

3. Caring and Clarity

Increasing emphasis on lifestyle also highlights the need for holistic practitioners to practise what they preach.

'Physician heal thyself' is a useful reminder for the doctor who appreciates that his or her own health deeply affects how useful he or she is in helping others. Wholeness is much more than just something physical. Emotional and mental clarity are needed to respond to a patient's real needs while caring and compassion are at the very heart of holistic practice and personal integration.

For example, this same individual may be willing to explore whether his or her back pain is a symptom of a mental or emotional conflict. He or she may be encouraged to examine the meaning this episode of 'illness' has for him or her. This may involve him or her in learning about meditation as a form of self-therapy.

Details of the Association are on p.63

Mary Swainson PSYCHOTHERAPY

Psychologies, especially those of a 'transpersonal' nature will become more and more important in the immediate future in bringing into consciousness the experience of worlds other than the material. In this report, Dr. Swainson presents some key ideas based on her personal experience as a psychotherapist and shows how the linking of different levels of consciousness is an essential aspect of personal growth.

'On which level shall we work?' asked a patient returning for more therapy after some years. Here-and-now group interaction was his métier; still to be explored were patterns set up in infancy/childhood, and those deeper levels - reaching beyond the present personality - which caused the re-establishment of such patterns. I explained that, at whatever level we started, by a process similar to induction, any change would affect other levels. There are no rigid boundaries. As I see it, the best principles are first to start where one is, and then to take what comes.

As the New Age approaches, however, the art of psychotherapy seems to be extending from the personal towards the transpersonal; from the limitations of the concept of linear causality to the experience of synchronicity; from materialistic determinism to the realisation of the power of thought and, above all, of creative imagination. Intimations which formerly came only through sleep-dreams are increasingly available to raised consciousness. In this way, some schools practise guided fantasy which is akin to certain methods of led meditation. The linking and transforming power is embodied in the symbol.

For example, by beginning with deliberate visualisation of a form of wholeness, such as the star, rose, or pyramid, integration of the whole psyche is progressively induced. From willed imagery of this kind, the individual may progress to what Jung termed 'active imagination' where the images take on a life of their own so that the conscious ego cannot alter them. (For instance, once I 'saw' what I tried to make into a glorious fountain of light, but it refused to budge from an inkwell with pens sticking out around it!)

There is a natural transition from active imagination to the 'inner journey' where, no matter how the conscious ego may struggle to hasten the pace or to escape, the process follows the rhythm of the inner growth of the whole Self, and in its own time. An interesting feature of this work is that our sense of the time-scale changes. In these inner worlds an immense duration of living may occur in a few minutes of outer clock-time; conversely years of outer life may pass until the subject is ready for changes in the inner.

Co-existent lifetimes

It is a short step from inner journeys to past lives - 'past' in the terminology of our linear time-scale, but possibly co-existent. In my experience, flashes from other lives first emerge like pieces of a jig-saw puzzle, gradually forming a pattern as more incidents fall into place. An increasing amount of research is being done on the many aspects of reincarnation, but in the purely therapeutic context I have found that only those lives - and only those incidents within the lives - which are relevant to the theme to be worked on in the present life are activated.

We find that the process can be trusted. As the themes emerge, together with their essential emotional discharge, the total sequence becomes more meaningful, indicating more obviously the redemptive

tasks to be undertaken now. Thus, a physical symptom, inexplicable solely in the context of the present life, may be repeated over and over again in several lifetimes, until we can find the original motive, such as (for example) the inability to forgive oneself, causing the symptom to reappear in life after life as a form of self-punishment.

Work on past lives need not be carried out only in a one-to-one therapeutic setting. Given reasonable maturity and stability, individuals who are committed positively to achieving wholeness, working with one or two friends who feel they have 'met before', can rediscover incidents and traits from past relationships emerging in the far memory of each person, in corroborative fashion, and at the right times for working on them.

