior. The majority of change. . . has been inner-psychically. I am extremely aware of thoughts, and am finding that I can directly trace their roots to either fear or love. It has been fascinating to investigate the repercussions of these feeling states on my overall peace of mind. I have honestly felt myself spiraling down to that place of complete tranquility, endless energy, and emptiness.

It is so deep and present. I am sure that 'the essence of my being is love' because I have touched it. When I touch it, the knowing is expansive and love is the only thing present.

Sarah continues practicing the Principles of Attitudinal Healing through her art work and her apprenticeship with a teacher experienced with healing through the laying on of hands. She says that she is convinced more than ever that all healing is facilitated through the development of open and loving relationships that are interpersonal and intrapersonal. A loving relationship with the earth is also very important to Sarah. She is particularly aware that massive amounts of fear still surface when love touches her historic pain. "What do I do when someone is caring in a place where I have only known abuse?" She is committed, however, to holding her fear within a nonjudgmental context, a context that offers her the choice to forgive herself once again and return to the peacefulness of her essential nature. "I believe my purpose in the world is to come to peace and wholeness within myself. My work in the world is to practice that purpose."

Sally

Goals: Sally came to the group to increase her understanding of "who we really are." She wanted to see if the perspective of Attitudinal Healing could help her communicate her own spiritual journey in a way that could help others on their paths. Unlike many group members who were working within the helping professions, Sally's life was more solitary and introspective, and she was very

interested in learning more about what it meant to be a facilitator of Attitudinal Healing. "Can I open my heart to others and feel fully joined with them? Can I open to the perspectives of Attitudinal Healing and remain faithful to my own spiritual journey?"

Outcomes: On the one hand, Sally was excited by the course content and felt challenged by the experiential exercises. On the other hand, she felt overwhelmed with the volume of information that was presented. She often felt frustrated with the lack of time to explore the concepts in depth. She did find, however, that developing presentations (on Guideline #4 and Principle#1), and opening to others' ideas, helped her clarify her own beliefs and attitudes.

"I decided to really accept the fact that every person does have a personal revelation of what life is all about. I decided not to follow anybody anymore. . . not to look for another guru. (I decided) to look within myself. . . for my inner resources and see what that might be."

She struggled with what she saw as a paradox. She often felt challenged to stay true to her own path while remaining open to others' experiences and perspectives at the same time. By being exposed to the wide variety of techniques, readings, and discussions, Sally came to appreciate her own limits. "The Attitudinal Healing course has helped me put words to my own spiritual experience and helped me communicate that experience in a way that is clear to others."

Sally describes the month after the completion of the course as similar to a "recovery process." It was often a difficult challenge for her to make personal meaning from the experience. Through the struggle, however, she concludes that the exercises and techniques can be seen as aids to increasing her own understanding of the

course's Guidelines and Principles. She continues to work with these Principles on a regular basis. She integrates them into her spiritual practice. She fully accepts that her growth is not about changing herself and her beliefs to meet the Principles of Attitudinal Healing. Rather, it is about becoming more open to the reality that the path called Attitudinal Healing is really a path called "Sally's Healing," and that "we are all joined with one another on the same journey."

I now feel that it's not a matter of love or hate, of forgiving or of letting go or of being angry or all of these things. It is something else. It has to do with opening and it has to do with . . . being big enough.

Carla

Goals: Carla had many years of spiritual practice before she entered the group. She hoped that the perspective of Attitudinal Healing would help her in her practice of Bakti Yoga, or the Yoga of love and devotion. She felt a particular need to do some healing in her personal life, and wanted to look at letting go of some longstanding addictions that were getting in the way of her spiritual journey. She came to the group with an open mind, but still had a major question with what she saw as Attitudinal Healing's lack of concern for social and political issues.

Given my identity as a poet and given my beliefs that we are living in an extremely dysfunctional, capitalistic society that might be terminal, how do you do 'right livelihood' in the Buddhist sense? . . . It is important to me that I don't have to

buy all of this stuff uncritically. I think that fear can sometimes be a defense against anger. I think the world needs moral outrage, but I would like to let go of my defensive anger. Attitudinal Healing has already increased my appreciation of how so much of my anger is a defense against fear.

Outcomes: During the six months, Carla used the group's supportive context to increase her commitment to a regular spiritual discipline. Major changes occurred. By the fifth month, she let go of four addictive substances in her life: alcohol, marijuana, tobacco, and caffeine.

I know that our group has played a pivotal role in this, as well as other things, like my therapy and my work with clients. I can't separate them all out. The group has helped me become aware of my judgments. They are much less now, and when they are up, I feel them a lot more acutely.

