Early Days in Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychology

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SYNOPSIS

This article dredges up some of my most vivid memories of the early days in humanistic and radical psychology in this country. The 1970s were very exciting for me, and also for the practice of therapy – particularly group therapy – in this country. And the formation of the UK Association of Humanistic Psychology Practitioners (AHPP) was a highly significant move, followed as it was by the founding of the British Association for Counselling (or BAC, as it was then) accreditation scheme, which took over many of the ideas worked out in the AHPP. When the UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) came to be formed, two of the three people who wrote the identity statement for the Humanistic and Integrative Section (as it was then) came from the AHPP.

For me, it all started with going to see a play. The play was 'Paradise Now', when it was put on by the Living Theatre at the Roundhouse in June 1969 (Malina and Beck, 1971). This was an extraordinary play, which was partly scripted and partly improvised, and the improvised bits took up most of the time and involved the audience a great deal, either by the players coming into the audience, or by the audience coming on to the stage. It was highly political, but also had a spiritual aspect to it, mainly based on the Kabbalah and Tantra.

The revolution of which the play speaks is the beautiful, non-violent anarchist revolution. The purpose of the play is to lead to a state of being in which non-violent revolutionary action is possible (Rostagno, 1970). Joseph Chaikin once said, 'The Becks perform that special function which very few books and movies, some love affairs and great losses do – they can actually change your life' (Chaikin, 1968). Well, I don't know how many people that is true for, but I am certainly one of them.

B NOW

I went with two friends who were also poets, Ulli McCarthy and Keith Musgrove. One of the lines in the play was – 'Form a cell' – so we thought we would. My loft had just been opened up, so we could meet there. We formed a

group called B NOW, the 'B' standing for 'Best society humanly possible'. Some of the best bits in the play had been the Actions, which often took the form of the things done in encounter groups or microlabs – for example, one was the Flying, where players and members of the audience had to get up on to a platform on the stage, and dive off into the arms of the waiting people, arranged in two lines with arms joining the lines. 'Breathe... breathe... breathe... FLY!!' – I remember it so vividly still.

The meetings of B NOW all took the same basic form: part one was a series of non-verbal exercises, which went on for anything up to an hour (these exercises were devised at first by Keith Musgrove, who was working as a group leader at Centre 42 in Kensington, the first growth centre in London; and later by Rupert Cracknell and John Henzell, both of whom were art therapists); to open part two, I would say, 'All right: the revolution has happened; the world outside is just the way you always wanted it to be; what do we do now?' (we would go on from there into some very fascinating fantasies about Utopia, where we took nothing for granted about the way things had to be); and part three was the eating, where we all brought food and fed each other – the rule was that you must not feed yourself. This turned into a very sensual and delightful part of the meeting.

This was really my first experience of group work, and because it was my house we met in at first (though we went to others later), I could put in any of my own ideas that I wanted to; so in a sense I was a co-leader right from the start. Some of the experiences I had in that group stay with me today, and some of them were turned into poems, and it was an emotionally shaking experience to go through. The exercises often stirred up early traumas, and were quite cathartic on occasion. My wife, parents-in-law and children (who lived downstairs) hated the group because of the strange noises (people crying, shouting, groaning, screaming and so on) coming from the group. That was the main reason why we later met in other places. It may have been partly because of this beginning that my first wife always disliked my involvement with group work and therapy.

This group, which had some interesting members including Jocelyn Chaplin, who later became quite famous herself as an artist and author and leader of the Serpent Institute, went on for about six months, meeting almost every Friday night, and then it gradually died – fewer and fewer people came regularly, and it petered out altogether. And I got interested in groups at that point – what made groups live and die – how did groups work exactly; what really happened in groups? So I started going to groups. I went to encounter groups, gestalt groups, psychodrama groups, Tavistock groups, psychosynthesis groups, T-groups, bioenergetic groups, movement groups – you name it, I did it. I read about groups, I studied groups. As a social psychologist, I was supposed to have read all the literature on groups, but I found I hardly knew anything, and in fact some of the best books on groups had not been written by then.

In the process I came across the Association for Humanistic Psychology. This was an organisation which had only been created in this country in 1969, though it had originated in the United States in the early 1960s. It existed to put across the theory and practice of just the kinds of groups I had been going to, at growth centres and elsewhere. The whole idea of a growth centre, I discovered, had come from Humanistic Psychology, as had the whole idea of having direct methods of developing human

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potential. So I found it very congenial, and invited myself to a committee meeting: within two years I was in the Chair.

