



A New Psychology of Human Well-Being: An Exploration of the Ego-soul Dynamics of Mental and Physical Health

Richard Barrett

The soul is not a popular category in academic psychology, although psychologists like Jung, Assagioli, Maslow, Grof, Wilber and others have elaborated their own models. Richard extends such analysis to the recent debate on happiness and well-being and provides a coherent developmental model evolving towards a recovery of soul consciousness and a motivation of service. See also my review of his book in the book review section.

My primary inspiration for writing this book was the following statement from the introduction to the second edition of *Toward a Psychology of Being* by Abraham Maslow.

There is now emerging over the horizon a new conception of human sickness and human health, a psychology that I find so thrilling and so full of wonderful possibilities that I yield to the temptation to present it publicly even before it is checked and confirmed, and before it can be called reliable scientific knowledge.¹

What Maslow was courageously attempting to do, was to establish the ground rules for a larger jurisdiction for psychology. What I am attempting to do in *A New Psychology of Human Well-Being* goes further: I am trying to build a theory of human well-being that unites psychology with spirituality and science. To achieve this purpose, I needed to bring the soul back into psychology.

At the heart of the theory I am putting before you is what I refer to as the Seven Levels Model. There are two aspects to this Model: the Stages of Psychological Development Model and the Levels of Consciousness Model. We grow in stages of psychological development, and we operate at levels of consciousness. Under normal circumstances, the level of consciousness we operate from will be the same as the stage of psychological development we have reached. I developed this model in 1997. Since that time it has been used to map the consciousness of over 6,000 organisations, 5,000 individuals and 25 nations.

Ego needs vs soul's desires

Maslow referred to the needs associated with the first three stages of psychological development, as "deficiency" needs, and the needs associated with the last three stages of psychological development, as "growth" or "being" needs. From a psychological perspective, the needs of the first three stage of development correspond to our ego's needs, and the needs of the last three stages of development correspond to our soul's desires. Thus, we can state:

Ego needs = Deficiency needs
and
Growth needs = Being needs = Soul desires

We feel anxious and fearful when we are unable to meet our deficiency needs, but once they are met we no longer pay much attention to them. The joy we experience when we can meet our soul's desires leaves us wanting more. Maslow points out the importance of satisfying our deficiency needs as a foundation for satisfying our growth needs:

Man's higher nature rests on his lower nature, needing it as a foundation. The best way to develop this higher nature is to fulfil and gratify the lower nature first.²

Maslow also makes a direct link between the satisfaction of our needs and health. He states:

...satisfying our deficiencies avoids illness; growth satisfactions produce positive health.³

In other words, when we can satisfy our ego's needs, we stay well, and when we can satisfy our soul's needs, we thrive. Maslow goes on to state:

...deficit needs are shared by all members of the human species ... all people need safety, love and status from their environment ... once satiated with these elementary, species-wide necessities ... development of individuality can begin ... each person proceeds to develop in his own style ... development then becomes more determined from within rather than from without ... self-actualisation is idiosyncratic.⁴

Maslow called the moments we are consciously aware of satisfying our growth needs as "peak" experiences. He describes these experiences in the following way:

...the powers of a person come together in a particularly efficient and intensely enjoyable way, and in which he is more integrated and less split, more open for experience, more idiosyncratic, more perfectly expressive or spontaneous, or full functioning, more independent of his lower needs, etc.⁵

Here Maslow expresses two important ideas: the idea that self-expression links to the satisfaction of our growth needs; and the idea that aligning our ego motivations with our soul motivations—becoming more integrated and less split—allows us to express ourselves in a particularly efficient and intensely enjoyable way.

We can conclude from these statements that the path to health and well-being involves satisfying our ego's needs and our soul's desires; if we are unable to satisfy the former it will be difficult to satisfy the latter. Without a solid foundation for operating in your physical, social and cultural framework of your existence, you will not be able to focus on satisfying your soul's desires. In other words, satisfying your ego's needs is a necessary foundation for satisfying your soul's desires. When you can satisfy your ego's needs *and* your soul's desires, you will find personal fulfilment and experience a deep sense of well-being.

I believe what makes *A New Psychology of Human Well-Being* different compared to most modern books on psychology is that it explores the topic of human well-being from the perspective of the ego-soul evolutionary dynamic. You will not find this approach in any scientific papers because the soul (sometimes called the higher-self or the inner core), for the most part, is ignored by the academic world. Let me recount an anecdote that illustrates my point.

In 2015 I gave an opening keynote address at a conference put on by one of the top business schools in Europe. My title was *The Spiritual/Psychological Dimension of Creativity and Flow*. The audience of close to 300 people was comprised of academics, coaches and business people. At the beginning of my speech, I conducted an experiment with the audience: I asked them to stand if any of the statements I was going to make were true for them.

I started by saying "I have a car", and most of the audience stood up. Then I said "I am a car" no one stood up. Then I said, "I have an ego" and after that "I am an ego." Most people stood up when I said "I have an ego" and sat down when I said, "I am an ego." Then I said "I have a soul," everyone stood up. After that, I said "I am a soul" and everyone remained standing.

What I had half expected, but was amazed to see, was that everyone stood up for both of the final statements. Not just one, both of them! After jokingly pointing out the high level of confusion they must have about who they are, I suggested to the audience that having a soul was the stage of development that preceded being a soul, but the ultimate truth was that your soul has you! Since that occasion, I have repeated this exercise with diverse audiences in many parts of the world and each time I got the same result: the vast majority of people believe they have a soul, and they are a soul.

But it was what happened next that made me realise there is something wrong with the mainstream scientific approach. The next speakers, two very bright and influential academics were talking about neuroscience research.

They had a statement on their first slide that read "Assumptions we make: There is no soul." When I saw this statement, I could not help smiling to myself. The entire audience of academics, coaches and business people had just indicated that they believed they not only had a soul, but they were souls.

What this experience clearly pointed out to me, and probably the rest of the audience, was how the objective, scientific approach not only has a tendency to deny our inner knowing and our subjective experiences.

I believe there are two problems that arise from the objective scientific approach: the dualistic notion that the body and the mind belong to different realms, and the plethora of disciplines that keep our minds blinkered from the larger realities of life. In this respect, the following words written by Peter D. Ouspensky (1878–1947) early in the last century are almost as meaningful now as they were then:

We fail to understand many things because we specialise too easily and too drastically, philosophy, religion, psychology, natural sciences, sociology, etc. each has their special literature. There is nothing embracing the whole in its entirety.⁶

However, all the different areas of knowledge must have significant interrelationships. We need to identify and explore these linkages if we are to develop theories that unify psychology, spirituality and science.

The proposition I set out in *A New Psychology of Human Well-Being* is that there is a unifying model. Furthermore, we can only grow to understand this model by removing our blinkers, embracing self-knowledge, and acknowledging the limits of our three-dimensional (3-D) physical perception. The unifying model I propose transcends birth and death and leads us into an energetic dimension of reality where we encounter the soul.

The problem with perception

Even though the human mind/brain is surrounded by frequencies of vibration coming from a larger multi-dimensional energetic continuum, it is constrained in the frequencies it can intercept by the body's five physical senses. Like the dials on a radio receiver, the body's senses can only register a narrow band of frequencies, thereby preventing us from intercepting and interpreting the larger domain of our existence: the four-dimensional (4-D) energetic frequencies of the soul and the universal energy field. What we are not aware of is still there, it is just not in our conscious awareness.

Although mystics and shaman have been aware of the unity of the physical and energetic worlds for millennia, it wasn't until the early part of the twentieth century, with the development of the quantum field theory, that scientists began to acknowledge that there was a crack in our 3-D material interpretation of the world. Albert Einstein (1879–1955) was aware of this crack. He fully recognised that we live in a 4-D energetic continuum. He put it this way:

The non-mathematician is seized by a mysterious shuddering when he hears of four-dimensional things, by a feeling that is not unlike the occult. But there is no more commonplace statement than the world in which we live is a four-dimensional continuum.⁷

Einstein was not alone in this way of thinking. Ervin László, a Hungarian-born philosopher of science, describes the two-world problem in the following way: he calls the observable, manifest, physical 3-D world the M-dimension (M for material or manifest), and he calls the unobservable, energetic 4-D world—the world of the soul—the A-dimension. The A-dimension (Akashic or energetic dimension) is a universal field of information and potentiality that is in constant interaction with the M-dimension.

... the A-dimension [energetic] dimension is prior: it is the generative ground of the particles and systems of particles that emerge in the M-dimension [material] dimension.⁸

Max Planck (1858–1947), a theoretical physicist, who was one of the originators of quantum theory, is quoted as saying: "I regard consciousness as fundamental. I regard matter as derivative from consciousness. We cannot get behind consciousness."

Even though we derive our sense of personal reality from focusing our attention on the 3-D material world, what we are observing is just a thin sliver of a much larger energetic world.

One of the links we have to the energetic world is our thoughts. Our thoughts are energetic impulses of positive, neutral or negative intention. Consequently, whatever thoughts you are thinking not only influence the energetic vibration of your energy field (the body-mind) but the energetic vibration of the world around you. Fear-based thoughts make things feel heavy and serious, whereas love-based thoughts make things feel light and cheerful. This is because the energy of fear has a low frequency of vibration and the energy of love has a high-frequency vibration. Love energy feels light because it connects (people); fear energy feels heavy because it separates (people), it goes against the natural state of energetic order. We feel "at home" in our soul when we love, and we feel "separate" from

our soul when we fear. Feelings are the antennae that allow us to tune into the status of our ego-soul dynamic.

When the fear-based energies of the ego-mind are juxtaposed with the love-based energies of the soul-mind, you feel a sense of instability in your energy field and sensations of discomfort in your body. As you release the fear-based energies of your ego-mind and align with the love-based energies of your soul-mind, the ego-mind and the soul-mind come into energetic alignment, and your body feels vital and healthy. This following quote from Maslow describes the process:

...the powers of a person come together in a particularly efficient and intensely enjoyable way in which he is more integrated and less split.⁹

The key words here are “he is more integrated and less split”. In other words, when we raise the frequency of vibration of the ego-mind by releasing our fears, we align with the frequency of the vibration of the soul-mind.

The journey of the soul

There are seven stages of human development that souls pass through from the moment they enter into our three-dimensional material world (the moment of conception) and the moment they leave our three-dimensional material world (the moment of death). I call these the seven stages of psychological development. These are shown in the following Figure. The first three stages are about the development of the ego, and the last three stages are about the activation of the soul. The fourth stage involves aligning the motivations of the ego with the motivations of the soul. The seven stages of psychological development are also shown in the following Table along with the approximate age ranges when they occur and the developmental task of each stage.

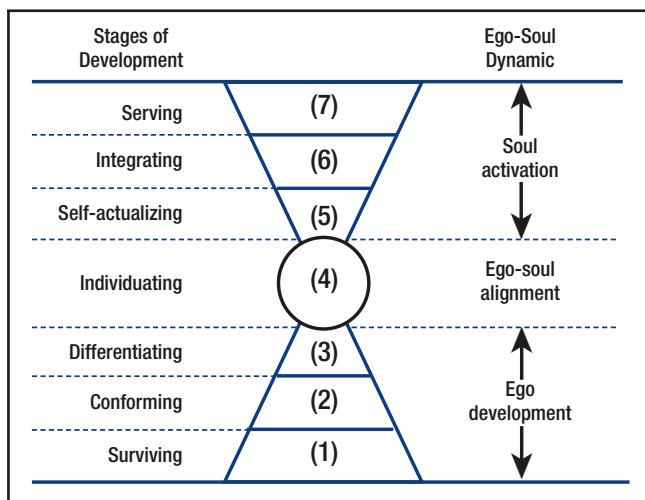


Figure: The Seven Stages of Psychological Development and three evolutionary stages of the ego-soul dynamic.