Due to an abusive history, learning when and whom to trust has always been a major struggle for Carla. She felt safe in the group. Much of her sense of safety came from the agreements the group made to totally respect and support one another's boundaries.

It says a lot about my experience with the group that I was able to take the risk of sharing so much of my pain. I'm struggling with boundaries in my life right now and the group was a good model for me.

A powerful example of healing work was offered by Carla when she shared a dialogue that she had with her "Inner God"

regarding her addictions. The following material was written down during a group exercise when members were asked to quiet their minds, ask an important question, and record their responses from their "Higher Powers" or "Inner Guides."

Carla: I would like to work on my needs for drinking and getting high. I've tricked myself into doing it again and again. The appetites are as unceasing as tides, which I obey. I want to find out what life is like without them. Are they truly keeping me from love and power, or is my desire to stop a bourgeois diminishment of those qualities which would make my mother happy but I want to keep for myself. Why do I find myself with these appetites?

Inner God: You chose them long ago. It was your way to feel the thrill of separation from your mother and father, to feel you. For you, converting guilt into anger is a first healing step. Drinking is your way to your roots, to your home of power. Pot is the way to your sexual being and the thrill of creativity. Together they were and are your arms with which to go through life: open, yet prepared, powerful, yet yielding. You have built a home in them and they, a home in you.

Carla: Why then should I stop?

Inner God: You are always totally free. The idea of stopping still scares you more than living out this destiny of death.

Carla: All destinies end in death.

Inner God: All destinies end in me. The question is, "Would you like to live your life in me?"

Carla: Does getting high and drinking really keep me separate from you? It feels so good, so right, so who I am.

Inner God: They have built a home in you. To oust them will cause pain.

Carla: I wouldn't be afraid of the pain if I could know it was worth it and that I could truly be made whole with you and all life. . . to fulfill my dharma in this incarnation, it would be necessary for me to make this sacrifice.

Inner God: I will lead you very gently to this realization, my child. Do not fear. You are not lost to me nor can you ever be. You are precious to my heart. In our good time, and sooner than you think, it will become clear to you. You know how far you have come in even these short weeks. It is only the beginning, not a fluke or your projection. Merely let yourself be led, as you have been doing so beautifully. Do not fear slipping. I will keep you even when you know it not. My protective light is on you as it has ever been. Go in peace.

Carla: Are you my projection?

Inner God: Your love, my child, is but a reflection of my own.
As it grows, you will know.

Carla: What should I call you?

Inner God: I am all forms. For now, for you, I may be your own
chevaya.

Carla: How can I know more about you?

Inner God: I have plans for you. Do not fear. You will never be
lost to me. Rest in me.

Carla: Thank you.

Inner God: Attend to my ambassadors. They surround you now.

Over the course of the six months, Carla made remarkable behavioral changes. Besides giving up addictive substances, she used the group extremely well to support her healing from a particularly abusive history. She risked sharing this history with the group, and was open to their support. The Attitudinal Healing perspective easily integrated into her own spiritual discipline. The "Facilitator Guidelines" helped her be much more nonjudgmental and open to her psychotherapy clients. Opening to her heart was a necessary part of understanding "right livelihood" in the world.

I appreciate the rhythm. I spent years being a political poet, being a cultural revolutionary, and now I'm practicing being a healer. There's a softening there. There will probably be a time when I need to go out there with a very sharp sword again. But right now, my work is involved with softening my heart.

Jim

Goals: Jim set several goals for himself in the group. He did not want to limit his involvement to simply an intellectual exercise. He wished to become more emotionally self disclosing in the group and wanted to learn to use this personal openness in appropriate ways with his clients. He referred to needing to respect the flow of his life and the life flow of his clients more. He described how the projection of his own mistaken beliefs have blocked his healing work with others at times.

"I think the whole transference/countertransference thing is essential to transpersonal issues. It's what makes therapists protected and closed instead of being able to join with their clients." He described the historic roots of his own fears, and his commitment to releasing these fears through the process of forgiveness. This had a direct correlation with his work as a therapist. "I firmly believe that you don't go anywhere with someone else unless you have been there yourself."

He wished to experiment with being fully present with other group members. He wanted to let go of judgments created by a very fast moving and creative ego-mind.

Outcomes: Jim has made progress on each of his goals. As a result of the group, Jim feels more open with his feelings in his personal life. He also believes that this openness is accepted by others. In addition, Jim is much more comfortable in being appropriately self disclosing with his clients, and this openness has strengthened his confidence and work as a therapist.

