

***Bodies in Treatment (The Unspoken Dimension)*** edited by Frances Sommer Anderson (2008) (pp 273) London: Routledge (£27.99 hardback)

'*Bodies in Treatment*' is a follow up from '*Relational Perspectives of the Body*' (Analytic Press 1998) that introduced working with the body and emotions from a relational perspective. The central theme in this book is the body in relation to trauma. Reading this book at times felt like reading a Body Psychotherapy book; especially the essay by Graham Bass who describes using a 'hands on approach' in a session with a client. Touching a patient in psychoanalysis is, at least in this book, not a taboo anymore! The reader is introduced to a range of body-based treatments that are either used to complement psychoanalytic treatment, or used as an integral part. This is a step change, signifying a shift from traditional psychoanalytic practice as well as psychodynamic and humanistic approaches. Throughout the book we are introduced to an approach that does not favour verbal over nonverbal communication. Furthermore, experiences in the nonverbal domain are seen as essential steps in the process of reintegration.

The editor gives a personal account of being at the receiving end of body-based treatments while undergoing psychoanalysis. Her remark that many of the body practitioners did not have sufficient interpersonal skills to work at a relational depth which, in her view is necessary in trauma work, is food for thought. Nonetheless, treatments like the Alexander Technique, bioenergetic techniques combined with kundalini yoga, biofeedback etc played an important part in her quest to uncover and integrate her traumatic experiences in a way that psychoanalysis was not able to do. Her experience of the limitations of traditional psychoanalysis motivated her to produce this book.

**Part One** explores ways of attending to 'bodily experience' which serve to support and strengthen a client's bodily self or 'core self'. William Cornell shows how this aspect of self can be strengthened in therapy. For example, he got a client to mimic different characters in one of her drawings she brought to her session. This role-play enabled her to get hold of feelings and sensations which were out of her awareness and forbidden. The acting of different characters awakened feelings that had been stored in her 'implicit memory'. This vignette demonstrates the undoing of another common analytic taboo: getting a client to act rather than talk in a disconnected way.

Wilma Bucci's essay provides theoretical underpinning for this new way of working. She relates 'The unspoken dimension' to multiple code theory: for example she suggests that experiences are stored on a symbolic and sub-symbolic level and that they are on an equal footing rather than regarded as lower and higher brain functions. This non-hierarchical way of looking at experience seeks to use language that connects to the intuitive and visceral level and contrasts traditional ways of using language that tends to be rational.

**Part Two** introduces the reader to body-oriented techniques such as Pat Ogden's and Peter Levine's trauma work, dance and authentic movement, yoga, cranio-sacral therapy, and polarity therapy. This part is very useful for psychotherapists who are seeking to integrate a body-based therapy into their clinical work. Christopher Eldredge and Gilbert Cole present trauma work which concentrates on tracking body sensation, the main reason being that 'memory, affect, and image arise from a deep somatic source, not a verbal or narrative source' (p.80). They came up with five different techniques that help a client to focus on bodily experience. Maria Paola Pacifici's essay describes long-term analytic work with an anorexic young woman, where dance and movement was crucial in helping to enliven her depleted, lifeless body. This enabled her to build a new authentic self. Patricia Gerbarg introduces a wealth of research on yoga in connection with trauma. The benefits of using Sudarshan Kriya Yoga (SKY) as an adjunct to psychoanalytic treatment is illustrated in her long-term work with a client who suffered from PTSD. She suggests that yoga could be a vital part in a therapeutic plan because:

'therapeutic breakthroughs may be catalyzed, particularly in cases where trauma-related schemas have remained inaccessible to persistent psychoanalytic approaches.' (p.143)

Continuing along the path of trauma work, Graham Bass, as mentioned above, uses cranio-sacral therapy as a means to helping a client become aware of, and learn to integrate, traumatic experiences. He also says that the same form of bodily integration of dissociated affects can be facilitated in an attuned psychoanalytic setting. Based on my personal experience of having received touch as well as using touch as an integral part in my client work, this does not ring true. The question whether touch adds another dimension or not sparks an interesting debate. Helen Newman's essay, the last in part two, introduces the reader to polarity therapy in conjunction with psychoanalysis. She works with the five elements: ether, air, fire, water or earth. Her clinical vignettes demonstrate how the elements can be applied to individuals' histories. For example:

'a person whose parents died during childhood might have suffered a blow to his earth element.' (p.175)

Consequently the work may centre around helping a client to feel more grounded.