Stages of psychological development	Age ranges	Developmental tasks
Serving	60 + years	Contributing to the well-being of future generations, humanity and the planet.
Integrating	50 – 59 years	Connecting with others in unconditional loving relationships to make a difference.
Self-actualising	40- - 49 years	Expressing your true nature by embracing your soul’s values and purpose.
Individuating	25 – 39 years	Discovering your true identity by letting go of your fears and your dependence on others.
Differentiating	8 – 24 years	Feeling recognised and respected by establishing yourself in a community that values who you are.
Conforming	3 – 7 years	Feeling safe and protected by staying close to your kin and your family.
Surviving	Conception to 2 years	Staying alive and physically healthy by getting your survival needs met.

Table: The Seven Stages of Psychological Development, the approximate age ranges when they occur, and the developmental task at each stage

Before restricting its consciousness so it can embark on a journey into 3-D material awareness, the soul is fully centred in 4-D energetic awareness—a world of abundance and love. By choosing to incarnate—restrict itself to 3-D material awareness, it enters into a very different world—a world of limitation and fear.

Material awareness

The fundamental properties of 3-D material awareness are time, space and matter. By conjoining time and space, we experience the illusion of separation; by conjoining time and matter, we experience the illusion of death and decay; by conjoining space and matter, we experience the illusion of physical forms and mass. Together, taken as a whole, all of these concepts align with the interpretation of reality explained by Newtonian mechanics and the First and Second Laws of Thermodynamics.

Energetic awareness

The fundamental properties of the soul’s world—4-D energetic awareness—are timelessness, omnipresence and energy. Because the soul has no awareness of time or space to give the illusion of separation, the soul experiences a sense of oneness and connectedness. Because the soul has no awareness of time and matter to give the illusion of death and decay, it experiences a state of being (present moment awareness). Because the soul has no awareness of space and matter to give the illusion of form and mass, the soul experiences shifts in energetic vibrations (emotions). Together, taken as a whole, all of these concepts align with the quantum mechanical interpretation of reality, which is explained by Quantum theory.

The soul’s desires

The soul’s purpose in incarnating is to attempt to recreate its 4-D reality in a 3-D material awareness by a) fully expressing its unique character and gifts, b) by connecting with others in unconditional loving relationships to make a difference, and c) by contributing, through acts of self-less service, to the good of humanity. These three “desires” are the motivations of the soul that drive the 5th, 6th and 7th stages of development.

However, before these desires can be pursued, the soul must establish itself in 3-D material awareness: it must learn how to survive—keep the body alive; it must learn how to be loved so it can feel safe and protected; and it must learn how to be admired and recognised so it can feel secure in its 3-D material reality. The soul delegates these tasks to the ego.

The ego’s needs

These three sets of “needs” are the motivations of the ego. They are the drivers of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd stages of development. Only when we have learned how to master these three stages of development are we in a position to find the freedom and autonomy we need to enter the 4th

stage of development. This is the stage of development where we begin to align our ego's motivations with our soul's motivations by letting go of the ego's fears and dependencies developed during the first three stages of development. We have to become a viable independent human being before we can begin to align with the motivations of the soul.

The journey begins

The soul's journey into 3-D material awareness begins when it restricts its awareness to material existence by taking possession of the energy field of a human embryo during the first few weeks of pregnancy. This is when the baby's heart starts to beat. The heart and the soul are intimately linked: The energy field of the heart is the access point of the energy field of the soul. At this stage, you are totally heart-centred and the soul mind is the centre of conscious awareness of the embryo.

The body-mind

Around five weeks later, towards the end of the first trimester of pregnancy, the reptilian mind/brain (body-mind) which has been forming in the background, takes over from the soul mind as the dominant centre of conscious awareness.

The period from conception to the age of 18 – 24 months, while the reptilian mind/brain is the dominant centre of conscious awareness, is known as the surviving stage of development. The job of the body-mind is to keep the body alive and functioning so the soul has a vehicle through which it can experience 3-D material awareness. The body-mind keeps the body alive by controlling the homeostatic regulation of the body.

When the body-mind takes over as the dominant centre of conscious awareness, the soul mind becomes the subconscious of the body-mind. From this point on, the primary motivation of the foetus and baby is to stay alive.

The emotional mind

The limbic mind/brain (emotional mind) takes over from the reptilian mind/brain as the dominant centre of conscious awareness when the baby reaches 18 – 24 months. This is when the ego begins to form. The period from 18 – 24 months to about 2 to 7 years, while the limbic mind/brain is the dominant centre of conscious awareness, is known as the conforming stage of development.

The job of the ego-mind at this stage of development is to keep the body safe and protected in its family/social framework of existence. The ego mind does this by attempting to build relationships which allow the child to feel loved, accepted and protected.

When the emotional mind takes over as the dominant centre of conscious awareness, the body-mind becomes the subconscious of the emotional mind, and the soul mind becomes the unconscious of the emotional mind. From this point on, the primary motivation of the infant and child is to keep safe.

The rational mind

The neocortex mind/brain (rational mind) takes over from the limbic mind/brain as the dominant centre of conscious awareness around the age of eight and keeps on growing and developing until around the age of twenty-four. The ego continues to develop during this period and remains dominant for the rest of our lives or until the soul mind is reactivated. The period from around 7 or 8 to about 24 years, while the neocortex mind/brain is still growing and developing, is known as the differentiating stage of development.

The job of the ego mind at this stage of development is to keep the body secure and comfortable in its cultural framework of existence. The ego mind does this by attempting to become a recognised and valued member of a group or community.

When the rational mind takes over as the dominant centre of conscious awareness, the emotional mind becomes the subconscious of the rational mind; the body-mind becomes the unconscious of the rational mind, and the soul mind becomes the super unconscious of the rational mind. From this point on the primary motivation of the teenager and young adult is to feel secure.

The suppression of the soul

During the first three stages of development as the ego's needs assume greater prominence, the soul's desires get pushed further and further into the background. If the ego's motivations are strong and deeply embedded because of difficulties it had in getting its safety and security needs met, the ego's motivations may stay dominant for the rest of your life.

Accessing the soul

The fourth stage of development—the individuating stage—is the stage you must master to reactivate your soul awareness at the 5th, 6th and 7th stages of development. The goal at the individuating stage of development is to find freedom and autonomy—to let go of your social and cultural dependencies—so you can become responsible and accountable for every aspect of your life.

The ego is not *who* you are; it is who you think you are. It is the mask you wear to get your needs met in the physical, social and cultural framework of your material existence. The ego represents your sense of identity in relation to the physical, social and cultural context in which you live. You must remove your ego mask to find your soul self.

Activating the soul: self-expressing

The last three stages of psychological development represent various stages of soul activation. If you have been relatively successful in mastering the individuating stage of development, you will begin to feel the pull of the self-actualising stage of development in your early 40s. Your challenge now is to fully embrace your soul's character and purpose by accessing your inborn gifts and talents and thereby give your life meaning.

If you failed to master your survival needs, the fears you developed about being able to exercise control over your environment will make it difficult to master your soul's desire for self-expression.

Activating the soul: connecting

The next stage of soul activation—the integrating stage of development, which usually occurs in the 50s—involves connecting with others in unconditional loving relationships so you can use your gifts and talents to make a difference in the world. Your challenge now is to develop your social intelligence and empathy skills so you can connect and collaborate with others and thereby use your gifts and talents to make a difference in people's lives.

If you failed to master your ego's safety needs, the fears you developed about forming relationships will make it difficult to master your soul's desire for connection.

Activating the soul: contributing

The last stage of soul activation—the serving stage of development, which usually occurs in your 60s—involves living a life of self-less service focused on future generations and the good of humanity. Having learned how to connect, what you are now tasked with doing is making a contribution to the common good. Your challenge now is to develop your compassion skills—to embrace the deepest aspects of your soul's intelligence and wisdom to help those who are suffering, disadvantaged or are less well off than yourself.

If you failed to master your ego's security needs, the fears you developed about being able to become a valuable member of a community will make it difficult to master your soul's desire to make a contribution.

Conclusions

How well your parents, guardians and teachers support you during the first three stages of development—surviving, conforming and differentiating—not only affects your physical health and mental well-being, during your early life, it also significantly affects your physical health and mental well-being, during the latter stages of your life.

Only when you have learned how to master your survival, safety and security needs and are successful in mastering the

individuating stage of development, can you move to the self-actualising stage where you begin to activate your soul-mind.

Mastering the self-actualising stage of development brings meaning and purpose to your life. Mastering the integrating stage of development enables you to make a difference in your world. Mastering the serving stage of development enables you to find fulfilment in your life. By this time, your soul will be fully activated and you will be leading a life of selfless service for the good of humanity.

Richard Barrett is an author, speaker and internationally recognised thought leader on the evolution of human values in business and society. He is the founder and chairman of the Barrett Values Centre, a Fellow of the World Business Academy and Former Values Coordinator at the World Bank.

He is the creator of the internationally recognized Cultural Transformation Tools (CTT) which have been used to support more than 6,000 organizations on their transformational journeys. To date, more than 5,000 change agents, consultants and coaches have been trained by the Barrett Values Centre to use the Cultural Transformation Tools in over 50 countries

Richard Barrett is the author of many books, including *A New Psychology of Human Well-Being: An Exploration of the influence of Ego-Soul Dynamics on Mental and Physical Health* (2016), *What My Soul Told Me: A Practical Guide to Soul Activation* (2012), *Love, Fear and the Destiny of Nations: The Impact of the Evolution of Human Consciousness on World Affairs* (2011), *The New Leadership Paradigm* (2010)). www.richardbarrett.net

Endnotes

- 1 Abraham Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* (Second Edition) (Van Nostrand Reinhold: New York), 1968, p. 3.
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- 3 *Ibid.*, pp. 33–34.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 97.
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
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- 7 R. W. Clarke, *Einstein: the Life and Times* (New York: World Publishing), 1971, p. 159.
- 8 Ervin László, *The Self-actualizing Cosmos: The Akasha Revolution in Science and Human Consciousness* (Rochester: Inner Traditions), 2014.
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Whatever Happened to The Tao of Physics?

John Clarke

An historian of ideas traces the development of Fritjof Capra's thinking from the publication of his early bestseller on the parallels between Eastern mysticism and modern physics to his detailed articulation of a new holistic world view which takes advantage of important recent developments in the sciences but remains committed to a deep spiritual vision.

The counter-cultural revolution

There is no doubt that *The Tao of Physics* captured the mood of its time. 'Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, but to be young was very heaven'; Wordsworth's recollection of his experiences in Paris at the time of the French Revolution were mirrored in the sixties and the seventies when the dawning of a New Age of Aquarius was thought to be imminent.



As he tells us in the Preface to his book, Fritjof Capra was caught up in the spiritual ecstasies of that time. He tells the reader how, as he sat beside the ocean one day, he was overwhelmed by a 'beautiful experience' of nature as 'a gigantic cosmic dance', one which he came to see as, not only expressing some of the mystical ideas which at that time were permeating the West, but which were also consistent with ideas currently emerging from modern physics.