The closer I have come to knowing the real core of some of my own issues, the more I am able to join with my clients at their core-essential level. Instead of asking another question, I sit, and the people will start to bubble out.

According to Jim, the nonjudgmental sharing and acceptance in the group empowered him to take risks in extending his boundaries. He appreciated the way the Principles of Attitudinal Healing were discussed and demonstrated. "Things for me are now very different. The more I experience forgiveness, the more I experience that the essence of our being is love, that the only time is the present, and that all people in all situations are our teachers."

He enjoyed the process of creating meditations and other experiential exercises for the group. He appreciated how people honestly shared their perspectives. "The more that a person is allowed to take the thread and unravel the weave, the closer they get to being empowered to interpret their own experience in the world."

Jim feels that since his group participation, he became much more forgiving of himself and others.

It is now so much easier for me to let go of the ghosts of my past. I really do believe that love is everything. I didn't believe that before. I am better able to honor that quality in others and this allows me to feel more connected with people.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

Common themes emerged over the six months. These themes centered around the twelve principles.

Principle #1- "The Essence of Our Being is Love."

Members experimented with listening to and acting on this "essence" and found that group meditation training, guided fantasies, and times of "inner dialogue" helped with this process. Listening and acting on "the still small voice within" was an experiment that helped identify fear in a more gentle way, pointing back to a place of feeling whole and connected. A number of members remarked on how Principle #1 was the perspective that held together all of the other attitudes. One Principle of Attitudinal Healing easily flowed into another. Healing was really accomplished through a repeated recognition of Principle #1.

Principle #2- "Health is Inner Peace. Healing is Letting Go of Fear."

Mind states such as anger, guilt, self doubt, and defensiveness are all fear based illusions that keep us separated from one another and from our spiritual essence. Healing is the process of releasing these mind states and returning to our natural states of inner peacefulness and connection with all things.

The Course does not aim at teaching the meaning of love, for

The Course does not aim at teaching the meaning of love, for that is beyond what can be taught. It does aim, however, at removing the blocks to the awareness of love's presence, which is your natural inheritance. (Text, p.viii.)

The group found that there was really no distinction between healing in one's personal or professional life. Health came to be seen as a state of mind that could at times include physical well-being but was in reality a much broader emotional and spiritual context. Letting go of fear was accomplished by members opening and softening to pain rather than avoiding it. The group became a safe, nonjudgmental context in which to do personal exploration. Group members became aware that fear was often attracted to thoughts of abandonment and abuse, and often these thoughts could be released by setting loving limits and choosing thoughts that facilitate joining with one another.

Principle #3- "Giving and Receiving are the Same."

As group members shared their hearts, they opened to the reality of their interconnectedness. People did not give in order to receive, but found that it was in the giving process itself that they received validation of their own essence. There was a trust in the "unconditional presence" of people. As Carla gave us a gift by sharing the healing dialogue with her "Inner God," many group members became more receptive to their own Inner Guides. In sharing her dialogue, Carla used the group as a mirror, to reflect back and hear the healing message of her own soul. When we acknowledge and

share our seemingly isolated and often painful personal experience, we immediately see how our own heart-felt positions are not separate, but joined with others.

**Principle #4- "We Can Let Go of the Past
and of the Future."**

Much of the group was focused around being in present time. Meditations, guided fantasies, openings, closings, and a wide range of experiential activities helped people return to the present. As group members acknowledged the grief that they experienced from broken relationships, parental promises, and premature deaths, they came to deeply appreciate the precious present . There was an energy that was felt when a group member chose to speak directly from his/her personal experience and trust that they would be heard and supported.

Five members used the group experience to begin or strengthen a regular meditation practice. Although the specifics of each practice were different, each in their own way used meditation to quiet the mind and return to the timeless present. Many members became much clearer as to how the thinking mind created the illusion of past and future.

Principle #5- "Now is the Only Time There is and Each Instant is for Giving."

When group members experienced the power of the present, they released grievances and fear-filled beliefs into that moment. When they moved beyond their own fear and joined with the pain of others (particularly with the physical challenges of Thomas and Jo) they became aware that as they chose to use the moment for giving, it also became a moment of forgiving and release from their own suffering. During the healing circle that was formed at the end of each group session, members experimented with sending energy to loved ones that were absent. Members that were struggling with resentments and anger found that some of these blocks could be released through holding the image of their loved one's inherent perfection. Forgiveness did not come from denying the anger, fear, or resentment, but rather, from opening and softening to all aspects of these often harsh feelings. Releasing judgments and excessive self blame seemed to be key. Forgiveness, then, came as a natural product of acceptance rather than a begrudging acknowledgement of error.