**Part Three** explores ways of paying attention to bodily experience in the form of movement, vocal rhythms and facial expressions as yet another way in to the 'unspoken dimension'. Steven Knoblauch describes a mutually transformative moment in a piece of client work which he

calls the 'tipping point', by which he means a moment of unusual emotional intensity that marks a shift in consciousness. This is the equivalent to Daniel Stern's concept of a 'now moment'. Gianni and Susanna Nebbiosi focus their analytic work by observing a client's rhythmic movement pattern. They found that miming a client's postural pattern in a supervision context has helped them to encode and understand their nonverbal communication. This approach is based on contemporary parent-infant research and the recent discovery of mirror neurons in the brain.

'Based on these studies, it appears that the sharing and communication of emotions takes place largely through our patients' body movements, and this process is mainly relational.' (p. 223)

**Part Four** outlines ways of bringing the body into therapeutic dialogue, and suggests that this way of working challenges many mainstream methods. Jean Petrucelli advances the topic from a clinical perspective and raises awareness of the simple truth that we all have feelings about our physical body as well as our therapist's body. This is often difficult to talk about. She suggests that:

'By bringing a consciousness of the therapist's body into the therapeutic dialogue, we have a chance to recognize how patients disown their bodies: their feelings of insecurity, shame, humiliation, self-hatred.' (p. 242)

Adrienne Harris and Kathy Sinsheimer write on the topic of the analyst's self-care. Both authors point out that listening to our clients emotional distresses and fantasies, often for several hours a day, may affect the practitioner's emotional and physical health. They recommend that psychotherapists seek self-care in the form of peer support and/or find ways of nurturing their bodies in massage, yoga or writing. This is especially important for psychoanalysts who, as far as I know, are not obliged to be in supervision after they complete their training.

Overall, I found 'Body in Treatment' a well-written and well-structured book. There is a good balance between theoretical concepts and clinical examples. The vignettes bring the often quite complex theories alive. The main message in this book is that trauma work needs to happen not only on a relational level, but on a bodily level too, in order to promote integration and healing. The variety of body treatments that are explored in the context of psychoanalysis is at the cutting edge of integration. I wholeheartedly recommend this book to psychotherapists, educators and body based health practitioners who seek to find effective ways of working with trauma.

#### References

Aron, L & Anderson, F.S. (eds) (1998) *Relational Perspectives on the Body*. Hillsdale: The Analytic Press.

***Becoming a professional life coach: Lessons from the Institute for Life Coach Training*** Patrick Williams & Diane S Menendez W W Norton 2007 £28.00hb pp.349 ISBN 978-0-393-70505-8

This is a big heavy book, and a very good one. It really contains so much material that any coach of any persuasion would find it useful. But it is not only useful to coaches: in my opinion there is hardly a counsellor or psychotherapist who could not pick up something useful from this book.

It starts off with a brief history of coaching, which has grown so much since we first heard of it around 1990. Then it gives some fundamentals, taken from the courses given at the pioneering Institute for Life Coach Training, where the two authors work. It says that coaching is not advising or training: but this book itself is full of advice and is very suitable for training.

Chapter 2 is on the language of coaching, and it becomes clear that, at least in the hands of these authors, it is a profoundly humanistic activity: nor is it restricted to the classic humanistic authors, but introduces us to people like Kegan and Wilber and other more recent people. On pages 28-35 we get a transcript of a whole coaching session, which I think is a beautiful example of how to treat a person right.

The authors argue that a good coach does not rely on web pages and glossy brochures, but tries to get into conversation with potential coachees. This seems an admirable and humanistic approach.

Chapter 3 is on coaching as a developmental change process. It is here that we are introduced to Ken Wilber, Robert Kegan, Clare Graves, William Torbert, Suzanne Cook-Greuter and others.

Then in the second part, we go on to empowering the coachee (with appropriate reservations about the word 'empowerment'), stretching the coachee and creating momentum with the coachee. These three chapters lead into the third part, called 'Coaching from the inside out'.

