Transpersonal Group Psychotherapy

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Presenter’s Background

- CA Institute of Transpersonal Psychology - 1972 syllabus
- gestalt - bioenergetics - ego psychology
- psycho-mystical traditions: Tibetan Buddhism, Sufism
- psychodynamic psychotherapy
- clinical supervision
- altered states of consciousness
- DSM-IV: ‘religious and spiritual problems,’ cults
- meditation
The Parrot Story
Aim of Transpersonal Methods

- symptom reduction
- behavior change
- conceptual framework for handling transpersonal experience
- emancipate awareness from the tyranny of conditioning
Aim of Transpersonal Methods

• open the compassionate heart
• gain access to one’s archetypal myths
• open intuition that lifts one beyond the senses
• expand consciousness to identify with a universal divine Presence
Definitions

- basic organ
- ego
- transpersonal
- conditioning
- states
- mysticism
Influences

- William James
- George Gurdjieff
- Aldous Huxley
- Roberto Assagioli
- R D Laing
- Idries Shah
- Stanislov Grof
- Arthur Deikman
- Frances Vaughan
- Charles Tart
- Seymour Boorstein
- Mark Epstein
- Mohammad Shafii
- Ken Wilber
- Peggy Wright
- A H Almaas
Transpersonal Stages of Development

- identification with self
- dis-identification from self
- transcendence of self
STAGES OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

SUFI SM

CONTENTMENT (Riḍâ) — INTEGRATED BEING (İNŞÂN-İ KÂMİL) — COMPLETE NAIFS (NAIFS-İ KÂMILA)

TRUST IN GOD (TAWAKKUL) — FULFILLING NAIFS (NAIFS-İ MÂRDİYYA)

PATIENCE (ŞABR) — FULFILLED NAIFS (NAIFS-İ RÂDIYYA)

POVERTY (FAQR) — SECURE NAIFS (NAIFS-İ MÛTMÂINNA)

RENUKCIATION (ZUHĐ) — INSPIRED NAIFS (NAIFS-İ MÛLHÂMA)

ABSTINENCE (WARA') — ACCUSING NAIFS (NAIFS-İ LAWWÂMA)

REPEALANCE (TAUBA) — HUMAN NAIFS (NAIFS-İ İNSÂNI)

ANIMAL NAIFS (NAIFS-İ HAIWANI)

VEGETATIVE NAIFS (NAIFS-İ NEBÂTİ)

EGO PSYCHOLOGY

GENITAL STAGE

SUPER EGO

PHALIC STAGE

EGO

ANAL STAGE

ID

ORAL STAGE

MATURE ADULTHOOD

YOUNG ADULTHOOD

ADOLESCENCE

PUBERTY

LATENCY

LOCOMOTOR-PHALLIC

MUSCULAR-ANAL

ORAL-SENSORY

EIRKENS' EIGHT AGES OF MAN

(chart from Shafii, p. 22-23)
Group Frame

- leadership
- intentional model
- selection of members
- evaluation
- exclusions
- meetings
- evaluating progress
Core Areas of Exploration

- cloudy mind
- training mind
- catalyzing transpersonal consciousness
Training an Untrained Mind

- ethical
- attention
- emotions
- motivation
- refining awareness
- wisdom
- intrapersonal
- interpersonal
Ethical Training

sin: ‘to miss the mark’
• orthodox
• traditional
• unethical behavior
Attentional Training

• observing ego
• asleep vs. awake
• mindfulness
• remembering one’s self
• meditation
Emotional Transformation

- contact - validate - experience
- express
- cultivating positive emotions
- dis-identification practice
Training Motivation

- unaware of our motivations
- object mode - receptive mode
- motive determines consciousness
- serving the task at hand
Refining Awareness

• cultivating intuition
• refining perception
• awareness shifts to Being itself
Training Wisdom

- perennial philosophy
- lives and writings
- teaching stories
- non-dual thinking
- ‘that little smile that hits your face when things fall apart’
Intrapersonal Training

- individual dialogues
- attention to feelings, thoughts, sensations, motivation
- unconscious material
- allowing
- personality vs. essence
Interpersonal Psychiatry

- Sullivan, Leary, Shostrum
- phenomenological method
- eight types displayed
  - four aggressive
  - four passive
- testing tool
- circular display
Interpersonal Training

• interpersonal group psychotherapy
• ego strengthening
• mutual support re: awareness

• interpersonal personality types
  – dictator
  – con-artist
  – judge
  – rebel
  – doormat
  – believer
  – martyr
  – helper
Personality Types & Essence Aspects

Personality type on outer circle

Aggressive
-passive

Con artist
Teacher
Can-do
Helper

Judge
Player
Healer
Lover

Rebel
Artist
Hard worker
Student

Doormat
Believer
Martyr
Teacher

Passive

Essence quality on inner circle

Believer
Martyr
Helper
Teacher

Can-do
Lover
Player
Judge

Hard worker
Artist
Rebel
Con artist

Dictator
Con artist
Teacher
Can-do
Helper

Personality type on outer circle

Essence quality on inner circle
# Aggressive Interpersonal Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONALITY</th>
<th>ESSENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dictator</td>
<td>can-do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>controls</td>
<td>yields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demands</td>
<td>states openly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pushes</td>
<td>harmonizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brutal</td>
<td>compassionate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stone-walling</td>
<td>authentic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bravado</td>
<td>brave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demand respect</td>
<td>humble</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Passive Interpersonal Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONALITY</th>
<th>ESSENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>doormat</td>
<td>hard worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>depressed</td>
<td>rest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unworthy</td>
<td>worthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>helpless</td>
<td>helper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passive</td>
<td>assertive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obeys</td>
<td>harmonizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shame</td>
<td>humble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passive-aggress</td>
<td>standing fast</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What to do with your type?

- ‘travel in your home land’
- summarize observations
- note the type arising
- disrupt/contain
- seek the essential expression
Training Leaders

- ethics
- conventional group methods
- transpersonal methods
- personal therapy
- clinical supervision
- meditation practice
Research Methods/Tools

- interpersonal prototypes
- mystical experience
- spiritual assessment
- dimensions of meditative experience

- consciousness I, II, III
- ways to live
- general index of reality
- religious experience
- fear of personal death scale

(c.f. MacDonald, et. al. 1995)
Building Community

- acceptance
- attention
- informed action locally
- seamless whole

- contacting the pre-existing communion
- waking one another up repeatedly
- linking with the Tradition in history
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