The book which emerged in 1975 was an elaboration of this insight. In it he set out to explore the idea that 'the concepts of modern physics often show surprising parallels to the ideas expressed in the religious philosophies of the Far East'. This was not just an interesting jeu d'esprit, but in Capra's view it was an insight into a profound change in worldview that was taking place at that time, one which science had hardly yet begun to comprehend, but which challenged contemporary assumptions and pointed towards a radically alternative social and economic order.

The original book cover informed the reader that the work was a 'stunning exploration' of these parallels, combining the seemingly opposing domains of science and mysticism. But as he himself was the first to explain, this sort of project was not new. He pointed to several leading physicists such as Bohr, Heisenberg and Oppenheimer who had already given voice to it; Heisenberg for example had spoken of 'the relationship between philosophical ideas in the tradition of the Far East and the philosophical substance of quantum theory'. And there had been other similar speculations in the thinking of such figures as C.G. Jung and Joseph Needham.

From Capra's personal and professional point of view, however, the book was a risky enterprise, and there have

inevitably been dissenting voices. There have been plenty of critics ready to dismiss Capra's thesis as on the one hand little more than a set of vague comparisons between mutually contradictory methodologies, and on the other as involving serious misunderstandings of both sides of the comparison. His persistence with the use of bootstrap theory, for example, has been questioned, and some have taken issue with his commitment to an organicist philosophy as contrary to universally accepted assumptions of the natural sciences. In spite of these reservations the book was generally received with enthusiasm and acclaim, and was seen world-wide as an important contribution to serious issues of the time. Several other authors followed in a similar vein, for example Gary Zukav and Michael Talbot. And if you search 'The Tao of' in any on-line book-seller you will discover that the phrase 'The Tao of...' has become a formula for a whole publications genre. Examples include; *The Tao of Fully Feeling*, of *Dating*, *Running*, *Twitter*, *the Dude*, *Microservices*, and many more, including of course *The Tao of Pooh* which has become almost a rival in popularity to its progenitor. I confess to having added to this list, and offer thanks and apologies to F.C. on behalf of us all.

Capra might well have gone on to a lucrative career as a New Age guru, or perhaps as an orientalist scholar, but he chose instead to take up the challenge of elaborating his vision of a new world view and world order, while at the same time continuing to teach, research and publish in his field of high energy physics. Though he was clear that 'science does not need mysticism and mysticism does not need science', he felt drawn towards the idea that the relationship between the two was intellectually and spiritually potent, and that the new physics contained important but as yet unarticulated philosophical and cultural implications. In the final chapter of his book he concluded that we needed not only a new world view but also a radically different social and economic structure, and much of his thought, writing and public speaking during the decades following the publication of *The Tao of Physics* was devoted to drawing out the revolutionary ideas needed to achieve this transformation.

Looking back to the period following the book's publication, his ambitious project must be seen in the context of a palpable reaction in the nineteen-eighties and beyond against the hopes and idealisms of the earlier age. The times they were indeed a-changing, but not in the direction that was hoped for by the advocates of the Aquarian Age. The Age of Universal Peace and Love has given way to the Age of the Universal Turing Machine, and aspirations have shifted from the art of living to the art of getting and spending. This reaction also saw the rise of postmodernism and the rejection of grand

utopian narratives. It experienced too the painful rise of neo-liberal economics which eclipsed the ideals of community and sharing. And the assumptions of reductionism, materialism and mechanism became ever more firmly fixed at the heart of the academy.

In spite of this radical cultural shift, Capra held his nerve, and boldly continued to elaborate in a series of writings, as well as in various enterprises and initiatives, his central thesis. This quest for a new paradigm, as he came to call it, was clearly a project of daunting magnitude. While drawing on many diverse sources, for which he always gave generous acknowledgment, he boldly undertook the task of applying his basic vision to a whole range of intellectual, social and cultural fields.

The new scientific revolution

In *The Turning Point*, his first major work after *The Tao of Physics*, he adopted a rather different tone and approach from the earlier work. The broad comparisons between traditional Eastern philosophical and mystical teachings on the one hand and recent developments in physics on the other, became less prominent, and in the new work he set out to show how the traditional reductionist, mechanistic paradigm, originating in the work of Descartes and Newton, had outrun its usefulness. That paradigm had certainly exerted a momentous influence, not only on the development of the natural and the human sciences in subsequent centuries but had impacted on the whole range of cultural life, even up to the present time, but by mid-twentieth century was being seriously challenged. The details of his argument can only be indicated briefly here, but it stretched across many fields including biology, medicine, psychology, economics and ecology.

The central theme in Capra's paradigm-transforming enterprise rested, not only on the broad holistic implications of twentieth century fundamental physics but also on developments in systems theory. General systems theory, as developed in the years following World War 2, and primarily evident in living entities, looked at structures in terms of the mutual interdependence of component elements such that the whole structure cannot be reduced to the sum of its parts, and in a way which, in situations of constant dynamic inner and outer change, order and balance are maintained. Capra placed special emphasis on *structures* and *interactions* between elements within a system rather than on the *material stuff* of which particular systems are made, and in this way it was possible to gain a new understanding of whole complex entities ranging from individual molecules and organisms to highly complex phenomena such as social and political systems, and hence for structures containing human, organic and non-living elements. He was able to draw further support for this approach from various sources including the concept of Gaia developed by James Lovelock and Lynn Margulis, and the idea of symbiosis – co-operation between organisms - given new prominence by Margulis; these were both important influences on Capra in his construction of a model of life as involving systemic interdependence.

The application of systems theory was clearly an important step for Capra in building a clear methodological foundation for his thinking, one which linked his argument back to *The Tao of Physics*, but also opened up new resources and possibilities for onward development. These new possibilities arose out of a number of interlinked developments in the sciences. From Capra's point of view these developments can be seen in retrospect as evolving out of and progressing beyond general systems thinking, and by which over the following decades Capra was able to integrate into his new-paradigm thinking a variety of subject matters.

First and foremost these developments included complexity theory. This not only opened up new potentials for the investigation of dynamic, evolving, open systems, but also provided new non-linear mathematical tools for carrying out such investigations. Linked to this was the development of

chaos theory along with fractal geometry. The significance here for Capra lay in the startling discovery that simple deterministic equations can lead to unpredictable complexity and hence to the idea of an open universe where predictability has inherent limitations, and where true novelty and creativity in nature become conceivable.

An important influence on Capra's thinking in this area came from Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela's concept of autopoiesis. This concept takes the idea of dynamic systems a stage further by seeing living systems, from the cellular level upwards, as self-sustaining, self-organising and self-regenerating. This clearly represented a radical shift away from the concept of living systems as constructed and operating on quasi-mechanical principles. As Capra points out, Kant had already noted that organisms, by contrast with machines, are self-organising and self-reproducing entities, but it now became possible to see this distinction applied in detail to a whole range of phenomena from bacteria to minds.

This advance also led to the conception of life as an emergent phenomenon, namely as generating features which combine lower level properties but are not predictable therefrom, and in a wider perspective as evolving to new and unpredictable levels. Combining A.N. Whitehead's process philosophy with burgeoning interest in the concept of emergence, Capra was led to a view of nature, not only as dynamic and ever-changing – something he also drew from his earlier investigations into Eastern thought - but as involved in a 'constant generation of novelty'. Ideas about emerging levels of complexity and order, as evident in organic evolution for example, enabled him to take a further significant step away from the old reductionist, mechanistic paradigm and to see nature in terms of systemic self-creation, to see creativity as inherent in all living systems.

Moreover he came to realise that this potent cocktail of ideas applies not only to nature but also to the human level, for example in the cultural fields of politics, law and ethics as well as to that of the individual, all of which he began to see as both emergent and self-organising. In the broadest terms, Capra's quest for a new paradigm led from principles relating to the web of biological life towards the human and social world of meaning and mind. It even led to the emergence of intrinsic purpose, a concept usually excluded from mechanistic style thinking except in theological contexts, though Capra was careful to avoid any idea of an extrinsic cosmic goal or purpose.

Emergence, however, is a rather elusive concept, not easy to define or explain, particularly in view of the related notion of unpredictability and the possible conflict with the law of entropy. Capra addressed this issue, and questions about the creation of novelty, by drawing on the idea of dissipative structures developed by Ilya Prigogine. On this view new and emergent events arise at critical moments of fluctuation and instability within a system, far from equilibrium, at the 'edge of chaos'. The problem of entropy is dealt with in terms of dissipative structures which are 'islands of order in a sea of disorder, increasing their order at the expense of the environment.

Life, mind and spirituality

The original focus for Capra of these speculations was the key question What is life? But as I have suggested this inevitably led him beyond life in general and towards human life, culture and mind. Much of his own creative energies have been devoted to the application of his work in the fields of science to the human world, to its problems and discontents. At one level this has involved a confrontation with the elusive issue of the nature of mind and consciousness. Influenced by ideas originally outlined by Gregory Bateson, his approach was to avoid the ontological question of the so-called 'hard problem' – how can matter produce or link to non-material mind? - as well as the related dilemmas of Cartesian body-mind dualism, and to speculate about the applicability of systems, complexity and autopoiesis theories to the cognitive realm as well as to all other levels of life. This meant, as I indicated, treating mind, not as a thing but as a process, not

as a visitation from another world but as a process of life. And it entailed a view of consciousness as an emergent property of life, arising from but not reducible to the purely biological. And in the shape of 'higher-order consciousness' it pointed towards the human capacity to map and control its internal and external environment.

At another level, Capra's commitment to the issues of human social and political life go back to early days and reflect the idealism of the counter-culture period. This involved a commitment to Green politics, which led in turn to the project of integrating this commitment into his broader philosophical enterprise. In a series of books and public talks Capra argued that since the systems approach to life necessarily involved an integrated, holistic approach to the living world, and indeed its non-living environment as well, it was essential that we should cease to treat the world as a set of dead objects, as an instrument for our utilitarian satisfaction but rather as a quasi-sacred living whole of which we humans are an integral part. Human life should therefore in some way be consonant with nature's own structures which have evolved to sustain the web of life.

The outcome of these developments was a series of proposals for addressing, inter alia, questions relating to planetary sustainability. He argued that the unlimited expansion of human exploitative activity on our planet can only lead to irreversible ecological catastrophe. Deep systems changes are necessary at all levels of society if we are to 'change the game'. Perturbations in the global environment, he points out, can lead either to global disaster or to the creation of a new sustainable life within the web of nature. In Capra's words by way of summary: 'My objective has been to develop a conceptual framework that integrates the biological, cognitive and social dimension of life, a framework that enables us to adopt a systematic approach to some of the critical issues of our time'.

Spirituality remained an important motivating factor for Capra. Eastern elements, especially Buddhist and Chinese Taoist, clearly continue to hold an important place in his thinking, but his dialogues with Father Steindl-Rast indicate an ecumenical outlook. His most recent major work, *The Systems View of Life: A Unifying Vision*, authored jointly with biochemist Pier Luigi Luisi, is presented as a university level textbook, but this does not deter the authors from dealing with spiritual topics. Indeed it boasts a chapter entitled 'Science and Spirituality' in which they make it clear that they are not talking about religion in the narrow sense, but are seeking to show that a purely secular concept of spirituality is not only compatible with modern science and systems thinking, but ought to play a role, along with ecological thinking, in education at all levels. At both of these levels – spirituality and education – the authors insist again on the fundamental vision of the interdependence of all beings, a point at which mysticism, morality, politics and science converge.

