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Towards A Transpersonal Drama Therapy

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This is to certify that the research paper prepared

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and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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Complies with the regulations of the university and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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## ABSTRACT

### Towards a Transpersonal Drama Therapy

Cindy Coady

This paper describes the need for a transpersonal drama therapy method, and explores the possibilities of what that may look like. The end result will be the creation of a new transpersonal model of drama therapy out of a synthesis of a transpersonal psychologist's ideas and the method of a drama therapist. The work connects the concepts of the Diamond approach in transpersonal psychology with that of Johnson's developmental transformation method in drama therapy. This work advocates that we should not only define spiritual wellness but also incorporate and integrate its construct within our field. As drama therapists we need to become more aware and sensitive to the spiritual dimensions that exist within all of us, to take into account the existence of spiritual aspects of personality and to embrace this resource for growth and change through the use of transpersonal drama therapy.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This paper is a point in a journey that I have been on for many years. It is a culmination of everything that is important to me personally as well as in my work. The realization of this merger would not have been possible if it were not for all the support I received.

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Finally to the Great Spirit, You have been my most treasured guide through this journey, I want to thank you for the essence which enabled me to create this work, I am eternally grateful.



## DEDICATION

I dedicate this paper to my mother, my guardian angel, having you in my life is proof that God is real. The road on this journey was long and difficult at times. You stood by me always and believed in me even when I doubted myself. I love you and could not possibly express in words my gratitude for you. To have you as an example of womanhood, parenting, friendship, and human being-ship is an honor.

Mental Health

Spiritual Health

The Trauma and Recovery

Coming Together

### Chapter 2: Trauma and Recovery

Spirit is power

Transparency

Spirituality

Psychology

Basic Assumptions

Techniques

Challenges

Approaches

Ken Wilber

Stanley Cavell

Hamed Ali

## Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b>             | 1  |
| Theater                                    | 1  |
| Mental health                              | 2  |
| Spiritual Journey                          | 3  |
| The Transpersonal Approach                 | 4  |
| Coming Together                            | 5  |
| <b>Chapter 2: Transpersonal Psychology</b> | 7  |
| Spirit in psychology                       | 7  |
| Transpersonal psychotherapies              | 8  |
| <i>Spirituality</i>                        | 10 |
| <i>Psychological</i>                       | 12 |
| Basic Assumptions                          | 14 |
| Technique                                  | 16 |
| Challenges                                 | 17 |
| Approaches in Transpersonal Psychology     | 17 |
| Ken Wilber's "Spectrum model"              | 18 |
| Stanislav Grof's "Holotropic Model"        | 21 |
| Hameed Ali's "Diamond approach"            | 23 |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <b>Chapter 3: Transpersonal Drama Therapy</b>             | 30 |
| The spirit in Drama Therapy                               | 30 |
| Approaches in Transpersonal Drama Therapy                 | 32 |
| <i>Dr Penny Lewis's Two Stage Model</i>                   | 33 |
| <i>Saphira Linden's Omega Transpersonal Drama Therapy</i> | 39 |
| <br>  |    |
| <b>Chapter 4: The Transformational Diamond Approach</b>   | 44 |
| Introduction  | 44 |
| Genesis   | 45 |
| Drama Therapy frame of reference                          | 49 |
| Therapeutic process                                       | 53 |
| The Transformational Diamond Model                        | 56 |
| The goals of the work                                     | 58 |
| Concepts regarding health and disjunction                 | 59 |
| Role of the drama therapist                               | 61 |
| How to account for therapeutic change                     | 61 |
| The population served                                     | 62 |
| Limitations   | 63 |
| <br>  |    |
| <b>Chapter 5: Conclusion</b>                              | 64 |
| <br>  |    |
| <b>References</b>   | 69 |

## Chapter 1

### **Introduction**

This research paper is the culmination of the numerous journeys I have embarked upon as a health care practitioner. It is an amalgamation of the aspects of my life that I believe are important in the human experience. It is the marriage of the idea of transpersonal health with the healing aspects of theater.

### ***Theater***

Drama is at the center of a lot of different aspects of my life. I seem to always be drawn back to it in one way or another. As a child, drama was a tool for me. It seemed only natural to play out different scenes, trying out different roles and stories to gain a better perspective and understanding of my existence. When I was in grade two, I was diagnosed with a learning disability. During this period, neither the school nor the teachers had any idea what to do with me. They believed I would be unable to learn no matter how or what they taught me. Due to what I believe was the fear of the unknown, the teachers ridiculed me in front of my peers and tried to make my family and believe that I would not amount to anything. After much advocating on my mother's part, they agreed to keep me moving with my class but paid very little attention to me. Fortunately, at this time, I discovered music and drama. I began to get recognition from the theater I was doing. I was no longer that girl in the corner but Cindy, the school's actress. This title pleased me and I kept it throughout my academic career. I believe strongly that drama gave me a purpose and allowed me to develop a strong understanding of who I

was and just as importantly who I was not. Drama became a passion of mine and was the one thing I did very well. Unfortunately, when I finally began to seriously study the art in higher education, I was unfulfilled. There always appeared to be something missing.

### ***Mental health***

I decided to pursue another interest of mine, which was working in the “mental health” profession. I enjoyed the act of becoming intimate with other human beings in a therapeutic sense, participating in their journey through life and being a guide through some part of that journey. In my final internship for my Special Care Counseling degree, I worked with adolescents diagnosed with “Conduct Disorder” at the local children's hospital. During my work with this group I was struck by their lack of communication skills. There seemed to be no way for this group of adolescents to connect or become close to anyone, let alone their peers, which is important during that phase of life. The group goal became guiding them towards a place where they could find a voice, a way to communicate. At the time, there seemed to be no other way for me to do this other than through theater. I knew that playing with different dramatic mediums would help them to discover new ways to communicate. After much hard work and negotiation, the group decided to create a fictional story with the help of puppets and perform it for the hospital staff. Each group member participated in creating the text for the play as well as designing and making the puppets. During the process I witnessed the group members attempting new forms of communication. They respected one another and had a space where their words and actions were validated. This experience clarified my idea that the arts could be healing.

## *Spiritual Journey*

As a Special Care Counselor, I was taught to assess individuals using the bio-psycho-social method. I felt that it was of great importance to look at the various contributing factors to a person's psychopathology; however, I felt that there was a specific spectrum of the individual that was being ignored. It was the concept of an individual spirit.

In the past, it was decided that medicine would be responsible for the body, psychology would be responsible for the mind and religion would take care of the soul. Our whole became fragmented. If it was viewed that way then it was certainly being treated that way (Elias and Ketcham, 1995; Horovitz, 1994). As I worked with patients, I found it impossible to neglect the individual's spirit. At this time my definition of spirit was the individual's driving force. I decided that it was time to reconnect these fragmented parts to help the individual in becoming whole, once again. I believed it was important to consider the individual's spirit when working with them. The idea seemed nice, however the question that kept coming back was: "what exactly is Spirit?" I knew what the word meant to me but coming up with a proper definition was a little more difficult.

I have come to the conclusion that asking this very question is as difficult as asking for the answer to the meaning of life. There are definite answers to these questions; however, depending on experience, culture, religion and social upbringing, the answer will vary. A listener's understanding of your words depends on their interpretation. The definition of spirit is difficult since one can become bewildered by the

use of words. After all, the word spirit is a very ambiguous term. It is mentioned in many texts, those of religion, psychology, philosophy and medicine and, since all these schools have chosen to look at human health separately and from different angles, how could they agree on the definition of such a concept. In reading such texts, I have discovered that a universally accepted definition is not given and it is up to the reader to interpret with their own ideas and prejudice.

It is my idea that spirit is a word used to define as Jung states: “ An inexpressible, transcendental idea of all embracing significance ” (Adler & Fordham, 1960 p.320). Jung also states that:“ Spirit like God denotes an object of psychic experience which can not be proved to exist in the external world and can not be understood rationally” (Adler & Fordham, 1960, p.329). The idea of not being understood rationally is an interesting concept in the helping profession. When asking individuals to begin embracing their significance it is important to realize that one may need to bring them to a place which may not be rational.

### *The Transpersonal Approach*

It is my belief that we spend our entire higher education reading, listening and writing, trying to find those concepts or ideas that fit with our own. Some never find it and dedicate themselves to creating something that reflects what they want to be a part of. Others find fellowship in their thinking and continue to learn and elaborate on the subject. When I began researching definitions of spirit, I stumbled upon transpersonal psychology. Not only did the theories found in transpersonal psychology provide me with a definition of spirit that was close to my own ideas. It also opened the door to a whole

history of research and theory that I believed could be coupled with the way I work as a drama therapist.

It became clear to me that I should focus my research on the liaison between our spiritual potential and the healing aspects of drama.

### *Coming Together*

This paper is a theoretical endeavor to discover the compatibility of a specific transpersonal approach with the theories of drama therapy. The outcome will be a newly designed and spiritually specific drama therapy model.

Chapter two will provide two brief descriptions of approaches on transpersonal psychology and it will focus on a third known as the Diamond approach. My personal work will be based on this last approach.

Chapter three will be an overview of the work already done in the field of transpersonal drama therapy to create links to spiritual matters and transpersonal psychology.

Chapter four will be the creation of a new transpersonal drama therapy model derived from the work of Hameed Ali's Diamond Approach and David Read Johnson's Developmental Transformation entitled The Transformational Diamond Model.

Chapter five is the conclusion. Although finalized, it is in no means the end. Bringing drama therapy in to the world of spirituality is a life long challenge. I am



committed to this work and feel that this is only the beginning.

## Chapter 2

### Transpersonal Psychology

#### **Spirit in psychology**

The idea of integrating the spirit into psychotherapy may be a difficult concept to understand. It may also be consequential to ask why it is important to work within a spiritual realm in psychotherapy. It is further complicated by the ambiguity surrounding the subject. The theory of spirit is not a unified, clearly-defined, approach.

Spirituality is included in several psychological theories. Maslow defines the spiritual life as a characteristic of human nature in his theory of self-actualization (1971). In Assagioli's supposition of Psychosynthesis, he states that a structure of higher consciousness exists in all human beings. He believed that spirituality did not only belong to experiences connected with religion but to all states of awareness in a person (1965). Jung seems to be in continuous conflict with his struggle for spiritual attainment. Stating that the concept of spirit is "a most perplexingly ambiguous term" (Adler, Fordham and Read, 1960, p. 320).