Here we get a chapter on Purpose. The view taken here is that every coachee has a life purpose, and that one of the most important things a coach can do is to help this purpose to be discovered. Past experiences can be examined, and examples are given. Then we are told that coachees can design their lives. 'The basic premise of life design is that human beings can create the life of their dreams... To create the life of our dreams, we also need to have the courage to create.' (p.179) Structured exercises are given to help start this process. The next step is to identify those things that get in the way - two important ones that get special treatment are energy drainers and unmet needs.

Worksheets are given for dealing with these. Maslow gets pride of place in the discussion of needs. Again specific exercises are given.

Then we get a chapter on values. This goes back to some of the work which humanistic people will be familiar with, in the values clarification work of Sydney Simon. The authors say: 'Working with values is critical to great coaching.' (p.218) Some good exercises are again given here. The next chapter is called 'Walk the Talk' and is about personal integrity. Some nice hints are given here, such as this suggestion: 'Be impeccable with your word. Don't take anything personally... Don't make assumptions. Always do your best...' (pp.236-7) And again there are exercises to follow. We then get a chapter entitled 'Play Full Out' which includes hints on saying 'no' (which are actually very useful) and again more exercises to carry out.

The next chapter is entitled 'How Wealthy Are You?', and this includes a very wise examination of what we might mean by wealth. It includes, for these writers, such things as love, time, vision, money, time, career and contribution. Again there are some good exercises to complete. There follows a discussion of mind-set, where we are told that 'many research studies illustrate the power of mind-set'. (p.285) And here the authors bring in Ken Wilber's ideas about AQAL (the four quadrant model) to flesh out their own ideas in this area. They also introduce the idea of affirmations, and present some more good exercises. The final chapter is 'Love is all we need', and it again includes a number of useful exercises. Subjects like care, compassion and forgiveness are all covered.

To sum up, this book contains more or less everything anyone could require who is engaged in coaching – and in my opinion it could also be of great use to counsellors and psychotherapists, particularly those who are not averse to an exercise or two. It seems to me definitely humanistic in its general orientation, though the odd whiff of New Age thought does creep in here and there. It is quite sophisticated and up with the latest thinking in the field.

*John Rowan*

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***Dialogue and Desire: Mikhail Bakhtin and the Linguistic Turn in Psychotherapy*, Rachel Pollard (2008) Karnac. London (£20.99)**

The enigmatic and elusive Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) has long influenced a wide variety of Western disciplines, striking powerful chords in literature, feminism, psychiatry and politics to name only a few. Despite undergoing a 30-year exile he was one of only a handful of independent thinkers to survive the Great Soviet experiment. In reading him from the cut-and-thrust comfort of Western neo-liberalism, we should never

forget that he wrote under appalling conditions of deprivation and censorship.

Bakhtin is best known for his writings on the Carnival. A recognition that people once led double lives of day-to-day grind countered by several weeks of Carnival. These medieval annual events once took over complete regions and cities. Hierarchies were reversed, mocked and collapsed. The body was celebrated in the abundance of feasts and grotesque masking. An altogether different way of people relating to one another was created.

Rachel Pollard's book ensures that Bakhtin now has an important profile within psychotherapy. Her book lays out the concept of the dialogical self – a self composed of a variety of voices that are forever in dialogue with each other. We are all made up of a number of inner-voices constantly interacting with each other and with each holding particular points of view. Some voices are in conflict with one another or serve to protect lesser voices. Other voices work at differing amplitudes. They may be weak, suppressed, powerful or fixated at some earlier experience.

The same intra-psychic pattern exists externally. The individual self may only be constituted in relationships with external others. We need the form-shaping activity of dialogue with another in order to fully know ourselves.

I have found it a useful therapeutic contribution to identify (and name) voices as they come to reveal themselves in therapy. Once welcomed into awareness they may be introduced to other internal voices and even thanked for the role they perform. Pollard confirms that Bakhtin's work is alive with extraordinary insights.

Dialogism is the celebration of language firmly embedded in a social context. Every encounter we engage ourselves with is a unique and unrepeatable event. Meaning, rather than a code to be sent and received, is to be something *jointly created between* people. This 'in-betweenness' is a volatile and turbulent space and many words must fall unheard to the ground. Hence, meaning is always something to be striven for. Dictionaries, Bakhtin argues, are full of the dead corpses of words. Accordingly, words must be drawn up through our bodies and struggle to find expression in this uncertain space. Meaningful understanding demands that we are attuned to the anticipation of the other; the element of surprise; and a deep respect for the interdependence we have on one another.