In writing this summary of Capra's work since the publication of *The Tao of Physics* I have been aware that while much of the widespread idealism of that period has become dissipated there are many aspects of its project which have been sustained and advanced. As I see it, we have developed a much greater appreciation of the symbiotic nature of our relations with each other and with the natural world, of the importance of conservation, of recycling and sustainability, of global warming and global health, of the opening of minds to world's cultural and spiritual heritage in which we can all share, and to basic issues of human diversity including gender and ethnicity. In these and in many other respects Capra's contributions have been bold, deeply thoughtful, and inspiring.

John Clarke (author name J.J. Clarke) has written several books on the East-West dialogue including **The Tao of the West: Transformations of Taoist Thought**. Routledge 2000. His most recent book is **The Self-Creating Universe: the Making of a Worldview**. He is a Vice-President of the SMN.

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On Re-reading The Tao of Physics: a Personal Tribute

Pier Luigi Luisi, Prof. Emeritus ETH Zurich

A book which is a classic is like an old friend: always there at your disposal, and each time you open a page, even at random, you find an inspiration for life today. Which also means that a classic book never gets old; it has an eternal freshness. And so it is for Fritjof Capra's *The Tao of Physics: An Exploration of the Parallels Between Modern Physics and Eastern Mysticism*, and in these few lines I would like to convey to you this sense of freshness that I experienced after taking again the book in my hands after more than twenty years.

The book was first published in UK by Wildwood House in 1975, and the third edition by Flamingo states on the cover that over one million copies had already been sold in 43 editions in 23 languages. The fourth edition in English was published in 2000. There were of course some criticism (see Google or Wikipedia for that).

Regardless of these criticisms I believe that the most impressive thing of the book was its impact on the reader. I knew of some people who stated that their life had been changed after reading this book, and this holds for scientists as well as for lay people. This is the sign of a book which has the power of opening up new horizons: you see the world with new eyes, you ask yourself questions you never thought to ask, giving answers, pointing even towards a higher state of consciousness.

You need to read the preface by the author to the first and second editions in order to have some idea of the climate surrounding the birth of the book. The main point here was that at that time, namely in the nineteen seventies, the idea of contaminating the holy grail of physics with the remote, odd and still unfamiliar traditions of Taoism, Buddhism and Vedanta, was something completely revolutionary, a kind of blasphemy. This also explains two things about the first publication of this book: it did not help Fritjof's scientific career he was at that time a researcher of high energy physics in an important university in the States (he himself, an Austrian, had received a PhD in theoretical physics from the University of Vienna), and it did not help to publish the book right away. However, the book was received enthusiastically in the UK and USA, and then had an immense success all over the world.

The main message of the book, as stated above, is about the parallels between modern physics and Eastern mysticism. Why and how can these two things should have something in common? The first simple answer is that both science and religious traditions are looking for the same thing: the truth. Or, to be a little more specific, they both want to discover the nature of reality. Another important point is that the Eastern religious traditions are not generally based on the idea of a creator God, as Christianity or Islam. As such, they avoid those forms of fundamentalism typical of monotheistic religions, typified in the 'holy' Christian Crusades, or, jumping to today's problems, in the ill-digested Islamism of the IS murderers.

It is useful to remind ourselves of the argument of the book. It consists of three main parts: 1. The Way of Physics, 2. The Way of Eastern Mysticism, 3. The Parallels, plus a preface and an epilogue. Each of the three main parts is in turn divided into various chapters.



The first part: The way of physics

In Chapter 1. Modern Physics - a Path with a Heart, you find some basic concepts about the progress of science, and physics in particular, with quite important quotations from the founder fathers like Oppenheimer, Bohr, Heisenberg, which, although written in the 50s or 60s, already mention the Buddha and Lao Tsu.

This shows that the basic intuition of the parallels between physics and the Eastern religious traditions was already in the air before Capra. And Capra, talking about Hinduism, Daoism, Buddhism, writes that contemporary physics leads to a world view which is essentially mystical.

The world 'mystical' may here may need some clarification: you should not think of ascetics, or of holy sages having transcendent visions of sainthood. As Capra says (p. 23): "when I refer to mysticism, I mean the religious philosophies of Hinduism, Taoism and Buddhism", adding that although these three Eastern traditions differ and differentiate themselves in a large number of ways, "the basic features of the world view are the same".

All this brings us to the question: how can we see and know the world? This is dealt with in Chapter 2. Knowing and Seeing where one of the main emphases is on intuitive knowledge, the direct experience of reality which, in Eastern mysticism, “transcends not only the intellectual thinking but also the sensory perception” (p. 36). Of course, physicists instead are mainly concerned with rational knowledge, but Capra shows that both types of knowledge may take place in both fields - science and Eastern traditions.

One major problem is language. In Chapter 3. Beyond Language, he argues that language does not really correspond to reality. Here he uses the metaphor by Korzybski often cited by Capra “The map is not the territory” which is particularly to the point. Words are only a qualitative and coarse description of things. Light is light, but when we wish to describe it with words, it becomes either waves or corpuscles. The problem is not the light, but our wordings; “The Tao that can be told is not the real Tao”. Because of this limitation, Capra emphasises the importance in science and Eastern tradition of logical paradoxes. “Whenever the essential nature of things is analysed by the intellect, it must seem absurd or paradoxical” (p. 58).

All this is found in more detail in Chapter 4. The New Physics, combined with many examples of these paradoxes in the theory of relativity, the notion of time-space, and the nature of light.

The second part: The way of Eastern mysticism

This section of five chapters, starting with Chapter 5. Hinduism. The term Hinduism, according to some Indian philosophers, is a term which should not be used, as it has been invented by the British colonialist to summarise the complexity of Indian religious culture. But Capra succeeds quite well in illustrating the main and common features of ‘Hinduism’, going from the ancient Vedic traditions to the Bhagavad Gita, then the relation between Brahman and Atman, the notions of Karma, Maya and Yoga, and the many gods and goddesses.

In Chapter 6. Buddhism, he explains that The Hindu notion that all things are interconnected is also the basis of Buddhism. Here we find in the world of Nagarjuna the notion of emptiness, and the corresponding concepts of non-self, impermanence and compassion. We proceed then in Chapter 7 to Chinese thought with a description of the two main schools, Taoism and Confucianism, with the notion of yin/yang, the I Ching and its hexagrams (famously commented on by C.G. Jung), and the Taoist *Tao Te Ching*, attributed to Lao Tsu (who possibly lived in the fourth century BC). To Taoism Capra devotes the entire Chapter 8 as this is centred on intuitive knowledge and intuitive wisdom, a notion particularly present in Zen Buddhism. This is discussed further in Chapter 9, where it is characterised by learning through paradoxes, the so-called Koan method, well known for its question: “What is the sound of one hand clapping?”.

The third part: the parallels

The common denominator of all these traditions, according to Capra, “is the awareness of the unity and mutual interrelation of all things and events, the experience of all phenomena ...as manifestation of a basic oneness.” This

general concept is very important for Capra, and is, among others, the basis of his latest book, *The Systems View of Life*, written with myself.

A closer look at the parallels forms the eight chapters of the third part, which is of course the most challenging both for the writer and for the readers. Thus, Chapter 10. The Unity of All Things, treats the well known problem of the duality between subject and object based mostly on the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum physics, which actually shows that this separation cannot hold. This touches on the notion of objectivity in the traditional science tradition, and on the notion of experience, as the subjective dimension, in the Eastern religious traditions. This is taken up and expanded in Chapter 11. Beyond the World of the Opposites, where we find again the dual character of light, the dichotomy yin/yang, the concept of complementarity, and the uncertainty principle.

The rather robust Chapter 12 deals with space/time, and here we see that what in Newtonian physics were considered two clear, distinct things, become with relativity one unit (the famous curved space-time). And all of this is never static, but is instead the expression of a dynamic universe, discussed in Chapter 13, where together with the transformation of particles, one into the other, or of mass into energy, (you may remember the famous equation $E=mc^2$), we also find again I Ching and the Buddhist notion of impermanence. There are not things, but only events and processes.

All these points are re-iterated in Chapter 14. Emptiness and Form, where the notion of field, and in particular the quantum field, is emphasised. Here Capra dwells on the Eastern notion of form/emptiness, seen as two aspects of the same reality (p. 238). Movement, change and transformation are emphasised in Chapter 15. The Cosmic Dance, where the dance of Shiva is taken as a metaphor for the continuous transformations of particles and mass/energy.

One cannot talk about modern physics without mentioning quarks, and here comes Chapter 16. Quark Symmetries (new Koan?), with a hard section concerning baryons and mesons, and a very interesting section on symmetry. Another challenging chapter for the common reader is the following one, Chapter 17. Patterns of Change, with a rich display of Feynman diagrams, and with a link to the I Ching hexagrams.

Chapter 18. Interpenetration, is in a way a conceptual summary of all the previous concepts, with emphasis on the interconnection of matter, mass, energy, so that reality cannot be reduced to solid building blocks with certain fundamental properties, as in the Newtonian concept, but “has to be understood entirely through its self-consistency, as expressed in the “bootstrap theory”, so that Capra concludes: “the view of nature came ever closer to the Eastern world view and is now in harmony with Eastern thought, both in its general philosophy and its specific view of matter”.

At this point, at the end of this article, the reader may say that it is not proper to condense a book like *The Tao of Physics* in a simple article of only 1500 words. I couldn't agree more, and I would say: this is why you should get a copy of the book and read it fully.

John Clarke (author name J.J. Clarke) has written *The Tao of Physics: The East-West dialogue including The Tao of the West: Transformations of Taoist Thought*. Routledge 2001. His most recent book is *The Self-Creating Universe: the Making of a Worldview*. He is a Vice-President of the SMN.

The Mystical Experience of Loss of Freedom

by A Political Prisoner

This article was originally passed on by member Ann Wetherall, who is researching into mystical experience in prisons. It was first published in the Network Newsletter No 33 thirty years ago and proved so popular that we reprinted it as a booklet. I am reprinting it here again as its message is profound and timeless.

In recent years a number of books have appeared, in which the authors have described their experiences in Soviet prisons and punishment camps. Some of these eyewitness accounts are of particular interest because they deal not only with the outward effects of loss of freedom, but also with the deep processes of change which take place in the inner man in that fearful world of Soviet prison life. These descriptions of what happens in the hearts of people in prison contradict in many ways our thinking hitherto on the subject.

Let me say at the start that the phenomena here analysed are of revolutionary importance not only for psychologists and psychoanalysts in the Twentieth Century, for Marxists and for sociologists of the West, but for modern science in general, including philosophy. It must be emphasised that we are dealing with empirical phenomena, which were recorded by men who normally had nothing in common. That is what makes the unanimity of their experiences and testimonies so valuable and significant.

The most fruitful works to study are the first and second volumes of Solzhenitsyn's 'Gulag Archipelago', Schifrin's 'Fourth Dimension', Panine's 'Experiences in Solgadin' and Siniovski's 'A voice from the Chorus'.