Although many include a spiritual aspect to their philosophies, there is one school of psychology that envelops their ideas on the human condition around their concept of spirituality. This is the school of transpersonal psychology.

## **Transpersonal Psychotherapy**

According to Penny Lewis, a transpersonal drama therapist: “ Transpersonal Psychotherapy, is the process through which individuals transform their identity from a limited history based sense of self to an experience of their soul essence. From the experience of the soul, individuals can access a relationship to the numinous and their unique life purpose” (Lewis, 2000, p. 260).

It seems that throughout time spiritual traditions and psychology were the only ones that could separately provide answers for the world's most difficult question, “who am I”? The spiritual traditions stated that the most fundamental aspect of who you are is found within our spirit/soul. Psychology, on the other hand, came up with the explanation of a self and ego. Both psychology and spirituality/religion have produced different languages and metaphors for describing the human condition. It has become clear through time however, that any explanation in psychology or spiritual/religious teachings that only considered their own philosophies would fall short. Transpersonal psychology is the attempt to put these two answers together by honoring the learning of each. It is concerned with developing the self while honoring the need to go beyond what we consider the self. Transpersonal work does not mean, however, that the focus is merely on the high end of the human experience. It focuses on the personal realm of ordinary consciousness as well. (Mann, 1984; Washburn, 1988; Cortright, 1997; Boorstein, 1991)

It is important at this point to distinguish between religion and spirituality because the two have been used interchangeably in the past. This is not the case in transpersonal

psychology. Several Theorists such as Ali, Cortright and Wilber take the time to differentiate the two, and it is very important that the difference be noted.

Religion is an organized establishment founded in a collaboration of beliefs, values and teachings. Spirituality is the soul's quest for the Divine, which may or may not be connected, to a specific religion (Fukuyana, 1999). For the purpose of this research we will be focusing on the aspect of spirituality.

Transpersonal psychology has been criticized for being removed from the reality that most people live by. However, this seems to be the important aspect of its work. The point of transpersonal psychotherapy is to focus on the aspects of the human experience that have been neglected in the past and by previous psychological models. In doing so, we move towards a more holistic sense of health. Only by delving into the spiritual dimensions that include and transcend reality can we discover an adequate answer to the problems of the human existence.

If we look at the word *transpersonal* it is clear as to its intent. The word *Trans* refers to "above and beyond" It may also pertain to "across" or "the other side". Both these meanings of *Trans* are appropriate when discussing the ideas of transpersonal psychology. On one count, transpersonal psychology looks at factors that are *beyond* the personal but at the same time the work may move *across* the personal realm as well. Personal, according to the Webster dictionary means: "Relating to or having the nature of a person or self-conscious being: belief in a personal God. " Going beyond the personal dimension to the universal, or the spirit. Putting the two words together creates a definition of transpersonal, as "beyond the being". This is true however, in the evaluation

of the field, practitioners of transpersonal psychology are moving towards finding the sacred in ordinary, conscious personal life as well. Transpersonal psychology studies how the spiritual is expressed in and through the personal, as well as the transcendence of the self. Of course, it has become clear that transpersonal psychology must include the whole and not just the high end of human experience, but the very personal realm of ordinary consciousness as well.

### **Transpersonal Models of Transformation**

If transpersonal psychology is the integration of spirituality and psychology, it becomes important to depict the overall background of the two. What hypothesis about human nature and consciousness do they make? And what applications are there for human development?

#### *Spirituality*

The spiritual dimension in the West has been concerned with seeking a relationship with the Divine, while spirituality in the East focuses on the merging of the individual with the Divine (Fukuyana, 1999).

All spiritual systems however believe and work upon the foundation that “Our fundamental identity is a spiritual being or essence of soul” (Cortright, 1997 p. 31). Our problems are due to a lack of knowledge or a connection to this aspect of our selves. This lack of connection is due to conditioning, which teaches us to focus more on our outer nature, i.e., our bodies and minds.

So, according to the spiritual perspective, psychopathologies are caused due to a lack of consciousness of our spirit and our connection with the Divine, which in turn causes alienation from true self. Then, to reestablish and deepen the soul's relationship with spirit by becoming involved in spiritual practice will help restore health.

In Smith's description of perennial philosophy, the world's spiritual traditions all believe that they have the most complete map to the human condition. The appeal of this philosophy is due to its wide range and the ability it has to encompass a variety of spiritual experiences within it.

Smith (1976) states that we have four levels in the dimensions of our identity :

- Body
- Mind
- Soul
- Spirit

The first two levels are self-evident and studied by conventional science and psychology but soul and spirit need more concrete explanation. In Smith's theory, soul is considered the part of us that transcends birth or death, a sort of vehicle for other aspects of the self. So while our soul is the vehicle that brings us to the Divine, our spirit is what identifies and is connected to the Divine so our spirit resides within our soul. No longer is there duality or multiplicity because everything exists as one.

In describing cosmology ( Smith, 1976), the perennial philosophy also delivers four different dimensions of existence:

1. The terrestrial plane: this is what we know as reality and sensible experience.
2. The intermediate plane: also known as the psychic plane. It includes our subtle body.
3. The celestial plane: This is the realm of the personal Divine, which is often experienced in form but can also be without form as well.
4. The infinite plane: This is the realm of impersonal Divine. At this level, there's nothing but the Divine

### *Psychological*

There are many different schools and models in psychology and psychotherapy. All of them provide varying windows in to the human psyche. Their commonality is in the belief that our identity is psychological in nature. There are three major schools in the psychological field (Gray, 1991):

1. Behaviorism: Beginning with Pavlov, the first force in psychology and still the therapy of choice for much pathology such as phobias. It's biggest limitation is that it restricts itself to the outwardly observable, attributing pain to the conditioning that people receive. Viewing health as being obtained by altering or changing that condition.

2. Psychoanalysis: Fathered by Freud, psychoanalysis is interested in the interior of the psyche by considering the unconscious as well as the conscious. It believes that we are greatly affected by our childhood and that our dreams and subconscious thoughts hold keys to unlock what we are unaware of. There seems to be much conflict within our psyche between impulse and defense, mind vs. body, self vs. society, id vs. superego, sex vs. aggression. Our problems stem from not successfully passing through different developmental stages. The goal in therapy is to go back to those missed steps and recreate them, bringing them back to consciousness.

3. Humanistic: Beginning with Maslow and Rogers, the focus was on studying healthy people. Self-actualization is the process in which human beings begin to discover and work towards greater potential. The failure in achieving this potential will cause psychopathologies. Therapy is used to expand and present new and healthy possibilities of self and to replace an inauthentic existence with an authentic one.

Both spiritual and psychological frameworks produce very different assumptions about the human condition. Although they are often seen as competing with one another they both have one thing in common and that is that they both function within our Being. These spiritual and psychological systems each describe essential aspects of the human experience and their metaphors and images describing the human condition are overlapping and complementary. Transpersonal psychology works on raising the idea of



self to a larger context. This could not be complete without bringing together both the psychological and spiritual dimensions. The idea is to integrate the three previous forces in psychology with that of perennial wisdom. Because of this union, transpersonal psychology views the entire range of human functions. This also leads to diverse theoretical and treatment perspectives. The desired end result is that transpersonal psychology can provide a multi-perceptual framework.

### **Basic Assumptions**

In his book Cortright (1997) discusses key assumptions that define a transpersonal approach. Even though there are different perspectives in the field, Cortright believes that there are principles that unite them all. I found that this type of synopsis (Cortright, 1997, pp 16-21) was very helpful at pinpointing those similarities.

- *“Our essential nature is spiritual:* Our being is both spiritual and psychological in nature, however, transpersonal views give more importance to the spiritual, believing that this aspect of self supports its psychological structure as well.
- *Consciousness is multidimensional:* The normal, ordinary consciousness most people experience is but the most outward tip of consciousness. Spiritual experiences often lead people to discover altered realms and states of consciousness that reveal how limited regular consciousness is.

- *Human beings have valid urges towards spiritual seeking, expressed as a search for wholeness through deepening individual, social, and transcendent awareness:* The search for wholeness leads individuals to seek on the transpersonal plane, which has been avoided by other schools of psychology.
- *Contacting a deeper source of wisdom and guidance within is both possible and helpful to growth:* Looking for a deeper source of guidance than that of ego or self. Accessing inner wisdom for greater emotional and psychological integration.
- *Uniting a person's conscious will and aspiration with the spiritual impulse is a superordinate health value:* guiding people to a spiritual orientation helps them become aligned with the healing forces of the psyche along with psychological integration.
- *Altered states of consciousness are one way of accessing transpersonal experiences and can be an aid to healing and growth:* Altered states can open doors to the foundation of our being opening up new possibilities of consciousness. Altered states have significant implications for psychological work.

- *Our life and actions are meaningful:* We develop through our life actions. Everyone is significant. Transpersonal psychology helps us put meaning to those events.
- *The transpersonal context shapes how the person is viewed:* most therapies view the therapist and client as different. A transpersonal approach views the client just like the therapist, as an evolving being.

### **Technique**

If the goal of transpersonal psychology is to expand consciousness and widen the entire range of the human experience, then what we can do with clients and how we practice is limitless. This idea is very exciting. It takes away all boundaries; it allows us as therapists to be more receptive to all the needs of the client both in what they want and how they want it to happen.

Some of the techniques in transpersonal psychology are as follows:

"Interpretation, reflection, focusing, exploring cognitions, confrontation, role play, guided imagery and fantasy, dreamwork, bodywork approaches, breathwork, expressive arts techniques, expanding expressiveness, meditative practices, journal work, voice work and altered state work." (Neher, 1980; Mann, 1994; Lewis, 2000; Linden, 2000; Cortright, 1997)

## **Challenges**

The most pressing challenge for transpersonal psychology is the ambiguity in the subject matter. Its ideas and images of work with clients may be construed as fuzzy and not measurable. This makes it very difficult for some clinicians especially behaviorists, to understand the therapeutic work done with the clients.

There is a strong need for transpersonal psychology to synthesize into itself more powerful insights and techniques that the behavioral, psychoanalytical, and humanistic schools have discovered. Once this is done the ideas found in this theory will reach their full stature and will create more definition.