Principle #6- "We Can Learn to Love Ourselves and Others by Forgiving Rather than Judging."

For all of the group members, there seemed to be a much greater sense of openness and acceptance of self and others by the end of the six months. Many felt that they had learned to become more nonjudgmental, and that they were more able to see things inclusively and holistically rather than in reductionistic fashions. (Principle #10)

This quality of unconditional presence was felt in both the members' personal and professional lives. Many felt that they were more accepting and less critical of their partners and families. This feeling extended to those who were still grieving the end of a relationship with an ex-husband or an alcoholic father. They found that accepting the limits of a relationship helped them heal into its new form. For group members that were helping professionals, acceptance of their clients' unique flows of growth seemed to come easier.

Forgiveness was a key component of this attitude of nonjudgmentalness. Often, forgiveness was experienced as a sense of recognition. Pain of separation and abandonment could be healed through an awareness that the feeling of aloneness was often the result of a judgmental and critical mind, a mind that simply reflected one's own self doubts.

For many, the nonjudgmental attitude toward others stemmed from becoming more merciful and forgiving of themselves. All experienced how often they were brutal and harsh with their own

fragile senses of self. There was increased awareness of how self judgment arises from hurtful cultural and familial messages, as well as degrading and abusive experiences. Without denying the pain of history, release and forgiveness were strengthened by the awareness that "we're all doing the best we can all of the time." Experimenting with different forms of prayer and meditation helped the group look at forgiveness. Calling for help from a Higher Power with the sense that "I can't do this all by myself" was essential in moving some members to a place of greater peacefulness and acceptance.

Principles #4 and #5 supported Principle #6 by suggesting that returning to present time and releasing the past and future support the forgiveness and healing that can only occur in the moment. Many members experienced how painful grievances and judgments are supported by past and future mind fantasies that keep them stuck in emotional suffering. The group's meditations, guided visualizations, and healing exercises were helpful in returning members to present time and letting go of painful memories and future fantasies.

The structure of the group itself, with its caring, open, and non-critical processes was an important model for many; here was a weekly context in which to practice a peaceful and forgiving perspective. This sense of acceptance did not come through denial of feeling, but rather, through adopting an attitude of opening, softening, and accepting all feelings as important guideposts pointing the way home to our essential, loving natures. Group members sometimes searched for ways in which to judge themselves. Some found themselves lacking when it came to keeping up with weekly

reading or writing assignments. A few group members came close to dropping out because of harsh self judgments. e.g., "Am I doing this process right?" "I should be working harder and doing more journal writing." Most members, however, came to see that Attitudinal Healing is a context that can support inner directed psychological and spiritual growth, and not an external model with strict, confining limits.

Principle #7- "We Can Become Love Finders Rather than Fault Finders."

Many members of the group experienced how our belief systems and attitudes shape our reality. As Jo opened to the reality of her alcoholic parent's denial, she released remaining aspects of self blame and strengthened the loving limits in which she chose to hold the relationship. Limits came to be seen by many group members, not as limitations, but rather as present and clear guidelines that kept them connected with the heart of the matter, while not becoming enmeshed in the drama of the projected pain and confusion. The glass could be seen as half full or half empty at any moment.

Principle #8- "We Can Choose and Direct Ourselves to be Peaceful Inside Regardless of what is Happening Outside."

Many group members came to meetings directly from work environments that were filled with many demands. The group was

often used as a center and home-base within an external world that was often filled with very needy client, family, and business demands. The power of conscious volition was acknowledged as the point around which attitudinal change became a reality. There is always a choice to see differently, to move from a fear based world view to the reality of a loving connection with all things. Inner peace can be a moment to moment decision rather than an occasional happy state that is dictated by external circumstances.

Principle #9- "We Are Students and Teachers to Each Other."

This perspective enriched many group members' therapeutic practices. One individual became more willing to self disclose with her clients in appropriate and helpful ways. Another found herself more accepting of the growing edge of her high school students, and less fearful that she might lose a sense of authority and control. A third therapist found that the group strengthened her need to create an ongoing healing community, based on the perspective offered by Principle #9. The work clarified her wish to be connected to a practice that offered services without charge, and was open to all who had a need and felt comfortable working within both the psychological and spiritual contexts.