The most significant paradoxes

Reading these works carefully, again and again we come across statements that seem paradoxical. For instance, all the writers agree that arrest, imprisonment, the camps, in short the loss of freedom are the most important experiences of their lives. Moreover, they assure us that, although under these conditions they had to endure the worst forms of psychic and physical suffering, they experienced at the same time moments of utter happiness, such as those outside the camp walls could never imagine. Never before had they felt love, hate and despair so strongly, never lived through such interesting days and nights filled with the basic questions of human existence, never felt so at one with the universe, as during their time in prison.

On this basis, loss of freedom could be defined as particularly concentrated and intensive living, and it is a fact that in prison, in spite of all the suffering – and not only according to the statements of the writers we are studying – there is hardly ever suicide.

Another paradox confirmed by the writers is that only those can preserve their bodies and physical existence, who preserve their souls i.e. those who, obeying an inner urge, are prepared to lose their physical existence. Generally, one assumes the opposite – that in a difficult situation a man has to choose to save either body or soul. Yet these writers, who have lived through situations where both body and souls were threatened, affirm unanimously that those who try to preserve their physical existence at the expense of their souls, lost both, while those who were prepared to sacrifice their bodies for the sake of their souls, by some mysterious law, and contrary to what they expected, had their bodies, i.e. their physical existence, preserved.

This means that it is now an incontestable experience of life that in the depths of the human soul there swells an unexplained force which is stronger – and not only symbolically, but empirically stronger – than all outward forces of oppression and destruction, however invincible they may seem. Those who describe these happenings which have been repeated and confirmed hundreds of times under the most frightful conditions of imprisonment – have come to the conclusion that powerful forms of psychic energy are dormant in every human soul, that the psychic world cannot be separated from the physical, and that the thoughts and wishes of a person achieve far more in the outer, physical world than do his hands.

At the same time, the writers assure us that nothing in their lives happened by chance and that, contrary to all their efforts and plans to decide their own fate, everything ran along pre-arranged lines. This seems contradictory: on the other hand, mysterious powers are supposed to be given to a person, which in some inexplicable way affect the outer world, and on the other hand there is some kind of Predestination before which the person is powerless.

But the contradiction is only a seeming one. If a man, against all outward circumstances, against his own wishes and plans, in spite of the threat of physical destruction and against all the dictates of reason – let alone public opinion – if he obeys that voice which, deep in his soul, is subject to no rational control, then roads open up to him of their own accord which lead not only to the preserving of what he thought he had given up by obeying this mysterious inner compass, but also to the fulfilment of his most secret wishes.

If, on the other hand, a man seeks to realise his own plans and desires, to save his life and escape physical destruction by actions in the visible world that are contrary to the commands of his inner voice – some call this voice the instinct for freedom – then fate, *das Fatum*, takes its course and sooner or later brings to nothing what was to be achieved against the inner voice.

But man has the freedom to decide whether or not to follow the inexplicable yet so real inner voice. To put it more clearly, the terrible experience of suffering in prison makes him free. On that basis there is no contradiction. Unalterable destiny and the highest form of freedom exist side by side. It depends on the person himself whether he submits to fate or chooses freedom.

If this is so – and the experiences described here confirm it – then the conclusions to be drawn from it must shake the whole edifice of science, not only on man and his psyche, but also on visible and invisible reality. If there are two worlds, which are not merged together, yet cannot be separated from each other i.e. the world of fate and the world of freedom; if a person lives in the one world or the other, according to whether he obeys or disobeys that mysterious and sometimes unclear inner voice, which neither reason nor science can explain, yet is separate and personal to every human being – then any science is senseless which starts from the assumption that there is only one world, with one and the same laws valid for everybody, a world which can be mastered by an understanding of such laws that are independent of man.

The experience of those who have known this (prison) life as the greatest freedom, teaches the opposite: neither the knowledge of the laws with which present-day science is concerned, nor the knowledge of these mysterious and so far unexplained laws which, contrary to every expectation and probability, save those who follow the dictates of their inner voice – neither of these gives a man power. Moreover, to be saved, a person needs not power but freedom. And we find freedom not by knowledge but by faith.

Faith alone makes it possible to obey that inner voice, of which there is no 'objective' proof. In other words, to obey the inner voice, that is faith. Panine writes: 'Here in this concentrated life every teaching is tested under the harshest conditions.' Siniovski adds: 'Here there is more intensive thinking than in science' and, speaking from personal experience he says categorically: 'Science is getting away from Truth'.

These men, completely cut off from the outside world, study the Bible, which they carry around in handwritten extracts on scraps of paper. They discover the forgotten basic truths of the Eastern Yoga teaching: they turn to Theosophy; in brief, they try by every means to master their personal experiences, which they cannot doubt even if they run contrary to any number of teachings, ideologies, doctrines and scientific theories.

Perhaps the most paradoxical and most optimistic conviction of these men, who have experienced the concentrated force of evil in their own bodies, is that the power of good is stronger than anything else. Panine writes that the world resembles a white tablecloth with black spots rather than a black tablecloth with white spots.

Not political

From what we have said so far it is clear that the battle between the individual and the powers of evil and destruction is not at all a political one. The battle being fought in the totalitarian states today is in reality not political but religious, even if this is not always clear to those taking part. Solzhenitsyn is right when he says that it is precisely the Christians who represent a truly political force in the USSR, because they rob the totalitarian system of its basis, namely the belief in the priority of the visible world and the dependence of man's inner world on the outer.

If the outer world is stronger than the inner, then the oppression of man cannot be removed by political reforms. If, however, the outer world obeys the inner forces of the human soul, then man's fate depends on himself. Then there are no innocent sufferers. Then all trials and sufferings are deserved and just. But equally the way is open to a life of freedom in which a humane political system is but the outcome of the inner freeing of the soul.

While the question, whether man obeys the outer world or vice versa, is of purely theoretical interest for most people, for those whose experiences we are studying here, and for millions of others in the same position, it has very practical significance. Whoever follows his inner voice and saves his soul, learns empirically that, so long as the soul is not lost, the most important is not lost. From this knowledge comes belief in the immortality of the soul: to obey the inner voice means nothing less than to define actions in time in terms of eternity.

Such an experience is, however, not only for those living under extreme conditions of loss of freedom, but for all who have lived and will live on this Earth. It is extremely important to realise that prison and punishment camp, i.e. the uncontrollable caprice of the powers of the visible world, sooner or later await everyone, and that we cannot escape the decision whether we will submit to death and to total physical and psychic destruction or whether, contrary to all 'realism', objectivity and common sense, we will courageously follow our inner voice. Illness, catastrophes, accidents and death are only another form of arrest, trial, prison and punishment camp. Nobody can escape them.

The first and most important factor

What happens to a person who is suddenly torn away from his normal life and falls into the hands of merciless forces who only want one thing, to destroy him? Can he defend himself? Everything that has so far made up that person's life, everything he possessed – freedom, friends, work he enjoyed, property, body, life itself. All this he cannot protect; it is now in the power of Evil. And if he tries to defend himself by means which belong to the world in which he has lived hitherto, he is doomed to failure from the start. Whatever these outward forces take away from him, he cannot protect in his own strength.

It is at this decisive point, immediately before his complete destruction, that the person begins to realise that there is something which is beyond the reach of the outward, seemingly invincible forces and that, even if nothing else can be saved, there is one respect in which resistance, fight and victory are possible, namely, when it is a question of preserving his soul. Whoever trusts and obeys the inner voice of freedom has a chance of emerging victorious from the battle against evil and oppression. But first he must renounce everything which the forces of the visible world can take from him.

'Above all, don't cling to life', writes Solzhenitsyn, and again, 'Possess nothing, free yourself from everything, even those nearest to you, because they too are your enemies.' Panine confirms that the struggle demands separation from everything – except the soul. Only he who renounces everything becomes completely free – i.e. freedom begins where there is nothing more to lose.

When a man has got rid of all that ties him, a mysterious thing happens to this outwardly unfree, but inwardly at last utterly free person. In the depths of his soul there rises up a mighty force, which not only endows his totally exhausted body with incredible powers of resistance, but, in strange ways which we do not yet fully understand, also begins to affect the visible world. i.e. to determine events over which, I repeat once more, he can, as far as we know today, have no influence, but which becomes his salvation.

That is why Panine writes: 'Who saves his soul, saves his body too.' That is why Solzhenitsyn says repeatedly that only the spirit can save, only the spirit can preserve the body, and all four writers confirm that the body, as they have seen again and again in themselves and others, responds with incredible toughness to strong spiritual concentration, while the loss of the spiritual leads to physical disintegration.

The relationship to the inner force

'There is a tremendous force living within us,' Panine asserts, and goes on to say that the whole universe is in some mysterious way linked to the depth of our soul. 'Each of us is the centre of the universe', writes Solzhenitsyn. They did not come to this conclusion by abstract thought, but have again and again experienced the effect of this unknown force in their own bodies.

Solzhenitsyn writes of a strange inner warmth that seems to come from another world and saves a person from freezing in a glacier ice. Panine tells of a mysterious, unknown force which brought him back to life after forty days.

He who lets go of all outward trappings and decides from then on to obey his inner voice – which is only another name for faith – and then discovers to his amazement this mysterious yet real force at work not only inside himself but in the outer world, realises at the same time that he is not master of this force and cannot use it as he wishes. On the contrary, he begins to understand that everything in his life, indeed life itself, is entirely dependent on the mysterious inner power, which, in the language of religion, is called God.

In their attempts to discover more about this mighty, mystical power and its relationship to man, prisoners have tried out various methods of developing their inner life. Not from abstract or theoretical considerations nor as scientific experiments, but simply and solely in order to be able to meet the frightening and unavoidable danger of death, they have tested the effects of prayer, of meditation, of yoga and even exorcism. Alongside the Old and New Testament – in so far as these were available in the form of single texts committed to memory – everything connected with the teaching of Yoga, parapsychology and theosophy became for them a highly important and very necessary practical help in their attempt to preserve body and soul while they tried to influence directly their outward circumstances by their spiritual efforts.

Panine confirms the real effect of prayer. Solzhenitsyn speaks of an inner 'relay system', which advises him unerringly on the qualities of each person he meets. Others testify to the complete reliability of what is commonly called 'instinct'. A person's character is, however, also reflected in his eyes. What the eyes say 'is better than a passport' in the view of Schifrin, Panine and Solzhenitsyn.

The most important mystical law

If it is true that a mere thought can bring about certain results, then it is not to be wondered at that in totalitarian systems 'thinking differently' as Schifrin calls it, is regarded as the worst kind of crime. Or that Solzhenitsyn writes: 'A mere thought was punishable!'

A story told by Solzhenitsyn in the first volume of *Gulag Archipelago* is the best illustration of the mystical law of which we have been speaking. An astrophysicist in solitary confinement tried to avoid going mad by thinking out specific astrophysical laws and problems. At one point he could go no further because he did not know by heart some of the dates and figures he needed. The mental exercise which enabled him to keep sane, came to a full stop. In his despair he began to pray. He did not know as yet to whom, whether to God or an unknown power.

A miracle happened. By mistake a text book on astrophysics, which he could never have dreamt would be available in such a place, was brought to his cell from the prison library. When two days later the mistake was discovered and the book taken away again, the astrophysicist had already looked up and learned by heart all the dates he needed. His mental work could go on, and not only saved him but also helped him to discover a new theory.