Because transpersonal psychology views all psychological processes against a spiritual backdrop, many are afraid of the implications of a connection to religious schools or the paranormal (Cortright, 1997 p. 22).

## **Approaches in Transpersonal Psychology**

The concept of transpersonal psychotherapy does not belong to one writer. Ken Wilber, Carl Jung, Stanislav Grof and Hameed Ali's theories all represent different interpretations of the viewpoints in transpersonal psychology. There commonality is that they all articulate a comprehensive psycho-spiritual vision of life and it's unfolding.

### *Ken Wilber's Spectrum Model*

Ken Wilber is one of the most influential writers in the field of transpersonal psychology. His work has served as a focus point of much theoretical discussion in the field. He has helped to create a theoretical core in the subject that was previously lacking. Wilber compared consciousness to light. He talked about the similarities in the way light consists of many colors with the way consciousness consists of many levels. In his theory, all psychologies and spiritual traditions are right. They all contain partial and complementary truths about the human condition; therefore, all psychologies and spiritual philosophies fit somewhere on his spectrum of consciousness. However, they cannot work alone. Bits and pieces must be fused together. Western psychology concerns itself with the lower and middle portion of this spectrum moving up to the upper levels of consciousness represented by the spiritual spectrum and thus Wilber's "Map of consciousness" is created.

Wilber's "map of consciousness" is not really a map but a concept. The idea is that at each stage, the individual is faced with different developmental tasks. These tasks challenge the person to bring forth new abilities and levels of adaptation. When the task is met, the individual's psyche will adapt and organize the new information gained and move to a new level. If the developmental tasks are not met, then development will stay stagnant where they are currently. Wilber (1977, p.60) suggests three basic levels: prepersonal, personal and transpersonal, and each of these stages have three sub-stages.

## 1. Pre-Personal

- Sensoriphysical (Piaget's sensorimotor level)
- Phantasmic-emotional (the emotional-sexual level)
- Rep-mind (representational mind or Piaget's preoperational thinking)

## 2. Personal

- Rule/role mind (Piaget's concrete operational thinking)
- Formal-reflective (Piaget's formal operational thinking)
- Vision-logic (Burner and Arietie's hypothesized step beyond Piaget)

## 3. Transpersonal

- Psychic (the perennial philosophy's level of mind or intermediate power)
- Subtle (the perennial philosophy's level of soul or celestial plane)
- Causal (the perennial philosophy's level of spirit or infinite plane)

Failure to develop in the pre-personal stage will manifest as the levels of psychological organization, which are known as psychoses, borderline and neurosis.

Wilber accepts standard psychotherapeutic practice when treating these pathologies.

Medication, structure building and depth therapies work best.

Failure in the personal stage will result in pathology, identity neurosis, and existential pathology. Wilber believes that the existential therapy is the best treatment for these pathologies.

Finally, failure on the transpersonal level will develop into what Wilber calls psychic disorders, subtle disorders, and causal disorders. Treatment for what Wilber calls spiritual emergencies varies. He uses such methods as Structure therapy, prayer, meditation, diet, exercise, and integration of spiritual practice in daily life.

Wilber's believes that the earlier and more severe the wounding is, the greater the psychopathology. This is of course with consideration to the genetic predisposition, past karma (what individuals have done in past lives) and spirit roles (Wilber, 1998).

This is a very brief summary of Wilber's ideas and his “ spectrum of consciousness.” It is a movement through the planes of consciousness. The planes that scientists, doctors and therapists are beginning to acknowledge are spiritual within them, working from a place of fragmentation to becoming whole. This is accomplished by using many diverse schools of thought with the belief that psychological development leads to spiritual growth

### ***Personal reflection***

I think that the aspect of Wilber's theory that struck me most was his integrative idea that all psychologies and spiritual traditions have a bit of truth in them concerning the human psyche and so they all fit somewhere in his spectrum of consciousness. I believe that this allows for all schools of psychology and spirituality to become one,

which will allow for more flexibility within the way someone is diagnosed to the way they are treated. Wilber also brings together the concepts of psychology and spirituality, and clearly connects them in his three stages.

I do, however, have difficulty with his three stages. In my opinion spiritual change can begin at any one of those realms and does not or can not necessarily follow the particular sequence he has laid out. This leads to the problem that Grof (1989) and Cortright (1997) have pointed out in their books. Wilber's theories are nicely laid out and look very convincing however, the problem is that he is a theoretician and not a clinician and therefore his concepts are not experientially grounded.

### ***Stanislav Grof's Holistropic Model***

Grof's transpersonal work started in the 1950s. He was quite distinctive because of his use of altered states of consciousness to obtain therapeutic growth. Grof has developed a new map of consciousness due to his research on the effects of LSD, which go beyond conscious states and work in the transpersonal. In his work, he observed that most people went through similar realms of consciousness when on LSD. Because LSD is illegal, Grof mimics the effects of LSD by exposing people to loud music and deep breathing.

The basic map involves three broad territories:

1. The realm of the sensory barrier and personal unconscious: This realm can be broken with the use of mind-altering drugs. Once broken, it leads to the unconscious.



2. The prenatal or birth related realm: This realm is connected to our birth-related experiences and serves as the central organizing principle of the psyche.
  
3. The transpersonal realm: This realm is responsible for a variety of different spiritual states such as out of body experiences, telepathy, recall of previous life, Shamanic states.

Grof believes that a person works through the first two territories and emerges into the third. The client's pathology will also go through this path and will be reconciled in the third realm. Although Grof believes that the best way to move through these realms is by using LSD, as mentioned previously, Grof created a technique, using deep breathing and loud music to mimic the effect of LSD, called "Holotropic breath work". The idea is that this type of breathing and the intensity of the music will increase and enhance the oxygen in a persons system changing the energy and activating the parts of the psyche that need healing ( Cortright, 1997; Grof, 1989; and Grof, 1975).

### ***Personal reflection***

I believe that Grof's holotropic breathwork was a very interesting and innovative way to bring individuals to altered states of consciousness, therapeutically. I do, however, believe that his ideas are outdated, his work in altered states of consciousness leaves much in the normal consciousness untouched. His LSD work has produced as stated, a

specific map of consciousness but can not be used in most instances. I would like to believe that our unconscious could be tapped from working in a conscious creative therapeutic setting without psychedelic drugs.

### ***Hameed Ali's Diamond Approach***

Hameed Ali writes under the pen name of A.H. Almaas (*almaas is Arabic for Diamond*) and has created the transpersonal method that resonates most with my own point of view.

Ali focuses his work on four concepts that are significant to the understanding of self realization:

1. Self/soul: The soul is the self and soul is the organism of consciousness that contains and cognizes all of our experiences.
2. Presence: is the essence of ourselves
3. Essence: our true nature
4. Identity: significant characteristic of the soul

(Almaas, 1996, p 56)

Instead of self, Ali uses the term *Essence*. He also uses the word soul as synonymous with self. In this respect, Essence is who we are intrinsically. It is our spiritual identity; it is in fact our spirit and, therefore, it is a depiction of our self. Ali

focuses on the body and believes that a person's deeper spiritual identity can be developed through delving into psychological conflict, unconscious wounds and defenses. This is where one's Essence can be directly experienced. This approach seeks to shift a person's sense of identity from ego to spirit or to shift a person's identification from the self-image to Essence for the purpose of spiritual development and self-actualization (Almaas, 1986).

The Diamond approach differs from most schools of psychology because it recognizes the uniqueness of each individual and adapts itself to each person's unique needs. It seeks to help individuals to shift their identity from ego/self image to their Essence/spirit. It is a contemporary spiritual/psychological path that has arisen in response to the needs of today's humanity. It utilizes modern as well as ancient methods and makes self-realization accessible to more people who are interested in re-discovering their true self and integrating it in to their daily lives. It extensively utilizes the insight of modern psychology about the human ego and personality, and extends that understanding into its logical completion in the spiritual dimension (Almaas, 1996).

(N.B. For the remainder of the paper "spirit" and "Essence" will be used interchangeably)

### *What is Essence ?*

The goal of this work is to access a person's Essence or spiritual self to help individuals exist consciously. To achieve this, the individual has to work towards

experiencing the “ I am” (The awareness of self and not it’s content) (Helminiak, 1996. p 56).

Understanding Essence, Almaas states is “beginning to see through our illusions” (Almaas, 1996. p ix). The concept of Essence is found in many spiritual traditions but is more commonly known as “ The aspect of something most true, real, or substantial. It is the Essence of something that makes it what it is” (Almaas, 1986, p. ix). Almaas believes that Essence is the part of us that we are born with that is not part of our upbringing. It is our true nature, the direct experience of our existence. Essence is not the body, not the heart, and not the mind. It is the life energy. This can get confusing because energy can be misconstrued Essence is not energy as we know it, it is something fundamentally different from what we have defined energy to be. It is more substantial and deeper then power that ignites.

Unfortunately, due to a loss in Essence, people realize that they exist, but they do not experience their Essence. We have never been taught how to encounter our Essence and so it can be mistaken for something else. Essence is a presence not an activity. Activities such as emotions don't have presence, they transcends emotion. We can feel our stomach but our stomach doesn't feel because it exists as Essence does. We can feel it, but it is not a feeling because it actually exists.

Of course, the ultimate nature of Essence and our essential reality cannot be communicated in words; however, it will present itself in pure essential forms of consciousness and experience in the aspects of Essence such as love, strength, peace compassion, awareness and so on. Of course, feelings are close to the experience of

Essence and so we need to be clearer on our understanding and differentiation of the two. Feelings are not our Essence. The main difference of the two is that emotional states are discharged processes of our nervous system and our psychological processes, whereas Essence is not a psychological process and is independent of the nervous system and can exist, in fact, without a physical organism. The difficulty is that individuals think that their positive reinforcements are their Essence when, in fact, this is their personality and it is this very search for positive feelings that derails us from realizing our Essence. Another problem is that Essence can be confused with affect. This is because Essence has affect, it can feel soft, warm, hard but these are the qualities of Essence not the other way around.

