

where my fecundity
lays and dirties.
not in some mannered measure
taken from my wings.
I prefer to stay
with the substance
of a subtler underlying process
which tells of softer rustling
of other night-time wings
the moth/er of spinning grubs
creating wondrous tapestries.
For you are a man

and I fear
cannot let me be
both water, wind and swift
skimming its rippling surface
to sip from life giving skin
on lethian mud-ling depths.

LISTEN!
I want to build a mud house
for my children
in the rarified air.
and I will.

Beyond Intellect

Jamie Moran

I read John Rowan's comments about the need to distinguish soul and spirit (*S&S*, September 1994) with great interest, and would commend the investigation of the depth psychology or spiritual anthropology of a number of mystical religions, where not two but several trans-ego realities exist.

Psyche indicates access to subtle levels, which in fact are various. Different traditions give different architectures of the subtle, but seem often to settle on at least four levels or kinds: one in us, in our unconscious (*chez Jung*); one in nature (hence the fey realm); one in the cosmos (hence the gods and goddesses); and one which is represented as the angelic.

Soul is *not* synonymous with psyche. Some of the phenomena that John refers

to here belong under soul and some under psyche — the crucial difference being that soul is capable of ecstatic experience and of what Eastern Orthodox Christian tradition calls 'contemplation' of the divine mystery. The undoubted 'highs' that come through the psyche are not to do with love, and so have an impersonal and ultimately cool quality about them; the ecstasis of the soul is a certain, expanded kind of love which retains a personal and thus warm quality. The soul is broken open by love, initiated into a (sacred) space of reciprocity which releases both intense philanthropy and also wisdom. The gift of tears, as also of inarticulate celebration, come from the soul's ecstasis.

In addition to psyche and soul there is nous, the spiritual intelligence which is

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the first 'eye' to be opened in spiritual practice (the soul is the second, and the heart is the third), and is an anchor for all the others. Intensely practical and down to earth, yet also acutely perceptive about spiritual issues, the nous has the arrow-like capacity to cut through all illusion and fantasy, especially when this is wrapped up in false spiritual glamour, and get to the heart of the real. It is a sober, penetrating realism — not materialism or idealism — which 'sees it as it is', no frills. It is a discerner of spirits — as to 'whether they be of God, or delusive.' Cultivation of the nous introduces all kinds of revolutionary changes in a person's whole psychology, but the chief of these is the achievement of what the Buddhists call detachment and the Greek Christians, especially the desert tradition, calls dispassion. This is a certain freedom from intellect, sensations and (especially) emotions — the staple psychology of the ordinary states of being. Whether this dispassion is then taken further, and what it is used for, becomes the key question. It can be used to kindle the true passion of life, or to justify a sort of singularity that is acutely disengaged. In the Eastern Christian desert tradition, it is thus made an injunction that we should 'take the mind down into the heart.'

Next there is heart, or deep heart, an organ of spirituality which plays a central role in mystical religions, but has been short-sightedly neglected by transpersonal psychology as a whole. It does not fit, for example, into Wilbur's distinction between the centaur, the subtle, and the causal. The heart includes the will, and the spiritual meaning of passion; it is the heart that bears the dilemma of existence and gives us to, or withholds us from, that

dilemma. It is referred to in the Lakotah Indian phrase 'man of great heart', and also in their teaching on the 'eye of the heart.' It is referred to in Eastern Christianity as the locus for the 'eye of fire', and is the crucial organ of ascetical life, involved both in the spiritual warfare and in genuine union with God. It is the heart that carries our most personal cry in existence, but which also discovers the mystery of togetherness which discloses that we are all in the wound of existence together, with no winners and losers at either an economic or religious level. The heart is what a Cherokee Indian once described to me as 'the deep place'; and it is in this place that the ultimate tragedy of life is experienced and can also be overcome and transmuted into greatness: and it is in this place that, if we throw off the scenario of individual winners and losers and perceive our togetherness in the dilemma and wound of existence, extraordinary actions become possible. We can do things when acting for 'the people' that we could never do when acting for ourselves. But because western society, as it has developed, is so heartless, it is all too easy and all too tempting for westerners to retain their lack of understanding of and commitment to heart in their so-called 'spirituality.' Without deep change in the heart, no real movement in the spiritual life happens — and the heart needs to be yoked to the path (wolf) as well as staked to the ground (bear) to receive the spirit's mysteries and life (deer).

Human spirit is the next reality. A strange passage in the Jewish bible refers to the fact that 'Jacob's heart fainted but his spirit revived'. The human spirit is not to be confused with the holy spirit, but

neither are the two to be absolutely separated. The spirit tests and proves the deep things of God and of the human being, and so this spirit moves our spirit to open and move in strange ways that often go against not only intellect and survival, but also against what we might think of as spirituality. Therefore, the Lakotah Tradition sees the human spirit as the (real) action of the heart; this was conveyed to me personally by a Lakotah Elder.