Schifrin also mentions cases of strange interventions in events which were threatening his inner convictions. Thus, during a camp search several improbable 'chance happenings' saved the only copy of the Bible and a handwritten text of the book of Exodus, in whose translation and dissemination Schifrin saw his life work. Here too, it was not the thought which had the effect. It was rather the mystical law, responding to a person's strong, inner concentration on a particular goal and bringing about the effect in an outside world seemingly beyond the person's influence. Neither the thought, nor the magical power of thought in the outer world, produced the desired result, but as Solzhenitsyn assumes in the second volume of Gulag Archipelago 'Heaven heard the prayers and intervened'.

It can therefore be said that any deviation from the prescribed way of thinking – a punishable offence under totalitarianism – is not the cause but the result of an inner philosophy of life, a philosophy which is dangerous to the ruling powers because it is 'inside' and hence uncontrollable. It is not so much the thoughts that are punishable, as the inner set of values. The strong inner concentration on a particular goal sets off events in the outer world, which set the stage for the realisation of the inner goal. This is the mystical basic law which changes the whole of human thinking and dynamites the ideas forming the foundation of science.

At the same time, this inner striving is not voluntary. It is not dependent on the desire or will of the person concerned. All that depends on the person is whether he wishes to follow the inner impulse or not. Yet as far as the outer world is concerned the decision to follow in future the call of the inner voice is an act of complete freedom, and we are reminded of Berdyaev's words that it is not man but God who desires the freedom of man.

Solzhenitsyn stresses again and again that it was only the weak who fell into the hands of the NKVD, out of fear. And here we have an interesting discovery of Grossman's. He found that those prisoners who opposed the totalitarian system and fought against it until their arrest, i.e. those who obeyed their inner voice, believed in the innocence of all the prisoners, while those who had been careful to avoid incurring any guilt towards the rulers and yet landed up in prison camp, believed that only in their case a mistake had been made, and that all the other prisoners were in fact guilty. Only suffering brought them to the realisation that very few bore any guilt towards the rulers, but that they themselves were guilty before their own souls, which demands they had neglected in order to serve their earthly lives.

This shows that we can never, even temporarily, in order to deceive the evil powers and save our own lives, deny our inner voice without paying a price, or as Solzhenitsyn says, we cannot 'in order to live, not live'.

A final word

'How can we free him, who is unfree in his soul?' asks the author of the Gulag Archipelago', and Schifrin replies: 'He alone is free, who frees himself from the wretchedness of inner slavery'.

The experience of loss of freedom has proved that every human being is in a position to create for himself a stage of complete freedom, and that it is within his power to change the world on the basis of the mystical law. Experience has further shown that the fate of men is not decided by earthly powers, by outward, physical forces, but only by the mystical power which from time immemorial has been called 'God', and whose relationship to man seems to depend on man's relationship to his inner voice. This is nothing less than the glorious confirmation of the ontological and empirical freedom of every human being. Man can hardly experience any greater happiness than the knowledge that he can influence events in the world, against and in spite of the mighty influence of Evil. This freedom, born of obedience to the inner voice, the soul, cannot be taken away from man by any outside force. He can only betray it himself.

The recognition that the invisible world is a reality must change the whole human thinking and learning of our age. However, there is no guarantee that man will draw the right conclusions from these experiences. The authors of the remarkable books we have quoted seem by no means certain when it comes to generalising and making available for others their prison experience of freedom following obedience to the inner voice, that what saved them must also save others.

In their view it is not from within, as their experience teaches, but from without that the freedom of the individual and of mankind will come. Solzhenitsyn thinks in terms of a human form of authoritarian society, whose ideological basis will be the Orthodox faith. Panine places his hope Church and the classical church organisation. Schifrin in esoteric teachings.

Yet they are precisely the men who ought to know that the salvation and liberation of man cannot be guaranteed by any form of organised society, by any church or ideology, by any esoteric or exoteric teachings, but only by the mighty power which guides both the inner and the outer world of man. Only when man obeys the voice of that power will he be free, even in the face of death, like Daniel in the lion's den.

As far as the inner voice is concerned, it is different for every single person, and there are no outward securities to guarantee it, such as reason, science, the Church or any teaching. But anyone whose eyes have been opened has no more need of these securities than a man with a compass need laboriously to figure out where North or South will be from any future position.

'He alone enters the Promised Land, who does not know where he is going,' says Lew Schestow – and I believe that too.

filler pic please

Declaration for Integrative, Evidence-Based, End-of-Life Care that Incorporates Nonlocal Consciousness

Stephan A. Schwartz, Gary E. Schwartz, PhD, Larry Dossey, MD

This Declaration, as you will see below, follows up the Manifesto for a Post-Materialist Science, which we reprinted in Network Review 115, Summer 2014, pp. 4-6. A volume based on this will be published early next year, with 18 contributors and entitled Expanding Science: Visions of a Post-Materialist Paradigm.

Introduction

In February 2014, a group of internationally known scientists from a variety of scientific fields (biology, neuroscience, psychology, medicine, psychiatry) participated in a summit on post-materialist science. Co-organized by Gary E. Schwartz, PhD and Mario Beauregard, PhD, of the University of Arizona, and Lisa Miller, PhD, of Columbia University, the summit was held at Canyon Ranch in Tucson, Arizona. The purpose was to discuss the impact of the prevailing mechanistic-materialist ideology within science and the emergence of a post-materialist paradigm for science, spirituality, and society. The resulting Manifesto for a Post-Materialist Science was published in *Explore* [2014; 10 (5): 272-274] and on the Open Sciences website, which also resulted from the summit (<http://opensciences.org/about/manifesto-for-a-post-materialist-science>).

In September 2015, a second meeting was held in Tucson, called The Final Transition Conference. Organized by consciousness researcher Stephan A. Schwartz, the purpose of the meeting was to explore the questions: What happens when we die, and what constitutes humane, decent care of the dying? The conference faculty was composed of therapists, clinicians, scholars, and researchers from the US, Europe, and Asia all of whom are involved in some way in the processes of human death. Many of those who attended felt that an exclusively materialist model of consciousness — the view that consciousness is produced entirely by the brain and that physical death annihilates it — cannot account for the rich and variegated experiences they see in the dying who are the focus of their research and healing service.

Their views were nuanced but on the existence of a nonlocal aspect of consciousness they agreed, and there emerged from the faculty of the Final Transition Conference the *Declaration for Integrative, Evidence-Based, End-of-Life Care that Incorporates Nonlocal Consciousness*. It was first drafted by Stephan A. Schwartz and Gary E. Schwartz (no familial relationship), who invited Larry Dossey to become the third drafter. They then submitted it to the faculty. This Declaration represents a consensus view of the undersigned faculty of The Final Transition Conference and others.

This Declaration is an application and extension of the 2014 Manifesto for a Post-Material Science to the greatest issues anyone faces: the origin, destiny, and nature of human consciousness, and how these considerations affect the care of humans at the end of life.

Anyone interested in joining us, and affixing their name to the Declaration, please contact Stephan Schwartz at: saschwartz@earthlink.net

Declaration for Integrative, Evidence-Based, End-of-Life Care that Incorporates Nonlocal Consciousness

1. Twenty-first-century medicine and healthcare pride themselves on being evidence-based. Whether the therapies are conventional, complementary, or integrative, in all instances the explicit philosophy guiding their use is their grounding in the best available scientific theories and outcome research. This same philosophy ostensibly guides end-of-life care.
2. And yet, the nature of consciousness has been largely explored only from the assumption that it is a poorly understood neurophysiological process entirely resident in the human organism. Its inherent physicality has become an ironbound axiom. However, a growing body of experimental and clinical research now challenges this assumption. The conference faculty was composed of therapists, clinicians, scholars, and researchers from the US, Europe, and Asia all of whom are involved in some way in the processes of human death. Many of those who attended felt that an exclusively materialist model of consciousness — the view that consciousness is produced entirely by the brain and that physical death annihilates it — cannot account for the rich and variegated experiences they see in the dying who are the focus of their research and healing service. Although the consensus of the authors and co-signers of this Declaration is that the collective evidence points toward this conclusion, other consciousness scientists believe that the current evidence is not definitive enough to conclude this with certainty.
3. Today, there are seven stabilized experimental protocols used in laboratories around the world, each of which requires the existence of nonlocal consciousness to be successful. All seven protocols have independently produced six-sigma results, meaning that the odds against a chance explanation of the experimental finding are roughly a billion to one, or above a 99.999999 percentile of certainty.
4. In addition, there are now five areas of consciousness science that are directly linked to the processes of death that also support the existence of a nonlocal, non-physiologically dependent consciousness. This research includes (1) near-death experiences (NDEs); (2) after-death communications (ADC); (3) death-bed vision and physical phenomena at the time of death; (4) laboratory studies with research mediums; and (5) reincarnation research, particularly involving young children.

5. We believe that the question, can consciousness exist that is not physiologically based? has been answered in the affirmative, and that it is time to move on — time to incorporate these findings into clinical applications and public policy, and integrate them into evidence-based, end-of-life care.
6. We believe that everyone involved in end-of-life care — patients, providers, loved ones, administrators, insurers, policy makers — should be educated in a non-sectarian, evidence-based manner concerning these findings, and how they can be integrated in the care of individuals at the end of physical life.
7. Programs should be developed that prepare patients and their loved ones for the journey following death, based on the evidence provided in 4. This can have major effects in reducing the fear of death in both patients and their loved ones.
8. The current practice of keeping severely ill patients alive, against all odds of meaningful recovery as judged by medical experts, needs to be rethought in light of this research. Important factors in this decision also include a patient's Living Will, the quality of his or her final days, and the desires and wishes of loved ones when a patient is no longer conscious or responsive.
9. The new consciousness research points to the existence of an individual's immortal, nonlocal consciousness, a perspective affirmed by many philosophical and religious traditions for millennia. If consciousness pre-exists physical birth, and continues after corporeal death in a cycle whose dimensions we do not yet know, then liberty, respect, and justice require that an individual have autonomy over when to terminate their corporeal existence. We believe this process is best served when every aspect of end-of-life palliative care representing the integration of sciences and humanities is available to that individual.
10. We emphasise that all of the above considerations have substantial economic implications for family members, health care providers, insurance companies, and societies.
11. We see nonlocal consciousness as existing within the broader context of the emergence of a new paradigm Science, one which incorporates consciousness. We recognize, however, that acknowledging non-physiologically based consciousness has the potential to evoke emotional responses that challenge deeply held beliefs in both mainstream science and religions. It will take a commitment of courage, compassion, and integrity to address the wealth of implications and opportunities afforded by integrating the research findings supporting a consciousness inclusive model with end-of-life care — more accurately, end-of-*physical* life care. Now is the time to advance this integration.

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Could more be done to help the NHS, which is failing to stem the tide of chronic illness?

Mark O. Mathews, BSc Hons DO

The increasing incidence of chronic illness is presenting the NHS with one of the biggest challenges ever. It is not something that can simply be put down to the fact that people are living longer. A large part of it is due to the fact that the bodies in which we live have not had the opportunity to evolve and adapt to the different environment and lif styles that we follow in response to the high tech world in which we now live.

There is evidence to suggest that part of the problem is a result of medical interventions themselves, such as the drugs and procedures intended to restore health in the first place. Applying a more holistic approach to healing based on natural medicine could provide a safe, efficient and economical way to ease the burden which is threatening the ability of the NHS to cope.