Essence can also be identified in action because Essence is being. Action is only fundamental and real only if it's source is Essence. This is very difficult to determine since most people have difficulty merely identifying their emotions. If Essence is not an insight, an intuition, an emotion, energy or our personality then what is it? Almas says Essence is something wondrous, beautiful and much more magnificent and meaningful. Unfortunately, for most of us, it is hidden but this is not it's nature but we do not see it because we are expecting something else bound to our ideas of what is.

A good way to understand this concept is to imagine that Essence is water and emotions/feelings are the movement of the water. Most western psychologies, such as cognitive or behavioral psychologies, have tried to change the movement of the water instead of focussing on the water. Essence is not energy, it is the source of energy which is not static but constantly transforming. With that said, Essence is not external but

internal, it is not a part of us but it is what we are before anything else; it encompasses everything.

### *Loss of Essence*

According to Almaas (1986), babies are born with a strong connection to their Essence. Unfortunately, adults become out of touch with that part of themselves and do not encourage or model it to their infants. Because of a lack of mirroring, the support and identification with that part of themselves is gone and this creates a void, a lack of essence, which must be filled. Slowly, due to this void, a sense of ego evolves. Essence is gradually covered up as the personality develops. After a while they lose touch all together and can only identify themselves by the images they have created, thus, the ego is compensation for Essence (Cortright , 1997). Self-image is what blocks our connection to Essence, creating knots that clog the flow of energy. It becomes Essence vs. personality

### *Retrievement of Essence*

Almaas talks about holes or a void, as mentioned prior the holes are the places where people experience themselves as missing something, as deficient or inadequate due to the deterioration of essence. The idea of holes is an original contribution from Almaas. He believes that, for our personality to become essentialized, it is necessary to explore all wounds so that the holes can be filled with the essential aspects that are missing. The hole or void, is the experience of the absence of the essential quality. Individuals need to

uncover what the holes mean psychologically in terms of early object relations and trauma.

The void is void in the sense that nothing will be left of you then: but the void is not void in another sense, because the whole will descend on it, the void is going to be the most perfect, fulfilled phenomenon. So what to do? If I say "Void" suddenly the mind thinks there is nothing: then why bother? And if you say it is not a void, it is the most perfect thing, the mind goes on an ambition trip: how to become the most perfect human being, then the ego enters in. To drop the ego the word void is emphasized. But to make you alert to the fact that the void is not really a void, it is also said that it is filled with the whole. When you are not, the whole existence comes in to you. When the drop disappears, it becomes the ocean.

(Rajneesh, 1976. P 66)

If our loss of Essence is due primarily to a) a lack of acknowledgment of Essence and b) construction of ego, then to retrieve our Essence we must first dis-identify with ego and have ego death. Almaas views ego death as the complete flexibility of identity. This flexibility involves the dissolution of self-identity, the cessation of the activity of identifying. Once ego death occurs there is no barrier or resistance to the presence of Essence and we can begin to create a space to play and acknowledge that part of ourselves which is Essence. The process of recovery and retrieveview of the buried Essence is the most crucial aspect of this therapeutic method. Essence can never be totally or literally lost. It gets buried, repressed, covered by layers of the personality. Almaas believes that the process needs to be turned around. If ego was created to compensate for a lack in Essence, then one must strengthen and acknowledge Essence if one is to take away the ego. To obtain ego death, Grof believes that we must go back to those holes/voids that were created by our lack of acknowledged Essence and filled by ego and deconstruct it. (This will be further looked at in a later chapter.) In working with

this and experientially entering into this hole, individuals are given the opportunity to explore the substance and textures of these holes, which may be very painful. In exploring these areas, the structure that filled the hole then dissolves which leads to space for our true Essence. These concepts differ immensely from other psychotherapies. Most do not focus on the existence of Essence or its loss. It is usually oriented towards making the personality healthier and stronger, making it function better in the world. The empty hole is never approached rather the person learns better and more effective ways to fill the hole.

The goal of this work is to discover and integrate our essential presence in our experience of ourselves, to return to being. The process of “Essence retrireview” and development of essence does not mean a complete and permanent dissolution of the personality. Rather it works on creating a personality that is strong and flexible enough to allow temporary regrouping, so that personality will be of service to Essence, doing its true and natural function which, as mentioned before, is to work towards self realization, an understanding of and connection with our Essence.



## Chapter 3

### Transpersonal Drama Therapy

The ultimate translation of experience involves the transformation of human suffering into a dramatization of the endurance and compassion of the human spirit... I believe that our work in the arts is more closely allied with the larger continuities of religious belief and faith. The arts in this sense can be viewed as sacramental actions that symbolically represent the mysteries and intensities of inner experience. (McNiff, p xvi)

The aim of therapy is the development of a sense of soul, the middle ground of psychic realities, and the method of therapy is the cultivation of imagination. (Hillman in Mitchell p 10)

#### The spirit in drama therapy

Modern psychology has taught us a great deal about the importance of honoring our pain, of going into it, feeling and exploring it rather than avoiding or repressing it. As we relate to our pain it reveals a story, taking us to deeper levels of our being, As we become more vulnerable to our own depths, this expanding awareness heals (Cortright, 1997). If spiritual health depends on wholeness and wholeness derives from honoring and exploring our stories and pain, then drama therapy is surely a spiritual approach to psychotherapy, concerned with the person's relation to the source of person-hood. It is implicitly spiritual because of its medium. Drama therapy not only lives spiritually in the moment of encounter; it speaks spiritually in its mode of communication without being verbally explicit or precise. It likes to experience things rather than talk about them and it does not require any explanatory link or intervening variable, either philosophical or literary-critical, to draw attention to its spiritual nature (Grainger, 1995).

Some drama therapists have theorized on the subject, regarding drama as a locus of spirit. They share a passionate need to find meaning not simply facts. They look for “unity behind the discontinuities of the world of objects and stimuli, and to discover some sort of significance which helps them transcend the transitoriness of actual experience” (Gorden, 1983. p, 3).

Grainger (1985) believes that drama therapy is first and foremost a “spiritual search” based on the mysterious nature of the creative process, because it involves a certain investment of self. It reproduces its balance and harmony within the experience because it is not only the medium but the process as well. It’s spiritual healing effects are possible because it recreates a view of life that does not approach the meaning head on but lives creatively until meaning is ready to emerge. This emergence comes in the form of a story whether it be told, drawn, played out or sung. This personal story has transpersonal significance and allows for a celebration of self, which is transcendent. This celebration is significant because it is actual, it is movement, and it is felt.

Another influential drama therapist, Steve Mitchell, works towards the client’s spiritual wellness. The focus of this work is using ritual theater to help individual’s transformation from one state of consciousness to another while going at their own rhythm. What is vital to him is that the clients find meaning in the process. This meaning is essential because it invites the individual to become responsible and invested in the work. When embarking on a ritual a sense of the sacredness is almost inescapable. He believes that that the job of the drama therapist is to nurture the archetypes that arise in

the process of therapy and to help clients let go of what is known and follow the “flow” (Mitchell, 1999; Mitchell 1998).

All true rituals mark a transition from one mode of being to another. Working a transformation within the individual or community, at a deep psychological, physical and spiritual level, resulting in an altered state of consciousness. (Rose-Evans as cited in Mitchell 1998, p.75)

It is very clear to me that drama is a vehicle to explore the transpersonal realm. As mentioned in chapter two, the word *Trans* means moving “across” and to “the other side”. Drama does exactly that. It allows for us to move from the past to the future, from metaphor to reality, from what did happen to what could have. Transpersonal psychology studies how the spiritual is expressed in and through the personal. Mitchell does just this with his dramatic ritual. In his book *Development through Drama*, Brian Way states that “Drama is concerned with the individuality of individuals, with the uniqueness of each human essence” (Way, 1993, p 3).

### **Approaches in Transpersonal drama therapy**

There are many drama therapists that work in a transpersonal way, centering on spiritual wellness and self-realization. However, I would like to focus on two specific published transpersonal drama therapists, Dr Penny Lewis and Saphira Linden, because together they co-direct the “Alternate Route Certification program in Transpersonal drama therapy,” focused on utilizing the two stage transpersonal theoretical approach.

### ***Dr Penny Lewis's Two-stage model***

Dr Lewis begins her article in *Current approaches in drama therapy* (2000), by giving a very clear and concise definition of what transpersonal psychology and drama therapies are:

“Transpersonal Psychotherapy is the process through which individuals transform their identity from a limited history based sense of self to an experience of their soul essence. From the experience of soul, individuals can access a relationship to the numinous and their unique life purpose.

Transpersonal Drama Therapy utilizes the embodied arts in the recovery from all forms of abuse, dysfunctional relationships, and associated limitations acquired from personal history toward an experience of being fully present and whole. From this consciousness, transpersonal drama therapy offers creative experiences through which individuals develop an awareness of their soul's journey and potential service to expanding human consciousness.” ( Lewis , 2000, p. 260)

I felt that this quote connects Lewis and Almaas in regards to “Soul Essence”, and, in turn, reflected my goals as a therapist. Just as Almaas in his Diamond approach, Lewis is interested in helping people understand and experience themselves in a new way by connecting to their Soul Essence. Of course Lewis may not share the view on Essence that Almaas and I do, however, the over all goal is similar and the end results may be comparable.

Lewis became interested in transpersonal drama therapy due to her training in Jungian Analysis and personal spiritual experiences (which she has chosen not to share). She views the drama therapy process as two overlapping stages.

## Stage I: Recovery

Lewis believes that pathologies manifest themselves due to " abuse, less than good enough parenting, cultural oppression and the repeated ineffective use of survival patterns that were created in childhood in the place of health boundaries" (Lewis, 2000, p. 264). The result is a fragmented sense of self. The goal of therapy is to obtain the capacity for intimacy with one's self, others and the transpersonal, while being fully present in the moment. This means viewing each incident as a present situation and not a reminder or repercussion of the past. The method used to identify dysfunction and limiting problems as well as to transform them to a more positive structure is carried out by embodied techniques such as sand play, dream work, puppets, embodied psyche, and the recovery of the inner child.

This is very interesting. Almaas talks very little about pathologies. His concerns lie in the loss of our Essence, however, just like Lewis, he puts much emphasis on the parenting, saying that, due to their lack of acknowledgment a child's essence is lost. I believe that a combination of the two is important. I believe that psychopathologies do manifest themselves due to our disconnection with our Essence and ourselves and the cause of this disconnection is due primarily to a lack of acknowledgment by adults.