**Principle #10- "We Can Focus on the Whole of Life
Rather than the Fragments."**

When Carla asked her "Inner God" for help with her addictions, she was told that the flow of her life was unfolding perfectly. "I will keep you even when you know it not. My protective light is on you as it has ever been." Her addictions had an important place in the whole of her life, and it was through their release that she came to recognize the real power of unconditional presence; both for herself and her clients. She began to see that social action was not something separate from her need to soften the heart. One flowed from the other; the whole required a perspective and context that was big enough to value both.

Sally opened more fully to the whole of her "personal revelation" and no longer saw the 12 Principles as something separate from her own experience. She saw that the human spiritual experience could encompass both her certainty and her doubts, and it was not a matter of trying to fit her own spiritual experience into a set of principles. This perspective could only dilute and fragment her own experience. As she began to value her own spiritual awakening and not judge it or compare it to Attitudinal Healing, she began to respect its wholeness rather than reduce it to a series of fragmented parts.

"It has to do with opening and it has to do with . . . being big enough."

Principle #11- "Since Love is Eternal, Death Need Not Be Viewed as Fearful."

A number of group members were dealing with issues of grief and loss. Grieving a therapeutic relationship that had become abusive, a son who had died, parents who were physically and emotionally abusive, and an alcoholic father who was dying were four transitions that were worked on in the group. Each of the four members personally involved found that the group helped them not only maintain but strengthen a regular spiritual practice that consisted of prayer and meditation in a variety of forms. Their respective practices were bolstered by their study of the Twelve Principles. They worked at finding ways of integrating the essence of the Principles into their daily disciplines. Returning to a sense of inner peacefulness and viewing their losses from this more centered space allowed them to experience their grief in an unrestricted way, without the critical barrier of self judgment. One group member who was grieving the loss of a relationship as well as struggling with an overly demanding work load found that the group helped her feel a sense of relaxation and peacefulness in her home, something she had rarely experienced during her marriage (Principle #8). Often grief was held within a context of joining with others, and many experienced that giving support and receiving support were identical (Principle #8).

Again, the concept of "unconditional presence" was practiced by all group members; they often noticed the shift to a tighter and less open feeling when this perspective was absent.

Principle #12- "We Can Always Perceive Ourselves and Others as Either Extending Love or Giving a Call for Help."

There were many instances throughout the six months where group members extended loving support to one another. There were also times in which fear and pain was expressed and reacted to with a sense of defensiveness and judgment. The group structure, however, provided opportunities each session to center, release the judgmental mind, and reconnect with the heart. The perspective of Principle #12 helped the therapists in the group join with their client's fear without becoming overly defensive or enmeshed in pain. Thomas found that suspending judgment was much easier if this Principle was used, and that long held resentments and stereotypes could be acknowledged and released.

Accepting the reality that we all need help in times of fear and isolation was an important awareness that helped break down artificial barriers between parent and adult child, employer and employee, and therapist and client.

CHAPTER 6

FINAL THOUGHTS AND IMPLICATIONS

One major goal in this study has been to utilize a psychological and spiritual text entitled A Course in Miracles in a six month training group. It was proposed that A Course in Miracles and the 12 Principles of Attitudinal Healing represent a meta theory that is sufficiently comprehensive enough to allow each individual to explore personal beliefs and values in a relatively non-restrictive fashion.

The most important objective in any clinical training program is to expose developing professionals to concepts and theories that precipitate the broadest possible understanding of the human experience, and the beliefs/attitudes that relate to effective human functioning. The author wished to demonstrate that A Course in Miracles and Attitudinal Healing was such a model. This study was designed to answer the following questions:

- 1) Did the group members apply the 12 Principles of Attitudinal Healing to their professional and personal lives.
- 2) Did the 12 Principles of Attitudinal Healing stimulate psychological and spiritual growth for the members?
How was this measured?
- 3) If growth is established, how did the principles manifest themselves?

Results indicate that the study of the 12 Attitudes and eight Facilitation Guidelines generated shifts in consciousness, belief systems, and individual behaviors. Study of the interviews also

shows that the group provided a vehicle for joining and healing within a context of non-judgmental support.

Attitudinal Healing provided a theoretical framework for the exploration of a psychological and spiritual path; one that is big enough to lovingly challenge the world views of other psychological models, as well as provoking an assessment of the self limiting beliefs of individual group members. This happened for all the members; no matter where each member was at on the continuum of psychological and spiritual growth, change occurred. Furthermore, no two group members reported exactly the same changes in their personal attitudes or professional lives.