Rachel Pollard rightfully declines to present Bakhtin with any sense of a unitary understanding. Instead she brings him into dialogue with other therapeutic voices; most notably with the little-known French anthropologist Girard. It's an imaginative combination that projects psychotherapy onto a political and

social plane. Girard speaks persuasively on how desire – for success, commodities, prestige - is rooted in our make-up. Pollard ably turns this focus onto therapists and our own political conflicts and desires.

For Pollard, dialogical therapy is a human social practice. One that must be rescued from the psychological categories that seek to measure and quantify people under established models. Dialogism, in itself, is always open, always in process. Accordingly we are asked to continually scrutinise the truth claims and rivalries that so corrupt modern psychotherapy. By working with multiplicities of meanings Pollard opens up a useful debate over the forthcoming state regulation of our work.

Rachel Pollard's has written a compelling book. It is refreshing in that it speaks alongside the reader carefully defining her concepts before moving on. The book is to be firmly recommended as a landmark statement of Dialogical Therapy.

*Peter Good is author of 'Language for those who have nothing: Mikhail Bakhtin and the Landscape of Psychiatry'.*

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***Remembering in a World of Forgetting: Thoughts on Tradition and Postmodernism* By William Stoddart**, Edited by Mateus Soares de Azevedo and Alberto Vasconcellos Queiroz. World Wisdom, 2008, £14.99, 184 pp.

'The only antidote to the relative and the subjective is the absolute and the objective, and it is precisely they that are the contents of traditional metaphysics or the *philosophia perennis*.'  
– William Stoddart

In his new book *Remembering in a World of Forgetting: Thoughts on Tradition and Postmodernism* perennialist author William Stoddart synthesizes the vast depth and breadth of the traditionalist perspective that he discovered in 1945, at the age of 20, through the writings of the metaphysician Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, curator of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston - a seminal spokesman of the perennial philosophy that led the author to the writings of René Guénon and Frithjof Schuon. Schuon later came to be his spiritual mentor. It might be of interest to the reader to note that Aldous Huxley who published his anthology, *The Perennial Philosophy*\* in 1945 became from that time forward the central figure attributed to the perennial philosophy. Yet the three writers

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FOOTNOTE \* 'One comment, concerning Aldous Huxley's *The Perennial Philosophy*: the least one can say is that his comments are not at the same high level of the quotes he selected. His approach is more "literary" than really spiritual.' Mateus Soares de Azevedo, also the editor of *Ye Shall Know the Truth: Christianity and the Perennial Philosophy*.

mentioned above, who are relatively unknown outside certain circles, have dedicated their lives to its doctrinal exposition and living in accordance with its spiritual methods. Readers who have never encountered their writings will be very surprised to see that what they presumed the perennial philosophy to be, from both a theoretical and practical outlook, is quite the contrary.

Dr. Stoddart makes the traditional perspective accessible to those who have never been exposed to the perennial philosophy providing an excellent introduction, topographic in scope, and yet his book offers countless pointers for those who are more familiar or established in the traditional perspective. He conveys this perspective, as disclosed in the preface of the book, with three key characteristics, 'precision, simplicity, and essentiality', as he coherently outlines what has been lost and forgotten in the modern and postmodern worlds, preceding to the essence of theory (doctrine) and then practice (method), which are all indispensable in understanding the perennial philosophy.

The book is divided into three inter-related sections. The first part is: *Forgetting DECLINE or what we have forgotten*. It is in these seven chapters where Dr. Stoddart contrasts the traditional world to that of the modern and postmodern, decisively underscoring the 'progress' that has led to our current impasse - shedding light on the terminal polarity of our times: survival or destruction? He points out the 'shadow' or 'unconscious' implications of evolutionism, progressivism, scientism, psychologism and democracy itself as the pseudo-religion of contemporary man, which is rarely perceived, understood or questioned in the current era.

In chapter four: *Ideological Obstacles to the Spiritual Life*, Dr. Stoddart makes it clear that the 'evils' committed in the name of religion (i.e. terrorism and that of fundamentalism in whatever shape or form) should not be confused nor identified with true religion itself.