## Stage II: Individuals

Health is seen as the ability to self-actualize and make space to be, play and discover who they really are. This can only happen when individuals go through the process of recovery and become freed from habitual patterns to experience a sort of re-

birth and evolving spiritual consciousness. The rebirthing concept is shared in most transpersonal philosophies. The method of identifying health and dysfunction in a person is to tap into what grabs and holds that individual's attention. This will lead the therapist to identify what type of work will best benefit the client. The therapeutic process entails using such techniques as dream work and authentic movement to provide the unconscious with sources to engage in this work. Lewis's work proves that the ideals found in most transpersonal philosophies are best achieved through action and, therefore, drama.

Lewis talks about waking up, rebirth, hidden parts of self and spiritual continuousness. All these concepts are found in the Diamond approach; however, I do not think it is seen as individuation or self-actualizing. The transpersonal work that I am personally interested in doing is focussing on the differentiation between who we think we really are and discovering who we really are without the thought.

*Drama techniques in the two-stage model:*

The techniques that Lewis uses derives from her belief that recovery and individuation can occur through the imaginal realm. The right hemisphere of our brain is responsible for our imagination, creativity, and is the threshold to our unconscious. It also serves as the access point to our spiritual realm. If our personal unconscious is what houses abuse, child survival patterns, and our shadow aspects, it seems clear that tapping in to that realm would be done easily through creativity and imagination. Lewis says that she "midwives consciousness" because it is the client's unconscious and not the therapist who holds the authority. Jung has said that the unconscious lies in the body (Adler,

Fordham 1960). Drama therapy provides a safe space to allow the body to experience the healing process while it is happening, making sure that the work is not too traumatic.

In addition to sociodrama, psychodrama, playback, solution-focused role modeling and rehearsal, the preceding techniques are used in the two-stage model.

I agree with Lewis in the belief that discovery and recovery of the unconscious can happen through play. I am very interested in the concept of “mid-wifing” consciousness, not only as fostering consciousness but Essence development as well which can be seen as the same thing at times.

#### The Embodied Psyche Technique in Assessment and Treatment:

The embodied technique is utilized because it helps work towards self-formation by internalizing the objects being used. When working with individuals it is important to look at and regard all roles played out within a person's psyche. The following are those roles.

- Ego or inner adult: chairperson of the psyche.
- Self or inner child: source of feelings, needs and wants.
- Childhood survival behaviors: defenses against inner pain, survival fear and external others.
- Addictions: the inner compelling voice of the addiction.
- Inner Objects: mother or father complexes: the internalization of the child parents.
- Devaluing negative collective: the internalization's of society's distorted worldviews.

- Animus and Anima: inner masculine and feminine aspects.
- Shadow aspects: inner same sex aspects waiting to be claimed by the ego.
- Soul: the eternal self.
- The technique itself: with groups, individuals, and couples.

#### Recovery of the Inner Child(ren):

When a child experience severe abuse the self becomes fragmented. This fragmentation allows for a place for different inner children of various ages to emerge from the child depending on the duration of abuse. This leads to a disconnection from the child within. The only way for the child to survive, is to file the episodes away in the unconscious. Therapy may be done in-groups or individually. In the “rescuing” technique, individuals are asked to go back to the time of abuse, as adults, and “save” the child from the situation, taking them out and bringing them to a safer place which may be represented in many forms. They may even confront the abuser at this time as an adult. Of course, reenactment of the abuse may be too powerful, at first, and so other mediums may be used to start such as art, story making and so on. When the client feels that they and their inner children are safe, they may begin to explore and heal themselves.

#### Dreamwork as Theater:

Dreams have been thought of as pictures of what lay in the unconscious. There are different types of phenomena that occur during dreams. It can manifest itself as metaphoric or symbolic information as well as literal flashbacks of actual events. In the “dreamwork” technique, the dream is enacted or recreated and clients are asked to



become different aspects of the dream such as characters, inanimate objects or feelings. These characters can be interviewed, transformed and integrated to help the client come to a place where recovery, individuation and reconnection to one's spiritual consciousness are possible.

#### Archetypal Enactment:

Lewis states that "At the center of each complex within the psyche is an archetypal core" (Lewis, 2000, p. 278). We all have masculine and feminine aspects of ourselves that can be represented through various archetypes. Often the process of individuation opens up the space for this work to happen, leading to health and consciousness.

The two-stage model helps individuals work on issues from their past in order to understand their roles, recover and help heal their future. By becoming more connected to themselves, other aspects of themselves and the transpersonal, they gain a better understanding of their meaning in life and become aware of their spiritual consciousness.

This is where I begin to see a difference in the way Lewis and Almaas's work. And it becomes evident that Almaas works primarily in a spiritual way rather than in psychotherapy. Almaas does not seem interested in these roles that we obtain in our life. His sole interest is in the bare essentials, which is to him the spirit/Essence. Lewis on the other hand is interested in self-formation related to roles developed by our psyche. I sit in the middle, perhaps a little torn. I think that this research has definitely given me many new ideas and concepts to meld together. I find myself more attracted to the way that

Almaas works which is a little less psychologically based and definitely more cosmic and spiritual. However, I am a therapist with a psychological background. I am at a point of finding my way and clarifying my views. This journey has just begun and I feel that a comparison and mixture of all these schools of thought will help me clarify my ideas.

***Saphira Linden's Omega transpersonal drama therapy.***

Being a Sufi spiritual leader for over 20 years, Saphira has been able to weave her work together with her training with Moreno and her therapeutic theater technique called "Transformational Theater."

As Linden states in her article describing her technique in chapter 17 of *Current Approaches in Drama Therapy*(2000),her focus began with theater. Inspired by Grotowski, Moreno and Spolin,she became aware of the connection between theater, therapy and education. Linden wanted to use theater without boundaries in her work with children, using participatory theater where the boundaries between audience and spectacle are erased to evoke and educate. The goal of her work as she states is to " help clients and audience to learn to identify with their essential nature or higher self while they work through their limited self images from early and later conditioning" (2000, p.359).

**Influence from Sufi teachings:**

In the process of her work, Linden felt the need to become connected to who she really was and in doing so expand her consciousness. She became attracted to the Sufi Path which, as she describes " has a long history of integrating spiritual perspectives with

expressions through the arts: poetry, music, dance, architecture, and the visual arts.” She continues by saying, “ The emphasis is on practicing inner discipline while working in the world with the goal of experiencing states of increased joy, strength and peace.” (2000, p.352). If individuals can learn to accept, love, honor and celebrate every aspect of themselves, they can overcome personal limitations and low self esteem, leading them to become more in touch and connected to their soul’s essence. The Sufi themes that seemed to correspond with the type of work the Linden (200,p 352) wanted to do are as follows:

- The search for truth through the experience of the inner nature of reality.
- Consciousness of a larger reality beyond our immediate selves.
- Unity within the diversity of creation

Amongst my readings on A.H. Almaas and The Diamond approach there was much mention of Sufism. It is unclear to me if Almaas practices Sufism or is merely inspired by the teachings. Almaas has adopted the particular way of putting object relations and body sensing together with Sufism in his work. As in Sufism, Almaas’ path is not monastic but very much in the world, so that Essence can experience itself in many different ways. This, I believe, brings about a strong connection between the goals of psychotherapy and spirituality. This is definitely a subject that needs more focus in future work.

The Omega Process:

Just as her peer Penny Lewis, Linden was also influenced by the powerful roles of archetypes in the transformation and healing process; she witnessed how individuals

became confused and trapped in these negative perceptions of self. It was the personality taking over rather than the pure Essence. With this in mind Linden, viewed therapy and the healing process as “Awakening to the eternal qualities of the soul rather than identifying with the limitations of the personality” (2000, p. 353). Linden had a vision of creating theater that would unite the players and the audience, focusing the work on uniting social, emotional, political and spiritual goals and connecting with what is believed to be our true nature. This is what the Omega process is: moving from Alpha, what we believe we are constructed from our past, to the Omega, our larger purpose, our future.

*Techniques:* (Synopsis of techniques found in Linden 2000)

1. **Psychodrama:** Specific technique in which the protagonist will work through challenges in his life with the help of a director and peers by reenacting specific events and playing with its outcome.
2. **Transformational Theater:** This technique combines practical theater with personal narration to evoke change by working on stories with small to large audiences depending on the need for intimacy.
3. **Storytelling:** Creating a safe space to access traumatic stories and helping clients discover a new story to emerge.
4. **Music and sound healing:** It may be difficult for some individuals to express themselves verbally. Music and sound can create a safe space where an individual “soul song” can emerge through play, voice work or movement.

5. Archetypal exercises for healing: A creative visualization technique, the individual is guided to meet a mentor. They are asked to find physical as well as emotional and spiritual qualities of that mentor that they admire. In time, the clients will learn that what they have created is a picture of their soul essence.
6. Sufi Purification breath practice and improvisation exercise: This is a breath practice that works with the magnetism of the four elements. Each element has a different breath pattern and each is done five times. Earth filters the impurities; Water washes the impurities; Air dissolves the impurities; and fire consumes the impurities. The elements are not only worked through the breath but are embodied as well.
7. Mirrors: body, heart and soul: Body- Done with a partner, they are instructed to have eye contact. Partner A moves while partner B mimics. Once the pair has established rapport. The therapist will instruct them to be leaderless and the movement will continue without a leader. Eye contact chanting will be insurrected along with movement to follow. Spirit- in the same pairs again breathing patterns will be followed.
8. The healer and the wounded: Again in pairs, partner A is instructed to face the wall. Partner B will begin to move and make sounds as their wounded self. Partner A turns around and never losses eye contact with their partner. The goal is that the wounded one will gain strength from their healer. They move towards each other as the wounded one slowly finds his way out of that place and contact between the two partners is made.

9. Archetypal enactment: Working with different archetypes through mask, character work and improve to discover and play with different aspects of the self.
10. Videography: Placing a monitor that the client can see, they have the opportunity to view themselves during the work.