Through post group interviews, common themes emerged which can be directly linked to one or more of the 12 Principles. The Principles were general enough to include diverse systems of meaning making without creating limiting judgments that could restrict individual growth. The individual reports of each group member verified that participants could use a principle to focus on any part of their lives without fear of being molded by a dogma that was restrictive or personally irrelevant. Training in this perspective can be geared to a wide range of professional and personal growth needs.

All the members reported that Attitudinal Healing is a vehicle that gave them permission to explore beyond the self limiting boundaries of consciousness set by previous theories; to look at a broader range of human experience. For all of the members, the sentiment was the same: Attitudinal Healing is an inclusive perspective, not a reductionistic one.

Each psychological theory since Freud has in some way been inclusive of the previous theoretical orientations. Freud asserted that it was safe to explore the unconscious, and that we were indeed sexual beings. Adler added that we were social creatures and that we could find our greatest joy by being intimate with one another. Sullivan went beyond Freud and Adler to discuss the importance of significant others in our lives and how we internalize our parent's images in order to develop a self system. From here Jung then recognized that our unconscious was not simply limited by individual world views, but was connected to universal beliefs and archetypes that are always guiding us. The ego psychologists added power to the ego rather than the id, recognizing the ego as the psyche's "executive" with powers of motivation and will. And finally, the transpersonal psychologists, following after Jung, expanded beyond the individual psyche to include our universal, spiritual nature. In short, each psychological perspective, in its own way, expanded our awareness of what it means to be human.

Traditional psychological clinical studies have for too long split off one's spiritual awareness from one's psychological growth. If transpersonal perspectives were studied at all, they were biased toward western institutionalized religion with its dualism and external orientation (Hendlin, 1989). Given the requests of our clients and our own needs to accept our spiritual nature as part of our humanness, Attitudinal Healing comes forward as one vehicle that can help us open to further dimensions of the human experience. This model is accessible to a wide range of individuals with diverse systems of training and growth needs.

Attitudinal Healing is a transpersonal training perspective that is effective with both professionals and lay people. A Facilitator Training Course in Attitudinal Healing was designed by Susan Trout (1987) and her colleagues to train individuals who had little or no "professional" helping experience. They purposely stayed away from words such as "counselor" or "therapist," preferring instead to define the helper as a facilitator of a healing process that is naturally unfolding. Many traditional mental health training programs create a distance between "helper" and "helpee," with the former being the one with the answers, and the latter being the one with the problem or pathology. Attitudinal Healing proposes that there are some universal principles that can aid all of us who are committed to working toward a more peaceful world.

There is a demonstrated need for more transpersonal awareness within traditional psychological training programs. Attitudinal Healing stands out as a "meta-theory" that integrates personal, human, and spiritual development. It is a theory that is universal and generic, and it allows people to work within their own personal phenomenological space.

The principles are like a series of mirrors that reflect where an individual is in their own psycho-spiritual development. The principles seem to join with you at whatever level of truth you are experiencing. What is reflected back is complete acceptance and an offer to return to the Universal Mind that unites us all; here is a mirror untarnished by reductionistic concepts.

Almost without exception, group members benefited greatly from the study of Attitudinal Healing and the application of the Principles to their lives.

Each member came to the group with some specific expectations and goals, and each finished the group with some significant progress on their goals. In many cases, some very specific, behavioral changes were evidenced.

The training model allowed for psychological and spiritual growth that was unique in terms of individual belief systems. This was evidenced by the results that were reported. The study has added a strong clinical validity to the use of this training vehicle to facilitate change in consciousness, values, belief systems, and attitudes. These outcomes are highly correlated with effective counselor education as well as with training for personal growth.

The model cuts across, but includes, all forms of theory that have been covered in traditional psychological training programs. It doesn't exclude any perspective. In some ways, it is a "content free" theory, a theory that allows individuals to open their thinking to a much more all-inclusive perspective on life's essential questions. The Principles act as stimuli for different ways of framing universal yet nebulous concepts such as spirituality, love, joining, etc. The Principles and the training program itself are based on some timeless spiritual perspectives. They can be seen as ways of shifting thought; a model that can be used in any area of human development.

Personal Reflection

Throughout this study, themes such as opening, softening, and awakening have arisen. How wonderful for me to be both a participant and an observer. The growth for many of us over our six

months together centered on an appreciation, in an unrestrictive way, of the flow of our lives. Much of our growth has been in the area of letting go of self doubts and opening to the possibility that we are not alone, and that with awareness and conscious choice, we can release the historic beliefs that trigger our fears and self doubt.