The history of science has been a story of competing ideas as different scientists have come up with ever clearer hypotheses to enable them to get a better intellectual understanding about how things work. Due to the financial benefits that the legal patenting and copywriting of one invention or another can have in the market place, these competing interpretations of meaning have taken on ever increasing economic and political significance. Eventually, reconciliation of the conflicts between competing theories has come through and expanded our knowledge of the universe.

For instance, Lamarck suggested that organisms could adapt to prevailing conditions and that these adaptations could be passed on to their progeny. Then Darwin's theory of natural selection suggested that changes occur through genetic variance. Those that enable a recipient to survive in a more effective way in prevailing environmental conditions would pass it on in their genes to future generations. Those that do not adapt to their environment die out. The scientific community then dropped the Lamarckian hypothesis in favour of Darwin's concept of natural selection and survival of the fittest. Two recent discoveries have brought these theories closer together again: epigenetics and neuroplasticity.

Epigenetics and neuroplasticity

In contemporary terms it seems that people only express a small part of their genetic potential. The expression of different genes can be modified as a result of environmental influences. The environment in which genetic expression is realised is diverse and variable. According Prof Marilyn Monk (1) genetic reprogramming can still have an impact on future generations, including epigenetic modification from ancestors, pregnancy, birth and upbringing, all of which can affect us in many different ways. An example of this is found in the children born to Dutch women who were starved by the Nazis during the first trimester of their pregnancy. These children had an increased risk of obesity in adulthood as the result of epigenetic changes that their mothers experienced. It was a biological response to help them store and make the most of

every bit of food that they were able to find (2). Children whose mothers smoked during pregnancy experienced changes in their DNA which could affect their health for the rest of their lives (3). Such examples fall into the sphere of what is now termed 'Epigenetics'.

Neuroplasticity is defined as the ability of the brain to reorganise itself by forming new neural connections throughout life. It allows the neurons in the brain to compensate for injury and disease and to adjust their activities in response to new situations or to changes in their environment (4). In their book 'Neurobehavioral Disorders of Childhood: an Evolutionary Perspective' (5), Robert Melillo & Gerry Leisman provide extensively well-researched scientific evidence that the ability to change and adapt is much more than was ever thought possible (5 p. 257), and state that it is commonly known that the major cause of illness and death in adults are lifestyle disorders such as heart disease, cancer, arthritis and depression (5 p. 244).

The capitalist system of economics, if played out in a free market place, could be seen as a Darwinian system of natural selection and survival of the fittest. This could be regarded as a dominant left brain approach to thinking. At a time when some international corporate businesses have become so large, monopolistic and powerful that they are able to exert disproportionate amounts of influence, sometimes behind the scenes, even on national governments, it is obvious that the rules of natural selection no longer apply.

Ecology and health

A world that is controlled via currency that we call money, which is bartered in a kind of international gambling casino between players with influence on nearly all the elements on which our lives depend, has become completely out of touch with reality. The world is manifestly failing to reconcile capitalism with the human, moral and ecological realities of Man's ability to live peacefully together as a community in a sustainable way on this magical planet floating in the universe, that we now have the privilege to call home.

The Lamarckian concept of biological species finding within themselves the ability to adapt to the environment which we now know can be passed onto their offspring could be regarded as a more creative right brain kind of activity.

Through our imagination, creativity, work, production, distribution and consumption, it is the natural resources of the earth within the context of the greater Universe that are able to sustain life and contribute to a sustainable future: i.e. one of liberty, equality and fraternity, as the French put it so succinctly.

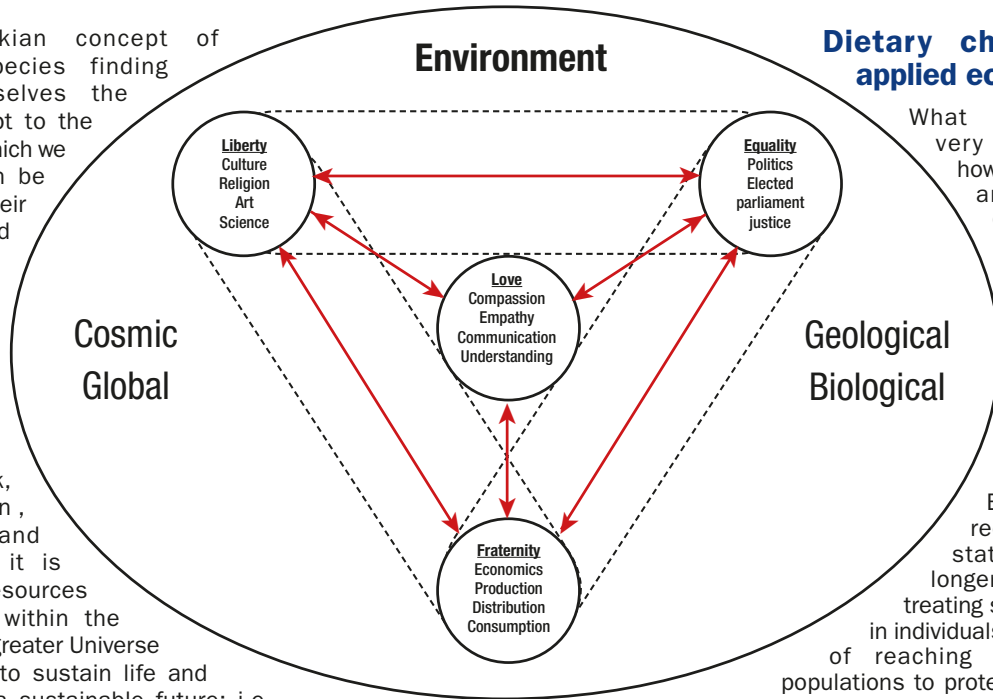
Today's society is paying a very heavy price for the combined effects of consumerism, poor diet (6) (7), inadequate exercise (8) (9), information overload, insufficient sleep, toxic environments, unhealthy lifestyles (10) and the fragmentation of local communities. The World Health Organisation, when it was first set up, described health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". Many of us who work in the sphere of natural health will be aware that some of the patients we see, having first been to see their medical doctors, were simply prescribed a drug to hide a symptom for which they were seeking help (11). This would seem to be based on the presumption that the symptom that they had is due to the absence of a drug.

Current concerns

The average spending of the NHS per capita is now around £2,000 per year (12). The growth of chronic illness is now costing about 70% of the NHS budget and rising unsustainably (13). In association with this there has been a steep rise in the number of children suffering from conditions that have impaired their health, behaviour and ability to learn, such as autism. Statistics from the USA demonstrated a 6-fold increase in diagnosed cases of autism between 1990 and 2010 (14).

The ability of the educational establishment, the health services and social services to work together to help the next generation of growing children is failing miserably. According to a report from the Westminster Health Forum (15) almost 18% of pupils in schools have special education needs. An estimated 32% of girls and 11% of boys aged 15 self-harm, and 75% of adult mental health problems begin before the age of 18 and 50% by the age of 14. "the failure to intervene early in preventing mental health and other social problems costs the Government £17 billion a year and the annual short term costs with child with mental health problems are 1.58 billion, the long term costs 2.35 billion. In an average class of thirty 15-year olds, three could have a mental disorder.

Another matter that is not often mentioned but is of international concern, is the fact that for all the convenience the disposable consumer society offers us, it has not improved people's health, welfare and sense of personal fulfilment throughout the world.



Dietary changes and applied ecology

What has changed very considerably, however, is our diets and lifestyles. One of the key factors is the reduction in the micronutrients in food and the increase in toxins of many different kinds in our environment. Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF stated, "It is no longer a question of treating severe deficiency in individuals. It is a question of reaching out to whole populations to protect them against the devastating consequences of even moderate forms of vitamin and mineral deficiency."

(16). Practitioners who are in touch with the basic principles of natural health will not be in the least surprised about these concerns.

World Health Organisation recorded a worldwide epidemic fourfold increase in the incidence of diabetes since 1980 (17). 11% of the world's population now suffer from it. 90% being type two which related to the change in life styles, diets and reduced physical activity (18). In the UK it takes up 10% of the NHS budget (19).

Over 150 years ago, when orthodox medicine involved bleeding people, or prescribing laudanum, the founder of osteopathy, A.T. Still, said that "osteopathic lesions could be *primary* or *secondary* ... The list includes mental shocks, bereavement, loss of property or friends, poor diet, overeating, extremes of weather, poisons including micro-organisms and their toxins and medical drugs." (20 pp. 158-159).

By far the biggest contribution to health that has occurred in the last two hundred years has been due to improved housing, clean water, better sewage management, improved working conditions, fewer accidents, periods of relative peace and access to better diets. Other than in cases of acute injury, trauma and/or infection, which traditional medicine has been very successful at helping to resolve, most people will have the symptoms for which they needed assistance as a result of their own unique combination of accumulated imbalances which conventional medicine is unable to reach.

Symptoms are usually the way the body is signalling that it needs help; simply repressing them with a drug for example, may provide some temporary relief. Unfortunately, it usually results in greater underlying imbalances which accelerate the downward cycle into chronic illness which is now growing into a crisis of epidemic proportions (21) (22) (23). One of the principles of medicine is to "first do no harm". It seems that conventional medical approaches to treatment, being largely based on the study of illness rather than health, have simply been unable to control this downward spiral or may have actually, in some cases, contributed to the unnecessary suffering that it causes (20 p. 86).

Things could be in danger of becoming very much worse. Imperial College have sent out in March 2016 a letter to their alumni requesting a donation for £1,000 to confront one of the most pressing challenges facing humanity: "antimicrobial resistance which is a global threat that could send modern

medicine back to the dark ages. Microbial resistance is here in our hospitals now and growing at an alarming rate. If we fail to tackle it, simple infections could become life threatening, cancer treatments ineffective and routine operations like knee replacement impossible" (24).

Healing is the innate tendency of all living things to be whole given the right environment. Each person will have the difficulties that they experience for their own complex combination of reasons. Expertise is the ability to make finer distinctions and to match needs specifically in the most efficient way. A functional approach, using a combination of natural medicine matched individually to each person in measured ways, together with changes in lifestyle, has proved to be very much safer, more effective, and fulfilling for all of those involved.

Indeed, I have had phenomenal success with children using this approach. Over the past 30 years, I have developed a measurable series of tests and therapeutic treatments –The Sunflower Programme - based on the founding principles of osteopathy. This is now the copyright of a registered charity, the Sunflower Trust (www.sunflowertrust.com).

The Sunflower Programme balances brain and body to help children be the best that they can be. It has demonstrated convincingly that it helps children to become balanced and integrated, ensuring they feel better, increase their ability to concentrate, improve their performance, and enable them to get on better with others.

"Dear Mark,

To say you are a miracle worker is an understatement. The changes in M are remarkable. He is more confident, talks and keeps eye contact. He is more engaged and concentrates when he needs. I could go on and on. Thanks for making our family happy and enjoyable.

Yours sincerely, S."

Here is just one example of hundreds of cases that could be quoted from the parents of a child who have been through the Sunflower Programme:

There is no magic and this approach is not miraculous; it is just applied ecology: helping to create the right environment physically, physiologically, mentally and emotionally to allow the innate tendency of nature to get on with the job it knows best how to do, which is one of the underlying principles of osteopathy clearly illustrated by A.T. Still (20 p. 336). This approach to healing is verified by research and academic validation (25).