Akin to these states of consciousness is what I might term 'parallel living'. Some people, either throughout their whole lives, or only during the period of therapy, may have inner landscapes in which people, animals and events occur, either experienced by the participating subject, or shown as an objective drama on a kind of inner TV screen. These parallel worlds are useful diagnostically as indications of what is going on at present in the outer world; they may also provide helpful guidance to choosing aright. Modifications of one level may affect the other. Or there may be what might be termed a 'remedial zone', set (like inner journeys) in a different time scale from earthly life, where re-growth of the personality can take place, several years of childhood and adolescence being telescoped into one or two years of our time. This is a great help to the therapist since much of the work is done 'over there'. The therapist's job, however, is to make links constantly between the different levels and also between inner and outer, so as to try to prevent too much confusion, and to 'earth' all experience soundly in the here-and-now. Acceptance, integration and application are the keynotes.

Some may be interested in the order in which these varied levels emerge. As yet, my experience is limited, but I would say that classically we work backwards from the here-and-now, through this life childhood patterns, to guided fantasy, inner journeys and past lives. Parallel worlds, like dreams, may occur at any time. But I have known a case in which past-life flashes came very early on, and were followed by the emotional discharge of buried traumas in the present life together with their application in more conventional therapy. A good deal depends on the nature of the individual and on the initial approach.

Contacting the inner guide

Closely allied to these areas of extended consciousness is the appearance of the inner teacher or guide. Sometimes the figure emerges from guided fantasy when the subject is asked to imagine strongly a helpful being and to listen to what is said. Sometimes the first appearance is in dreams of visions, or on an inner journey. Quite frequently in these times he (or she) can be contacted through what Paul Beard calls 'directed writing'; or words are spoken, dropped singly or in short phrases into the subject's mind, the whole not making sense until the recording is heard afterwards.

Of course, as anyone connected with the training of psychic or extra-sensory faculties knows, the utmost care and discrimination are needed, especially in the early stages when false 'teachers', or unrecognised aspects of the subject's own personality may be operating. But the criterion is always the **quality** of what is given, and the subject comes to know the true teacher by a special vibration. Once established by careful orientation and protection, the messages from the inner teacher can be of inestimable value in the therapeutic context as well as outside it, for the therapist is no longer working alone; the true inner guide knows more surely than either therapist or patient what needs to be done, and what is possible at each stage.

It is joyous team work. The therapist can go alongside and learn **with** the patient, ceasing to feel too great an ego-responsibility. These inner figures can take over much of the work; especially is this the case on the 'remedial' level once this is contacted and realised as containing experiences as valid as those of outer life.

Not only do these different levels of consciousness interweave each with the other, but also with the outer environment so that, as we progress, an increasing degree of reciprocity is observed between inner perception and outer happenings. Examples of synchronicity, 'the togetherness of things', far exceed the laws of chance. Things happen, we meet people, books are found, all at the significant moment. Gradually the subject becomes aware of him - or herself as contained within a progressively more comprehensive and significant rhythm or matrix, replacing the loss, or lack, of good earthly parents, which may have been traumatic, and giving a great sense of security and meaning to life.

We come to realise that, even if not always consciously, we function on many levels of existence. Further, instead of seeing the commandment to 'Love thy neighbour as thyself' solely as a moral imperative, we discover, as part of the nature of things, that what we are and what we do for ourselves we inevitably do for and share with others. Although essentially unique individuals, we are not separate. This becomes actual experience. And then we realise how much there is to be done.

As the changes come on, people are increasingly confused. The limitations of ordinary ego-consciousness make us see change largely in terms of destruction and death. I suggest that one of the "ways through" may be the living knowledge that we exist also in other worlds.

(Reprinted from SOLUNA - Vol 2 No 1. 1980)

Christiane Knight

A NATURAL BIRTH

36-year-old has her first baby, at home, in Kensington - in warm water!

This is only a brief report on my wonderful experience - I feel much more could be said, but I hope this short article will be enough to generate some fruitful thinking among parents who are expecting.

My pregnancy went fine. No major trouble. The few inconveniences were all greatly compensated for by the joy of creating a little baby body in my womb, and my feeling so much love for the baby coming to us.

I was confident that I would do the right thing when the time came for the actual birth if I fully understood the process, and both my husband and myself made sure that we would be ready for that.

It was so obvious to us that Baby should be born at home. Hospitals are for illnesses or accidents - birth is a natural process and a joyful event. As a first face-to-face contact with life on Earth, we wanted