For me, the writing of this dissertation has been a constant process of acknowledging my own fears, releasing them through forgiveness, and opening once again to the universal flow of wisdom that is present. Spiritual teachers claim that self doubt is a common block to a union with a Higher Power. Self doubt emerged many times during this writing process. When I wrote from my heart, the words came in an intuitive flow that seemed to continue forever. When I was doubtful, I felt as if I would never be able to move off from this stuck place. I have needed to give myself time to realize that many of these "writing blocks" are really emotional blocks which consist of very familiar thoughts of self doubt and insecurity. They are arising once again in order to be recognized, forgiven, and released.

Much of the process of this study seems to have been about a continuing commitment to observing the never ending chatter of my ego-mind without getting caught up in its familiar content. When I did get caught, as I did countless times, then the work was about practicing forgiveness once again, each time returning to my heart.

The river behind our house is a wonderful symbol representing the relationship between emotional blocks, commitment to the process of forgiveness, and the intuitive flow. The river is constantly "forgiving" the obstacles placed in its path, moving around the rocks, branches, and stumps with energy that reflects both its source and

direction. The water does not attempt to push through the rocks, nor does the river pause to question the presence of the rocks . The river simply flows with assurance, acknowledging the barriers, and moving on.

The river taught me about the increased strength that can come from seeing barriers not as forms of punishment, but as opportunities for redirection. As the river "forgives" each obstruction and redirects its own energy, the force of its direction and "purpose" is not only clarified but strengthened. The flow is never weakened by barriers as evidenced by the raging intensity of our spring floods. The river carves a path to the lake that is constantly changing, yet unified in its overall direction. As with our intuitive flow, the river remembers its essence and forgives itself with each seasonal shift and internal obstruction. Like the river, forgiveness is not effortful. It is a process of remembering, rather than "figuring out."

We often resist forgiveness because it requires letting go. Letting go means loss and grief. To forgive and return to the intuitive flow means letting go of the belief that I must control the external realities of my life. Forgiveness involves transforming internal realities. Forgiveness does not mean attempting to externally control individuals and things. Each time we forgive, we challenge the illusion that our primary task is external control. This illusion has been supported throughout most of our lives. It continues to be supported by our culture that insists that nature must be harnessed and conquered for the benefit of human beings.

I have found this writing process to be a daily lesson in self love, joining, and forgiveness. Each morning, I was confronted once again with my doubts of competency and my fears of inadequacy. In

the past, these fears have kept me up against a self imposed barrier, constantly avoiding, because of a deep belief that somehow I didn't have enough "original" ideas and I didn't deserve to complete my thesis. This fear also kept me isolated from others. As I began both exploring ACIM and Attitudinal Healing in relation to my own fears more deeply, my writing process actually created a daily opportunity to forgive my past illusions of fear and separation. This became particularly true during the re-writing process, which I initially viewed as just another example of "never getting it right the first time." I re-experienced a historic sense of fear and failure each time I sat down to write. Practicing forgiveness meant affirming my worthiness, knowledge, and seeing the process of writing as a practice in forgiveness rather than a continual reminder of seeming inadequacies and past failures.

Like the group members, I have found the 12 Principles of Attitudinal Healing to be of enormous benefit to me in all aspects of my professional and personal life. They have been effective in helping me integrate a spiritual practice into my work as a psychologist, without needing to impose any specific spiritual path or dogma on my clients. The Principles have opened me to a deeper exploration of life's essential meanings. As a result, the 12 Principles of Attitudinal Healing have enabled me to travel closer to the hearts of the people I counsel.

Over the last 10 years, my study of A Course in Miracles , and more recently Attitudinal Healing, has helped to clarify my life's direction and purpose. I am able to honor the role that forgiveness plays in releasing the mind-created barriers to my experience of love's reality.

In the introduction to this dissertation, there is a credo that was formed out of my years of psychological training, as well as my struggle to create a personal spiritual path. This present study has been an expansion of this personal belief system through a phenomenological exploration of a structured group training experience. This study is also an effort to see if Attitudinal Healing could be used as a context in which mental health professionals and lay people could explore a transpersonal system of self knowledge, and apply that system in their service to others. The results show that training in the Principles of Attitudinal Healing is a highly effective way to help people deepen their understanding of their own "meaning making" system. It is a perspective that helps us forgive the fear-filled illusions of the judgmental mind, and connect again with the Inner Voice of our own "Great Nature" and the "Great Natures" of others.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

PRINCIPLES OF ATTITUDINAL HEALING

1. The essence of our being is love.
2. Health is inner peace. Healing is letting go of fear.
3. Giving and receiving are the same.
4. We can let go of the past and of the future.
5. Now is the only time there is and each instance is for giving .
6. We can learn to love ourselves and others by forgiving rather than by judging.
7. We can become love finders rather than fault finders.
8. We can choose and direct ourselves to be peaceful inside regardless of what is happening outside.
9. We are students and teachers to each other.
10. We can focus on the whole of life rather than the fragments.
11. Since love is eternal, death need not be viewed as fearful.
12. We can always perceive others as either extending love or giving a call for help (Trout,1987, p. P&A-4.).