I believe that the work that Linden is doing and what I would like to do in my model are strongly linked. There is a powerful spiritual influence backed by psychotherapeutic knowledge. Her goal of awakening to the eternal qualities of the soul rather than identifying with the limitations of the personality is very close to my own which is described in more detail in the next chapter. What I am most interested in, is how she transforms this seemingly individualistic way of working to encompass community development. It is an amalgamation of psychotherapy, popular theater, community development and spiritual work. It is exciting to see how none of her ideals seem to be compromised in her work. During the process of this paper I made several attempts to interview Saphira, however she was never available to do so.

I think that once I have worked with individuals using my model I would be very interested to do as Linden did and bring it to a place that will facilitate social change.

## Chapter 4

### The Transformational Diamond Model

“ I have always tried to show that my approach was meant as much more than a psychotherapeutic method, my ideas have emphasized that creativity and spontaneity affect the very roots or vitality and spiritual development, and thus affect our involvement in every “sphere of our lives.

J. L. Moreno, M.D., 1975 ( Blatner, 1996. p ix )

#### Introduction

I ask the reader now to go back to chapter one and focus once again on the meaning of this work. It is the union of spiritual wellness and drama therapy through the creation of a new drama therapy model that is grounded in my views I have on health and dysfunction. To recap, I was interested in A) defining spirit and its importance to human health and B) discovering whether spiritual wellness had been taken into consideration in other fields in psychology. My first idea for a research paper was to prove that importance. In the midst of my research I stumbled upon transpersonal psychology and discovered that it had already been done. There in front of me was a school of thought that believed, as I did that we should not only define spiritual wellness but also incorporate its concepts within the field of health care. Reading about the different theoretical approaches in the field, one struck me in particular, Hameed Ali's Diamond approach. He was able to conceptualize what I believed; that dysfunction occurs do to a lack of understanding and connection to our spirit. He believed, in fact, that we were once very much connected to that part of ourselves but due to neglect and the creation of personality it was lost. His concept was clear and concise, and I felt that creating a drama

therapy model in this vein would allow me to work in the way that was right for me. Of course, I knew that drama was intrinsically healing. The question was: what drama therapy tools would help to deconstruct the ego and replace it with Essence? This was the birth of the Transformational Diamond model in drama therapy, using embodiment and development transformation techniques to reach its goal.

## **Genesis**

### *Essence*

The focus of this approach is on reconnecting to our Essence, our true nature of being. It seeks to shift a person's sense of identity from ego to spirit or from self-image to Essence. It is also concerned with the separation from that true being, which occurs during individual ego development. It achieves this by looking at an individual's deeper spiritual identity through delving into psychological conflicts, unconscious wounds, and defenses.

Before we can talk about what Essence is, we must first have a clear understanding of what it is not. Essence is not a thought or an idea a person has about himself. It is not self-image. The thought may have occurred due to Essence but Essence is not the thought. Essence is also not an image. Archetypes, visions, and dreams come from a certain essential state but are not the essential state. It is not an emotion; an emotion is an activity that starts and ends whereas Essence is a presence. Finally, Essence is not a feeling; it is a felt experience but not a feeling.



Essence is who we are intrinsically. It exists purely as itself; it is the direct experience of that which we are; it is a presence, our spiritual identity that reincarnates; and it is our spirit. The experience of essence is not always the same. It can be experienced across a spectrum from extreme subtlety to a playable substantiality. It is staring us in the face, but our eyes go to something else. Our minds reach far away and we remain thirsty and discontented. Unfortunately, essence is not recognized when it is present. This is because we are familiar only with the normally accepted categories and directions our thoughts, emotions and physical experiences. Essence does not fall in to these categories. There is a need for deepening and refining one's perceptivity of essence. However, when this happens, essence might not be recognized because one may not know that there is such a thing or may confuse it with something else. Once recognized, it becomes a permanent and abiding presence that one identifies as his or her true nature and identity. To be a genuine human being is to be essence. To be essence is then not just an inner experience, but a total experience. Essence is then what determines our actions. What determines our way of life, and what shapes our environment. This is real harmony. Essence can never be totally lost. What happens is it gets buried, covered up by layers of personality.

### *Personality*

Personality begins with the child's identification with the qualities that the child experiences through merging with the environment during the symbiotic stage. During this stage, the child has no conception of what is his and what belongs to the environment represented by the mother or primary care taker. At this point there is still no concept of

self and other. So a feeling that might have originated with the mother could end up as the child's and become part of their developing personality. By personality I mean the usual identifications of the individual, their self-concept, which is sometimes called the false personality and which is called the ego in spiritual parlance.

Ego in this sense should not be confused with the ego that Freud defined. Freudian ego for instance, has the functions of perception motility, reality testing, and so on. These functions are not included in the term ego as I have described. This latter ego denotes mainly the identification of the individual that gives the individual a sense of self and identity.

How ego develops is as follows. A self-representation develops through the organization of all our early experiences. They start out as small units and grow in to larger more comprehensive ones. This happens along side the development of object representation. It would seem in that case that ego development depends on the amalgamation of all realms of our experiences into a cohesive whole. Of course, this is not the whole story of the development of the personality. Personality development is also due to its necessity for physical survival and the need to deal with external environment.

*Conflict between Personality and Essence*

“There is a crack in everything. That is how the light gets in”

Leonard Cohen

The opposition to Essence is from the personality. The personality will do everything in its power to preserve its identity and uphold its domain. According to the Diamond approach, the barriers between the personality and essence create spots and knots that clog the flow of energy. These blocks are actually mental and emotional content relating to the loss of the essential aspects and the attempt at compensation. These spots are dark because they are repressed materials and so the “light” of understanding does not reach them. These dark spots can be described as the absence of identification with our self-image. The self-image exists but there is no identification with it, which results in a feeling of expansion and spaciousness. This leaves only the experience of empty open space. One of the goals of this work is to see through these dark spots and dissolve them, open them up and shed some light on them. This will bring the repressed memories to consciousness. The process of review and development does not require complete and permanent dissolution of the personality rather it works by rendering the personality flexible enough for the relationship between the personality and essence to change. Allowing the essence to be master and the personality to become servant.

## **Drama therapy frame of reference**

### *Basic Concept*

This work should not only be considered psychotherapy but should be classified as a transpersonal method of working as well. The Transformational Diamond approach works in two stages and utilizes the concepts of developmental transformation. The first being the deconstruction of the self and personality, ego death through the use of embodiment work. The second stage is the retrieveview of Essence using the encounter in the play space, allowing the true self to emerge from spontaneous play. These stages will be further discussed in the following sections. The concern of this work is more than just therapeutic, the aim is much more fundamental, and it is concerned with the return to being.

### *Developmental transformation*

Developmental transformation, as created by David Read Johnson, is a form of drama therapy based on the concepts of free play. It is the embodied encounter in the playspace, the act of spontaneous free play loosens and removes psychic structures that inhibit the client, blocking them from accessing primary experiences of being. The sessions consist purely of dramatic play in which the therapist is an active participant. It follows a natural process that will inevitably lead to natural health (Johnson, 1982, 1991, 2000).

Johnson believes that the goals of psychotherapy are, to facilitate the developmental process and help clients experience their own "becoming". This he

believes can be achieved through allowing the clients to explore previously disallowed aspects of life by increasing a person's flexibility in adaptation, self-observation and acceptance of the past. He uses the transformation and developmental methods because "They are extensions of fundamental methods of freedom that have emerged in the practice of psychotherapy". (Johnson, 1991. p, 287)

Sigmund Freud discovered a method of psychotherapy called *free association*. It helped the therapist gain a better understanding of the client's experience due to its freedom. In this work, clients were encouraged to say whatever popped in to their head. Developmental Transformations is essentially free association using movement, sound and play to go beyond words.

Carl Jung took this work a step further by giving the clients even more freedom and allowing them to include imaginary ideas, fantasies and stories as well. Jung believed that what we play with in our minds and what we make up reveals aspects of a person's inner world and is very valid information. He called this work *active imagination*.

Carl Rogers took this another step further. He believed that the therapist should be more involved and engaged in his client's work. He followed the principles of free association but actively participated with his clients by mirroring their feelings and feeding it back to them. Transformation followed this by leading therapists to become actively involved in their client's work, using the methods of free association, active imagination, authentic movement, and stream of consciousness journaling (Johnson, 1991, 2000).

I think that it is important to state that I have extracted only a few key concepts from Johnson's theory that I believed complimented the work that I want to do. This last section, is in no means a full synopsis of the Developmental Transformation method. I merely wanted to provide the reader with the concepts used in my work. For further information on this method read Johnson's article in *Current Approaches in Drama Therapy* (2000).

#### Developmental Method:

The developmental method uses various improvisational tools to create a drama therapy technique that facilitates spontaneity within the client in the *play space*. The *play space* is a cut off space from the rest of the world, designated by the client and therapist, that represents an interpersonal field. In this space, the therapist is encouraging *flow* while the free play is happening. *Flow*, is the experience of continuity between the individual their realm and the work. The client may experiences an *impasse* during the work. This *impasse* is an interruption in the free flow where the client feels lost and does not know how to continue. These *impasses* can help the therapist identify core issues and aid the therapeutic work.

#### Transformations:

Transformations begin as an improvisation and role play by client and therapist. How they decide who they are or the circumstances will vary. At any time during the improvisation, either the client or the therapist may be reminded of something else. At this point they may initiate a transformation in the scene by merely beginning to act as

though they were a new person in a new situation and changing the scene. A clearly stated rule is that they both must go along with the change

Principles:

*Embodiment* – The body is the source of thought and feeling, of physicality and energy.

Consciousness (mind) is the process through which form (desire, self, role) emerges, a process encompassing flow, multiplicity, and irony. Such emergence progresses through the body as presence, body as desire, body as persona, and body as other.

*Encounter*- Encounter is essential to transformation, and thus to healing. Development takes place through living encounter, following an intersubjective process of noticing, feeling, animating and expressing. The therapist sacrifices her privileged position as the container of the therapeutic space, and serves as the clients play-object within the playspace. The client is the therapeutic text. Projective, objective and predetermined exercises are avoided.

*Playspace*- the entire therapeutic interaction occurs within the playspace. The therapeutic process follows the deconstruction of role repertoires, persona, and polarities of desire. The focus of attention progressively shifts from Existence to Emergence to Nascence. The goal is to play with the previously “unplayable”, descending from the body work to the different levels of play, beginning with surface play then moving from persona play, to intimate play, and then ending with deep play, the place of “Soul Essence.”