In chapter five: *Religious and Ethnic Conflict in the Light of the Writings of the Perennialist School*, he explains how the increase of 'atheism' in the modern and postmodern eras has led to further disarray of the Western World. He clarifies that the universal principles of the perennial philosophy are not 'syncretism', but rather a synthesis - testifying that all religions are one in the transcendent Unity. This does not however mean that one must discard religion altogether thinking that because they are all one, *ipso facto* it being unnecessary to practice a religion. This has also been one of the many unfortunate misunderstandings of those who have interpreted Huxley's *The Perennial Philosophy* to be almost anything that the human



imagination could derive from its own directives - including the idea that it is somehow enough to acknowledge the transcendent Unity, the perennial philosophy, without practicing a specific and genuine spiritual form.

Dr. Stoddart clarifies that one must practice a religious form if one is to align oneself with the perennial philosophy. It is through the metaphysical principles of the perennial philosophy that a true universal understanding of diverse ethnicities and races (i.e. many of the popularized terms of our current era such as 'cultural competencies', 'cultural diversity' and 'multiculturalism') can be established. It is for this reason that Dr. Stoddart points out that the perennial philosophy is not 'syncretism' but rather a synthesis - where each of the traditions remains integrally its own, each one affirming, beyond its relative distinctions and differences, the primacy of truth. What is of the human or individual (relative) order and at the same time Universal (Absolute) order - or what is of immanence and Transcendence. It is here that the voice and outlook of the traditionalists can offer guidance in resolving the conflict and violence that plagues our current epoch by testifying to the validity of all revelations that were disclosed to the different ethnicities and races of the world, without creating a monopoly on truth or speaking of 'oneness' without any substance behind the words, which is sadly enough often the case.

Part Two of the book is entitled: *Remembering (theory) TRUTH or what we have to know*. It is composed of six chapters.

In chapter eight he examines what religion is according to the perennial philosophy.

In chapter nine he clarifies the misconceptions that are commonly attributed to the idea of 'orthodoxy', which is similar to the first item of the Buddhist Eightfold Path: 'right view' or 'right thinking' (also connoting doctrinal purity).

In chapter ten he identifies what is commonly misunderstood by the term 'intellect' and how, as it relates to the perennial philosophy, it is synonymous with Spirit, seated in the heart and not the brain - having nothing to do with discursive thought or subjectivity.

In chapter eleven he briefly introduces the Perennialist School and the key figures who were involved: René Guénon (1886-1951); Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy (1877-1947); Frithjof Schuon (1907-1998); and Titus Burckhardt (1908-1984), and provides their biographical information. In chapter thirteen he describes what education is from a perennial perspective.

The final portion of the book, Part Three, is entitled: *Remembering (practice) SPIRITUALITY or what we have to do*. He clarifies the many misconceptions of the term 'mysticism', which has been marked by individualistic subjectivity. The author gives an overview of the different religious traditions, some from a first hand account, reading like a spiritual travelogue - where he made a pilgrimage to the Holy Mountain of Mount Athos, a remote monastic community where Christian spirituality has been practiced in its purity since the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD. The author also writes about receiving *darshan* ('divine sighting') with the 68th Jagadguru of Kanchi (1894-1994), who traces his spiritual lineage to the original di Zankarcrya, who is known for his metaphysical doctrine of *advaita* or 'non-dualism'. There is also an appendix with excerpts of his previously unpublished letters including a brief biography of the author and a glossary of terms.

In each chapter of *Remembering in a World of Forgetting*, Dr. Stoddart condenses potent kernels of traditional knowledge and wisdom without compromising these doctrines and methods and yet he imparts to the reader the essentials of what is needed to be known by any seeker of truth.

Although this work is not devoted to any specific religious revelation, the author remains true to the 'transcendent unity of religions' by providing the metaphysical principles that underlie these traditions so that the reader may understand each in their unique revelation and, simultaneously, in their universality. It is these metaphysical principles that will assist the seeker in the post-modern era beyond the psychological imbalance and spiritual confusion that has become a 'norm' and in fact plagues the current epoch.

This new work by Dr. Stoddart will provide an astute reference and contribution to other perennialist or traditionalist works as it offers a grand synthesis of many ideas found in other traditionalist works and also contributes novel and insightful pointers that are not found in these approaches. The only shortcoming, if we could imagine one, is that the work could have been longer.

I will conclude this review with a few fitting words from the author's *Excerpts from Letters*: 'Religion is a *form* of Truth (it is 'colored'), and as such it is accessible to the whole community. The '*pure* Truth' ('uncolored') is for the very few.'

*Samuel Bendeck Sotillos*