Then there is human personhood. Identity is another theme, like heart, treated in a poor way in transpersonal psychology. In the Eastern Christian Tradition, personhood is not individuality, but neither is it some kind of dissolved state, but rather a third thing entirely, one that expresses the paradox of love. So personhood, though never losing what William Blake called 'the fine wiry line of creation', is a state of radical communion with the other. 'He who loves acquires another self.' Communion of persons, not melting, is the ultimate mystical state of being. Personhood partakes of the mystery of unity-in-diversity. Diversity, on its own, creates a world of divided egos. But unity, on its own, destroys the (sacred) space of reciprocity between God and what God has created, and thus destroys the very possibility of love. If, at the end of all things, there is only one identity, God's, then on that scenario God has not taken the risk of love, which is to let there be an other, but not to be bound to their fate. Freedom and love form the koan, the basic 'cross' of existence.

I would suggest that more study of the status and importance of the 'in-between' subtle realm be undertaken by those interested in transpersonal psychology. The

current view of the in-between is mainly Greek Hellenic (Jung) and Vedanta (Wilbur) influenced, but these two perspectives do not exhaust the options here. Thus in several traditions which honour a sacred woman — viz the White Buffalo Calf Woman of the Lakotah and other shamanic peoples of the northern plains, the Shekinah of Hasidic Judaism, and the Sophia (or 'Wisdom') of Eastern Orthodox Christianity — there is a quite different emphasis about the subtle, or 'soul world' as it is sometimes called in the west. In all cases, a sacramental vision is woven in to the mystical, and there is no hierarchy of ascending purity. Indeed, if any notion of levels is implied, it is understood that the pure descends into the subtle, and through the subtle, into the gross. The movement is from above to below, because spirituality is ultimately incarnational, and hence sacramentally embodied. St Maximus (8th Century) likens the mystical to the bones of the creation, the subtle to its blood, and the gross to its body. The three are in an organic relation — the in-between bringing what is above it down into what is below it, and thus not just a staging post in an hierarchical ascension. The subtle, understood in this way as the 'life blood' of the creation, has the crucial role of *mediating* what is above into what is below, so that the very matter of things, the very here-and-now dust, can be made sacred, as the body or house of the most high. Thus the subtle finds its most ultimate meaning in relation to the 'making sacred' of all creatures and created things, as metaphors for, and embodiments of, that which is beyond all metaphor and beyond all body. Moreover, the sacramen-

tal vision also allows the subtle to carry the future possibilities for the transfiguration of all created things. Love's way is to come down, and suffer, for a finally incarnational universe in which all things are in communion.

Transpersonal psychology, as we have it to date, can be criticised as resting in both a limited and very biased *a priori* frame. It ignores heart, personhood, and sacramentalism, and this says it is on a very specific path — but mystical religions do not necessarily follow this path. Other

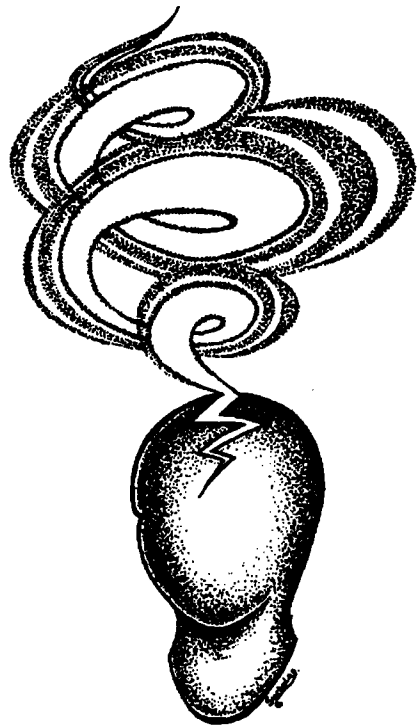
paths which aim not so much at transcendence or expansion but holiness, exist. And their practices are also wider and different. For example, meditation belongs to nous, contemplation to soul, and prayer to heart. Holiness needs all three. Transpersonal psychology seems to have fallen into the dichotomy of far east ('spirituality') v. far west ('materialism'), but in the process has lost what I would call the third way, the way of traditions that belong to neither East nor West but to where they meet.

Striking at Heads

Surbala Morgan

Beware the quest for scientific respectability when self-awareness is left out of the formula! My experience of a system where knowledge supersedes wisdom and theory overrides practice makes me chilled at the possibility of a common future for other therapy/counselling training courses.

I am coming to the end of my training in clinical psychology, where it seems that academic excellence is paramount and the acquisition of a 'toolbox' of clinical skills is seen as sufficient to set you loose on humanity. Knowing my self — the medium through which I am supposed to apply these 'skills' — is apparently unnecessary! What matters is passing the exams.



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