*Emanation theory*: In his Article Johnson (2000) discusses the ideas upon which developmental theory is based. The Emanation theory derives from the belief that the

world and our experience of it are in constant flow, from the source as well as to it. Every thing has what it needs rather than a will to obtain it. We as human beings have what we need to expand our consciousness and our consciousness has connection to its source; they are interconnected. So feeding the flower will feed the roots and feeding the roots will inevitably feed the flower because what is in the flower comes from the root.

Developmental transformations has an interest in facilitating the flow between source and self. The encounter in the play allows for continues change.

### **Therapeutic Process and Technique**

The Transformational Diamond model is a synthesis the theoretical ideas of A.H. Almaas and David Read Johnson. Over the course of the development of this model numerous theoretical perspectives have been incorporated to understand the process involved.

#### *Stage 1*

Ego Death through embodiment techniques:

Essence has an effect on the nervous system because it produces feelings of love and the attitude of humility. At the same time it effects the ego by melting it's structural boundaries. Ancient approaches revolved around emotional and devotional work. This involved prayer, supplication, devotional singing and dance. This served to put the mind in a set receptive to the essential aspects. These methods were used to put the mind and nervous system (represented by the heart) in the same condition that is produced by the actual presence of these essential aspects. In such practices the personality is put aside



and the individual attempts to cultivate attitudes more receptive to their essential reality; attitudes that might even contradict the structure of the personality. To achieve ego death we must work at putting the mind and nervous system within the same condition. This can be achieved through embodiment work .

Embodiment –

- Sand and water play
- Sensory play
- Early movement
- Relaxation and body awareness
- Guided visualization

*Stage 2*

Retireview of essence through the encounter in the play space

As previously mentioned, essence is present in all human beings. We do not really loose it per say; it merely becomes buried by layers of our personality. Once ego death has occurred and our personalities have taken on a new function it is time for our essence to emerge. But what does our essence look like? It may be difficult to recognize since it has been buried for so long. During the act of letting go and playing spontaneously will make room for essence to emerge. In that case, the most obvious choice of drama therapy techniques would be that of the encounter in the playspace found in Developmental transformations.

The Encounter - spontaneous play in the play space

The Steps in Therapy:

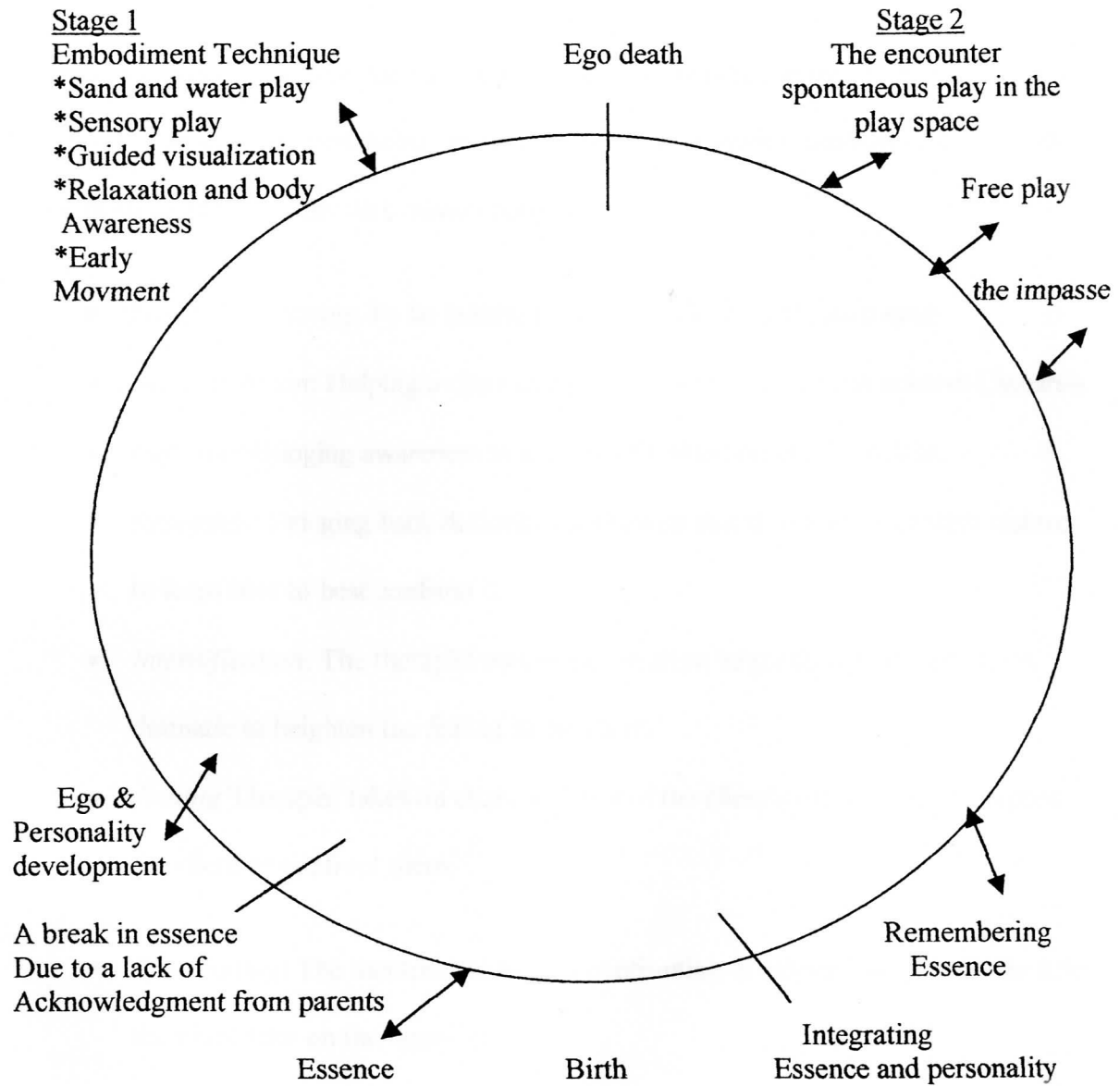
Step 1- free play: In this phase the client and therapist will play together spontaneously.

Exploring the new self after ego death. At the beginning it will be purging the self from unnecessary material

Step 2- the impasse: When a person's essence begins to reveal itself, it may be unrecognizable and one could become confused. The therapist will help the client work through those blocks to reveal essence.

Step 3- remembering essence: When the client is able to connect with their Essence, a time of reconnection and acknowledgment occurs.

Step 4- Integrating essence and personality: Finally the client must learn how to integrate there new sense of self with that that already exists.



## The Transformational Diamond Model

## Interventions:

In one of his articles on Developmental Transformations, Johnson (1991p 238) lists specific interventions used during his work. The Transformation Diamond approach will adopt these interventions with minor changes.

- *Faithful rendering*: To be faithful to what the client wants portrayed
- *Act completion*: Helping a client complete an act so as they can achieve Catharsis.
- *Defining*: Bringing awareness to aspects of a situation that is unclear.
- *Repetition*: Bringing back difficult situations so that the client has another chance to learn how to best confront it.
- *Intensification*: The therapist makes the situation larger than it appears more, dramatic to heighten the feeling in the client.
- *Joining*: Therapist takes on characteristics of the client's role in order to support the client or confront them.
- *Pre-empting*: The therapist takes on a confronting or ridged role, in order to help the client take on the opposing one.
- *Action interpretation*: The therapist may bring back previous scenes during a particular scene in order to show the client similarities and patterns.
- *Bracketing*: Putting brackets around a scene such as making it a television program, a movie or a picture.
- *Transformation to the here and now*: allowing for a space to talk about what is going on in the process of the play.

- *Witnessing*: The therapist temporarily leaves the scene in order to witness the client. They will eventually come back in to the scene.
- *Specialized spaces*: A space designated at the beginning of the session for the unintegrated or negative experiences of the client.

### **The goals of the work**

The Transformational Diamond Model focuses on the body and believes that a person's deeper spiritual identity can be developed through delving into psychological conflict, unconscious wounds and defenses through embodiment and improvisational work. Through this work he will learn to dis-identify from the personality and the sense of ego identity (ego death), this is when one's Essence can be directly experienced. This approach seeks to shift a person's sense of identity from ego to spirit or to shift a person's identification from the self-image to essence for the purpose of spiritual development and self. As mentioned in previous chapters, the literature of the Diamond approach talks about holes. This is the metaphoric place where people experience themselves as missing something. Therefore, the hole is the experience of the absence of Essence vs. if our loss of essence is due primarily to a) a lack of acknowledgment of essence and b) construction of ego, then to retrieve our essence we must first dis-identify with ego and have ego death. Almas views ego death as the complete flexibility of identity. This flexibility involves the dissolution of self-identity, the cessation of the activity of identifying. To obtain ego death, Grof (1975) believes that we must go back to those holes that were created by our lack of acknowledged Essence and filled by ego, and deconstruct it. Once ego death occurs, there is no barrier or resistance to the presence of Essence and we can

begin to create a space to play and acknowledge that part of ourselves which is essence. The goal of the work is the development of Essence through the use of dramatic techniques. The individual in the process of ego development actually has imbedded his personality from the environment, and now he is the personality. The enemy of the essence is not only in the environment. The greatest adversary is one's own personality structure. Once ego death has been achieved, the retrieveview and development of essence must take place.