APPENDIX B

FACILITATOR GUIDELINES

1. Our aim is to give mutual support and nonjudgmental listening and sharing.
2. We share our feelings and our experiences. Rather than give advice or counseling, we help others find their own answers.
3. It is okay not to have the answers for someone else. The intention to extend love is enough.
4. By taking the risk of exposing our own emotional states, we find common experiences that facilitate joining.
5. We respect each person as unique; each knows himself better than anyone else, and if he listens to his Inner Voice, he will find the best answers.
6. We recognize that we are here for our own needs; our goal is our personal healing and inner peace.
7. Each person learns to look at the other, seeing only the "light" and not the "lampshade."
8. In each situation we meet, we practice the single goal of choosing peace instead of conflict by practicing forgiveness and letting go of fear.

(Trout, 1987, p. P&A-4.).

APPENDIX C

COURSE COMMITMENT

We are asking each person enrolled in the forthcoming Facilitator's Training Course in Attitudinal Healing to make the following commitments. Keeping these agreements is a course objective and greatly enhances and deepens the value of the course for the participants.

I agree to:

1. Attend every class and be on time.

Days and Dates	Time
Friday, Sept. 8	6:00-8:30 P.M.
Saturday Sept. 9	9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M.
Mondays Sept. 11- March 5	6:00-8:30 P.M.
No Sessions Dec. 25 & Jan.1	

2. Write a letter of intention.

The purpose of this letter is to (1) describe the personal issues or goals you would like to accomplish during the course and (2) state specifically the ways you want to actively begin working on these issues or goals.

I will communicate throughout the course regarding your process in meeting this intention.

Your letter is due June 1.

3. Meet the course objectives of the Buddy System.
4. Participate fully in the six-month group process of the course.

This course, designed as a total six-month involvement, has assignments and requirements between class sessions as well as class objectives.

Name_____

Date_____

(Trout, 1987, p. P&A 10)

APPENDIX D

GROUP AGREEMENTS

To fulfill the purpose of the course and to provide a nurturing, safe and supportive learning environment, certain agreements are essential.

I agree:

1. To make a commitment to attend all class sessions, and to respect time structure to insure that class begins and ends on time.
2. To remain within the room during the entire class session.
3. To apply and expand upon class material in my personal and work-life situation.
4. To complete agreements.
5. To participate fully in the six-month process of the course, both during each session and between sessions.
6. To make a commitment to my buddy relationship.
7. To share, speaking from my personal experience and not evaluate what another's experience might be.
8. To observe when someone is or is not complete with his/her sharing.
9. To keep the confidentiality of all personal sharing.
10. To support another's process by not interrupting or touching.

11. To practice using the guidelines and principles during class sessions, participating fully in the group process. (Trout, 1987, p. P&A-5)

APPENDIX E

WRITTEN CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

I agree to participate in a research study conducted by David A. Osgood, M.P.H., a doctoral candidate at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA. This study is entitled "Miracles with Counselors: An Application of Attitudinal Healing to Clinical Training." The purpose of this research is to review the history, principles, and therapeutic applications of A Course in Miracles and then identify, describe, and analyze what the 12 Principles of Attitudinal Healing personally mean to the group of mental health clinicians over a six month period.

Participation in this study will consist of participation in a six month training group in attitudinal healing and responding to three oral interviews given by the researcher at the beginning, middle, and end of the group. Each interview will be approximately one hour in length.

I understand that I can choose to answer or refuse to answer any question at my discretion. I further understand that my participation in the group is not contingent on my being a part of this study.

I am assured that all areas discussed in these interviews will be held in confidence and recorded anonymously. No individually identified information will be used in the final report. I may choose at any time to request that any part or all of my interview not be used.

I understand that there will be no monetary compensation for my participation in the study and that there is no anticipated risk.

If I wish, I will be given a copy of the results of this study at its conclusion.

If at any time I have questions about any aspect of the group or the study, I may call David Osgood at (work) (802) 656-3340 or (home) (802) 899-3965.

I have read the forgoing material and have discussed it with David Osgood to my satisfaction. I wish to participate in the study.

Signed,

Date

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