Responsibility and efficiency demand that you first do the least you need to do in the safest way possible. The knowledge is there for anyone with a good medical training, given the interest, open mindedness, and determination to learn. We need to encourage a health system that is underpinned by a concern to keep people well and one that has scope to include natural therapies as part of an intervention and prevention mentality. This would improve overall health and wellbeing and save a great deal of suffering and money in the process.

As members of a healing profession we have a duty to our patients to take into account not just the structural and functional aspects of the body but also the influence of external environmental factors, emotions, behaviours, diet, and lifestyle choices.

Evidence-based medicine relying on a case history, observation of some orthopaedic tests and palpation is not exactly a quantifiable, measurable clinical basis on which to assess the amazing variety of factors affecting many different aspects of the integral health of each and every individual patient. Long before conventional doctors understood the relationship between the musculoskeletal, the motor sensory system, the autonomic system and the auto-immune system, A.T. Still had worked it out (20).

We are holistic beings and nothing happens in isolation. Using functional neurology, combined with principles of natural healing, it is now possible to establish what these variables are. It is then possible on an individual basis to discover what the relationship is to the structural, nutritional, mental and emotional factors that even classical osteopathy, although aware of, was unable to do. It is then possible to address each of these and many other factors with exactly the right mixture of natural approaches to healing and to assess the outcome measurably.

Functional neurology is something that professionally trained registered practitioners can learn. It enables those with the skill to enhance their delivery of appropriate natural approaches to healing in ways that their patients are able to experience immediately with the inevitable effect of enhancing the worth and reputation of their clinics.

Prevention is by far the best policy for health. I would urge everyone to learn more about this pioneering approach and help to reverse the trend of increasing the incidence of chronic illness.

Mark Mathews has been practising as an osteopath for 36 years. In addition to being principal of the Rêve Pavillon Natural Health Clinic he has also founded The Sunflower Trust (www.sunflowertrust.com), a charity that seeks to help young people with developmental or behavioural issues to achieve their full potential using osteopathic principles. He has written and contributed to numerous articles for national newspapers and appeared on television discussing his work.

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Humanising Healthcare: patterns of hope for a system under strain

Margaret Hannah

Why is there such widespread concern about our healthcare systems today? Quite simply, the inexorable rise in healthcare costs around the world is becoming unsustainable. That is true whatever the financial systems and organisational structures in place. In most developed countries healthcare inflation runs at about three or four percent per year, which as an exponential figure doubles the cost every 20 years.

Pressures in the system

The NHS, as an example, is rarely out of the headlines. It faces formidable funding issues, staff are routinely stressed, and efforts to move things on to a more sustainable footing seem less and less effective. In 2010 David Nicholson, the Chief Executive of the NHS in England, sent a letter to all healthcare providers saying that £20 billion (out of an annual budget of £100 billion) would have to be saved over a five-year period to 2015. This was the biggest saving challenge it had ever experienced. But it was largely achieved through efficiency measures familiar to anyone who runs a business - freezing pay, increasing pension contributions from staff, reducing the number of managers and administrative staff and delaying maintenance work.

But the underlying driver to healthcare inflation has not gone away and five years on, Nicholson's successor, Simon Stevens, described an even bigger saving of £30 billion now has to be made by 2020. In his Five Year Forward Plan he set out plans to undertake further efficiencies and to reconfigure services - again very familiar strategies for cost cutting in the private sector. Stevens estimated these strategies could achieve £22 billion in savings, but he also asked the government for an extra £8 billion because he couldn't imagine any other way to bridge the gap.

Another way is possible

It seems like a perfect storm is brewing. Unrelenting demand for healthcare, pressures on funding, an over-stressed workforce and options running out for addressing these issues effectively before the system collapses. Is another way possible? I believe there is - but not without deeply examining underlying assumptions and being bold enough to transgress the cultural norms of the dominant system. What follows is a short summary of work I have been involved in which is beginning to grow a new culture of healthcare better adapted to the changing circumstances described above.

The work started with a series of conversations with senior clinical managers at NHS Fife based on a framework called Three Horizons (www.iffpraxis.com/three-horizons). This helped us to describe our aspirations for a future health system which was sustainable and effective. In the course of these discussions, we heard about the "Nuka" system at Southcentral Foundation in Alaska and thought this was the kind of healthcare system we were hoping for.

'Nuka' is an Alaskan native word for a strong and extensive living structure. The Nuka system of healthcare sees staff and patients as participants in a web of life. This web is strengthened and enlivened by quality relationships between people built by open, honest and dynamic conversations. These take place at every level in their system between patients, staff, politicians and the wider community. In the Nuka system, they see the person not the condition. As they put it, "Diseases don't have people, people have diseases." They also recognise that the 'person' is more than an individual and includes their family, friends, community, culture and history. Staff working at Southcentral Foundation are trained to work in this way and are conscious that they too are on a healing journey in their lives.

Changing culture

These insights helped NHS Fife along with partners in social care, voluntary organisations and social enterprise to get started on changing the culture and pattern of care. Our first initiative involved finding ways for older people to thrive, not just survive, at home; to explore what matters to them in their lives and then address those aspirations by developing quality relationships and co-create solutions with them, their families and their community.

It was slow work. After a year, we had worked in this way with just six patients and were very unsure whether we should continue. But staff were keen. Each new story of an older person finding something meaningful and valuable in their lives had a knock-on effect on the staff who helped them to achieve this. As one of them said, "A little bit of hope goes a long way".

After five years, we are now working with over 15,000 patients in this way and have extended the work from older people's care to other areas including physiotherapy and podiatry. The change is subtle but profound: shifting from deficits to assets, problems to solutions, standard assessments to unique conversations and from clinical to relational practice.

Reciprocity and mutuality

Our assumptions have been challenged in ways we couldn't have imagined when we started. We know now that we can't facilitate change in others if we are not willing to change

ourselves. We now work differently, in a more integrated way and where possible in real partnership with our community. In addition to our professional training we recognise our need for good conversational skills to explore people's hopes for the future – what matters to them, what gives them joy in their lives, helps them thrive, not just survive. Another shift has been to recognise that we don't always have to be busy doing something with patients. Good quality conversation is itself of value and an important service to another human being.

The work is beginning to show that healthcare can renew itself if we are prepared to go beyond the constraints of the thinking which has led us to this point. It is not a magic fix, but working creatively and expanding what we consider as a resource for ourselves offers some hope to people working in a system under huge strain that another way is indeed possible.

Challenging the deep assumptions that drive modern healthcare helps staff explore new possibilities with patients and their families and shows signs of being highly

cost effective. This is because good quality conversations help people identify what they value in their lives, not what inputs they can get from staff. In Fife we are finding some patients saying they have achieved what they wanted from their contact with us and are telling staff they don't need to come back any more.

This is a novel experience for staff – being discharged by the patients and not the other way round. We are also finding patients are keen to help others – volunteering in the day hospital, or in one case, passing on a copy of the local newspaper to their elderly neighbour, as they did before they went into hospital. Meaningful and social activities are important for keeping well and generate mutual gains for those involved. This is a new type of sustainable healthcare, where the key characteristics are reciprocity, mutuality and diverse solutions. By drawing on these insights, we can grow a system of health and social care that is financially sustainable and highly valued by patients, families and staff alike.

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The Vibrant Years - Soul Time in the Human Life Span

Geraldine Schwartz

Our youth-oriented culture undervalues life as years pass. Nature images abound: we are a seed... a bud... a flower... a wilted blossom... dry petals crumbling... dust to dust. We are compared to seasons: born in spring, flourish in summer at our prime, fade in autumn, die in winter, what an oversimplification! We are not plants, concerned only to survive and propagate the next generation. We are born. We grow. We grow and grow. Some of us decline at an early time; others continue to grow and learn and make a contribution to the next generation over a lifetime. Milton Erikson, who identified the stages of human life almost a half century ago, called the stage of life I am about to describe the age of "generativity," the time when concern moves from focus on personal gain to the larger issues of life, to see the long view, the fuller picture, to contribute to the growth of the next generation. It is this time of life I would like to call "the age of the soul." It is in these years that we enter soul time.

Unlike our physical maturity, we do not enter this time within a particular chronological age range, as one enters puberty or menopause. Nor is it certain everyone will reach this time. In fact, some young people live a good portion of their lives in soul time, while some very old people retreat from their prime to such self concern that their childish behaviour defeats even their most generous caregivers. We can enter this "prime time of our lives" at any age, and we can stay vibrant and vigorous so long as we continue to engage the soul wisdom, sometimes called intuition, to know the right thing to do. Here is where human consciousness, which is ageless, makes us so different from the plants of my first metaphor.

At any time of our life we can choose to act with the vigour of youth, tempered with the wisdom of soul to participate in right acting, sometimes in a leadership role, but also comfortable in followership. As we act in cooperation with others, in concert, in coherence, our mind and spirit engages the body's immune systems to pour the neurochemical messengers of strength, power and good health into the part of our body that is ageless, the inner spirit that is truly us. We are continuously renewed and refreshed with a vibrancy that lights our way and shines out to light the paths of others.

Welcome the Mensch and the Old Soul

Various names have been given to people of any age observed to be living in soul time. One of these is the Jewish concept of "a mensch," a decent person who sees human higher possibility in all people, who can be counted on to do the right thing, regardless of personal cost. A mensch is a person who sees the mensch in others, soul to soul. Another name is "old soul," a person who acts in a way that displays human nobility, sometimes even in the face of treachery. I have seen

such behaviour in a five year-old, concerned about "Mummy's feelings" when he was in personal danger. I have seen it in a young woman working selflessly to save our country, and in a seventy-two year-old person willing to share his life to save the planet. The criterion is not the chronological age, but the maturity and the wisdom that underlies the person's value system.

But it is more than a value system. The age in which we live is too dangerous, and the matters at hand too urgent for the luxury of armchair philosophising. Values need to be expressed in action. Such action must be outward looking, embracing the larger, longer perspective about the critical issues of our time peace, the environment, and the new learning and thinking we will need if civilisation is to flourish in a new century full of discontinuities.

Action in the face of urgency and danger takes courage. Here we come again to the issue of a person's age. It is not that years of living are required to act the mensch, but that many of us use our years of experience to become less fearful. We learn how to exercise our powerful minds and spirits more readily.

This phenomenon has a practical outcome for each of us. Unlike the plants of earlier reference that exist the same in millions of copies, we are unique. Our learning, our life experience and hard won successes mean that the contribution of each of us is a specialised piece or thread of an eternal tapestry. Woven together, the fabric creates a mighty and awesome picture. This has an important lesson for leaders. Wherever we can collaborate, cross-fertilise, work as part of a team, we can maximise the effect of our effort. Working together creates "emergences" of higher order. All over the world we see the truth of this. The peace process in the Middle East and Northern Ireland inches forward as ancient enemies learn to work together. The environment benefits as groups on both sides of the issues cooperate. Businesses flourish as they harmonise their efforts to serve the needs of their clients.

Thus, to live vibrantly every day of our lives, to live in soul time, we need to engage the ageless wisdom of our highest and noblest selves, and we need to do this in the company of like-minded others. Such a cohort of leaders will evolve the consciousness of our species and create a legacy of hope for the next millennium.

Geraldine Schwartz, PhD

***From Journeys of Second Adulthood - A Woman's Search for Higher Ground**