### **Concepts regarding health and dysfunction**

As conveyed by Almass and stated in Chapter 2, babies are born with a strong connection to their Essence. Unfortunately, adults become out of touch with that part of them selves and do not encourage or model it to their infants. Because of a lack of mirroring, the support and identification with that part of them selves is gone and this creates a void, a lack of Essence. It might appear that Essence is fragile and can be oppressed easily. This is not true. In fact the power, strength and resilience of Essence is enormous after all; it is the force of life itself. It takes many years in a hostile environment of hurt, ignorance and rejection before it succumbs to suppression. It is very clearly seen in children. They begin life with resilience, joy and passion in their activities, being able to bounce back after disappointment, rejection, failure and discouragement. Slowly, however, over many years, their Essence is misunderstood, ignored, rejected and suppressed creating a void. This does not only happen in situations with bad parenting. Even if a parent is supportive and loving it is a far cry from actually seeing the Essence, understanding it and encouraging it to grow according to it's own truth. Of course this

void creates holes in our being and these holes must be filled. Slowly, due to this void, a sense of ego evolves. What once housed our Essence is gradually covered up by the development of our personality which becomes our only way of identifying ourselves, thus the ego is a compensation for Essence. Essence is gradually lost or covered up as the personality develops. We tend to identify more and more with the personality that develops in response to our environment. By the end we forget that we even had essence. We end with the experience that there is only our personality, and that we are that personality, as if it always had been thus. Self-image is what blocks our connection to Essence creating knots that clog the flow of energy. Personality by its very nature is contrary to Essence, for Essence exposes its emptiness, bears its hurts, and makes its falsehoods transparent. So the problem is not a lack of good intention. It is a lack of something much more fundamental. It is the lack of the right orientation, the right perception, and the right understanding.

The healthy person, from the point of view of this transformational theory, is achieved with the experience of Essence. When ego death occurs, the individual will go on to experience himself as an empty space, devoid of fullness or quality. If the individual can successfully emerge from this and begin to accept and explore these empty parts of themselves, these holes, the merging essence will happen.

(Cortright 1997, Almass, 1986)

## **Role of the drama therapist**

This type of therapy is very different because the role of the therapist may not always be clear. I believe strongly, however, that, in this context, the role of the therapist would be that of a guide, helping the clients enter the imaginal realm by demonstrating comfort and guidance, always being flexible and responsive. It is important to encourage the client to become their own guide and eventually able to gauge themselves. The aim is to track the client and contain the play space. The act as a counter playmate, always conscious of containing the work. The therapist does not attempt to interpret the work whatsoever.

- The drama therapist will follow the client and act out what is asked of them.
- The therapist encourages the client to explore new paths.
- The therapist will facilitate it times of impasse, helping the client reflect on the circumstances revolving around the block.
- The therapist will help the client search for meaning in their play and confront “demons”
- The therapist will provide a safe space.

## **How to account for therapeutic change**

Essence, in my interpretation of Almaas, is a difficult concept to understand and even more difficult to track and measure. Play and drama are also difficult tools for obtaining measurable results of change. Taking this into consideration, how am I going to



account for the therapeutic changes that is happening within the work? These questions need to be answered because it greatly impacts the identity and therapeutic validity of drama therapy. At this point in the creation of this model this question is very present in my mind, however, a clear and solid answer has yet to present its self. I suppose, like all drama therapists, I believe in the healing powers of drama and take that notion for granted. However, I am also aware that to be valuable to the field more research needs to be done and our work needs to become measurable in one way or another. As mentioned before, this model is in its infancy stage and had yet to be tested and have an assessment instrument attached.

### **The population served**

I believe strongly that this work can and should be done with every population due to the fact that, as mentioned previously, every human being has essence and every human being loses it due to construction of ego and personality. Of course, with this said, it is important to consider the work being done. This method was created to work on the spiritual crises of lost Essence. Considering the theory around the work, the earlier it is done the easier it will be to remember and retrieve that part of us. In saying so, I believe the work would be very successful with children. It may not be appropriate, however, if the goal were to achieve more cognitive aims with such issues as phobias, psychotic symptoms, and obsessive compulsive disorder. Of course it is also important to note that individuals who dislike play, body movement and drama may not be suitable for this work as well.

## **Limitations and challenges**

There are a number of challenges in the Transformational Diamondmodel. Perhaps the biggest challenge and limitation, at this point, is that is still just a concept and not yet experientially grounded. It has yet to be tried and accumulate case examples. This seems to work and fit together in theory, however, it may be more difficult to employ. As I brought together the ideas of Essence by A.H. Almaas and David Read Johnson's Developmental Transformations, I realize that it lacks in original thought. I felt very connected to and agreed whole heartily with what Almaas had to say and thought that Developmental Transformations was exactly what was needed to accomplish those goals. I am confident that when I begin to put this theory in to practice changes will be made and more of my own ideas will come together to form an even stronger Transformational Diamond Method.

This type of therapy is intended to reconnect with our lost essence therefor it is not well suited for problem solving crisis, nor is it effective for immediate behavior change. As mentioned previously, a method of assessment and measurement has yet to be created

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

My approach to therapeutic work begins in a place of not knowing. Of experiencing, focused on Being rather than Doing. To begin our acquaintances with the patients in the realm of being means we begin in the dark, by the light of the moon. We do not know this person will work out the dilemmas of human existence until he shows us the path. This receptive approach believes everything that the patient needs is inside his own psyche; the issue is to mobilize and actualize the patient's own health rather than to cure him. Instead of trying to act on the patient, the attempt is to receive from him what his psyche is trying to produce. Much of the effort goes into trying to efface oneself, to create enough space in the room for the patient to take on whatever shape and size he needs to assume at the moment. This is in no way a passive stance; it is an actively receptive one. The therapist is not flaccidly inactive, she is trying to welcome the patient's wholeness into the room, but she wants to be with the patient, not to do something to him.

(Sullivan, 1990)

#### *Personal journey*

I sit here writing the conclusion to this paper a year after I wrote the introduction. A lot has happened in that year. I moved to a new country and began working as a drama therapist on the trauma team of a mental health clinic. The most significant change is how I see the work in this paper.

A Few months ago my thesis supervisor brought to my attention that Saphira Linden (a prominent transpersonal drama therapist featured in this paper) had actually been studying the Diamond approach with Almaas himself. I was eager to hear about her studies, share the ideas of my paper with her and receive some feedback and guidance.

After talking with her, her only response was “ How can you write a research paper about something you have never experienced?” Her comment through me for a loop. I got off the phone with her feeling somewhat defeated. It became clear at that moment that the reason I was having difficulty finalizing this paper was because I had no business writing it in the first place. Of course I realized I could not stop at this point. I had been working on this research for a year and had only a few months until the deadline. Unmotivated, I decided to go back to the beginning to see if I could possibly clarify for myself the reasons for this research. As I read the introduction I was filled with a sense of renewed faith and the reasoning behind my work was clarified. I am not claiming to be an expert of transpersonal psychology, the Diamond approach, drama therapy or even the Transformational Diamond approach I have begun to develop. I simply felt that, in my experience, the spiritual aspects of a human being were being ignored and I wanted to explore the possibilities of creating a drama therapy method that would focus on what I believe is important.

Many emotions have come along with writing this paper, however, I finish it with a sense of accomplishment. I have put all that I know, and more importantly, all I understand into this research but I feel that my understanding lies at the cusp of the theory. Now, I need to practice it in order to bring it to a new level of understanding. My work is a crack in a window of transpersonal Drama therapy.

I want to take the time to thank the reader for embarking on this journey with me. I hope you have enjoyed the windows I have opened. I look forward to going through them and exploring further the integration of spirituality and drama therapy.

### *The approach*

As I see it, The Transformational Diamond approach aims to bridge Western psychological traditions, including transpersonal theory and existential psychological with dramatherapy. What differentiates transpersonal drama therapy from other orientations is not the presenting problems of the client but the spiritual perspective of the therapist and the context of the work. This approach seeks to help clients integrate the transcendental or spiritual and personal dimensions of existence, to help them fulfill their unique, individuality while pointing towards their rootedness in their creativity and Essence.

On one level or another, each person is a seeker of spiritual transcendence. According to Hetler, Wellness can be compartmentalized in to six major dimensions: Intellectual, emotional, Physical, social, occupational, and spiritual (Hetler, 1979). Of course, the spiritual aspect has always been the one that has been neglected. Since the seventeenth century Galileo affair, science and religion have forged an unwritten contract on nonrelationship. The doctors took care of the body, psychologists took care of the mind and spiritual leaders took care of the spirit. In the twenty-first century people are beginning to realize the connection between all these aspects of self, and health and spiritual care are becoming a legitimate part of health care.

Transpersonal psychology is the integration of spirituality and psychology focused on both the ordinary and high end of consciousness. It views all psychological processes against a spiritual backdrop believing that one's identity can be transformed

from what one thought they were, according to their experience, to an experience of their spirit.

The concept of transpersonal psychology does not belong to one individual. However, I became very interested and revolved my work around the beliefs of one man, Hameed Ali. Hammed uses the term *Essence* interchangeably with soul and spirit. He believes that a person's deeper spiritual identity can be developed through delving in to psychological conflict, unconscious wounds and defenses. His approach seeks to help individuals shift their identity from ego to spirit.

The spiritual emergency that arises in all people is our disconnection with our essence. As babies we are very much connected to our essence. Unfortunately, due to a lack of mirroring and support from parents and culture, we loose that connection. When that connection is lost, we feel a void/holes in our selves. The psyche compensates for this by creating our personality and ego to fill the holes. We begin to slowly identify with that personality and forget our Essence.

Ali created the Diamond approach, which helps individuals break down the ego and personality and reconnect with their essence. I was very interested in this approach and believed that drama would allow that journey to take place in a safe space. Thus creating a new transpersonal drama therapy method as a conceptual model.

This new method holds the theory of the Diamond approach with the work done through Developmental Transformations and is called the Transformational Diamond Model. In this work, Ego death is obtained through embodiment work such as free movement, Sand

and water play, Sensory play, Relaxation and body awareness and guided visualization. Once ego death has occurred, guided free play will allow the individuals Essence to emerge and take over what the ego has left.

I believe that this work represents a movement on the part of creative arts therapies to become more spiritual, more willing to countenance a more creative interpretation of wholeness. Many individuals are searching for a connection with their spirit. More and more people are becoming frustrated with their faith or religions, but still need spiritual goals met. My goal is for drama therapy to provide an alternative opportunity for that search and to allow opportunities for the intensely individual, relationship-centered spirituality of today to express itself.

At the heart of this account of drama therapy is an understanding of spirituality. Spirituality is a fundamentally human phenomenon, which must be attended to by more than just religion. Truly, a holistic approach to a person's wellness includes mind, body and spirit. Drama therapy has a healing effect because it embodies a view of life that does not approach meaning head on, but lives imaginatively and creatively with meaning until human truth is ready to emerge.

My Goal is to provide a kind of healing that, as Granger states: "defies the restrictions imposed by definition" (Granger, 1995, p. 102).

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