It seemed to me that Humanistic Psychology was implicitly revolutionary, in that it was totally dedicated to the idea of freedom. It was quite scornful of the idea that therapy was about nurturing people or supporting people – it was all about enabling people to take personal power and take charge of their own lives. It was very sympathetic to the ideas in the play, and indeed some of the exercises in the play had been taken from Humanistic Psychology in the first place. And yet there was something very solid about Humanistic Psychology; it worked.

What had been happening to me in the groups I had been to was that I had taken enormous steps in self-discovery. The first thing I discovered was that I was completely out of touch with my feelings – I really did not know I had such things, still less what they were. I remember how, at one of the first encounter groups I went to, at one point the leader said, 'Let's just go round and see how we are feeling. How are you feeling right now?' When it came to my turn, I didn't know; I just had no idea of how to answer the question. If it happened now, and I had the same feelings, I would say, 'I feel blocked' – but I didn't even have that vocabulary in those days.

The Real Self

The first clear and definite feeling I came up with in that first year was anger – I learned how to be angry, and how to express anger. The second feeling I discovered was grief – I cried and cried – I remember crying for 45 minutes about how sad it was, all the tears I had never shed! Later came other feelings, such as love, hurt, neediness and fear. Later still came the ability to open myself up to another person's feelings, and be intimate with them.

And with the healing of the split between thinking and feeling came, one time in a group, after a cathartic experience, a sense of being a whole person, of seeing people quite straight and undistorted. This only lasted for about half an hour, but it was something quite new, and I sensed that it was important for me. Later I had this experience again and again, as other splits were healed, and I started to label it as an experience of getting in touch with the real self.

The idea of the real self is very important in Humanistic Psychology, and it is always tied to actual experience, rather than being just a theoretical construct. I have written about it at some length elsewhere (Rowan, 2000). It is the result of healing splits in the personality, and of the integration of the person which results from that. I have seen it happen many times in groups, and it is a marvellous experience to participate in, in any way. The person can go round the group and say something to each person, and each of these interactions is completely unique and appropriate – no clichés, no old tapes playing, just fresh and direct perception and communication.

One of the most confusing things about the whole business was that in the growth movement there was this great emphasis on autonomy – on moving from other support to self support. Gestalt therapy was particularly strong on this, and I loved gestalt therapy. Frits Perls (1970) was the great facilitator of autonomy. Now I was great on autonomy, which to me was another name for freedom – I had specialised in autonomy, I was brilliant at autonomy, and so leapt at this and loved it. The whole idea of the real self even promised more autonomy. It was only later that I discovered that there is a pathology of autonomy, the same as there is a pathology of dependence, and I had been feeding my pathology as much as doing genuinely good work in self-development. Autonomy is good, but emotional nourishment is important, too. With real intimacy I could get both of these things in a proper balance. This realisation took a long time to dawn.

And of course all this led to an increasing interest in psychotherapy, although I still saw this as best done through group work. I was very suspicious of one-to-one therapy, as an expensive, middle-class, establishment sort of thing. I was also very suspicious of the Tavistock type of group, which I went to in 1970. I wrote up my experiences in that group in a series of 38 poems, which I then delivered as a scientific paper on groups at the Annual Conference of the Occupational Psychology Section of the British Psychological Society, and which later became most of one chapter in my book *The Power of the Group* (1976b). This group, it seemed to me, was all about reinforcing the power of authority to put people down and keep them where they are. But what interested me was the process of change. How do people change? That was the question.

Radical Psychology

At the same time my intellectual interests had expanded and taken a new turn. I still pursued Humanistic Psychology, which was my positive path, so to speak, but now I also

started taking a parallel negative path. I went in 1970 to the first Radical Psychology conference, organised by Keith Paton at Keele University, and out of that came a magazine called *Red Rat*. I helped to produce the first issue, and stayed with it until it was overtaken by a better radical psychology magazine, *Humpty Dumpty*, which I later helped to originate and produce. I got involved in other activities – some of us produced a big pamphlet called *Rat, Myth and Magic*, and started to invade and militantly disrupt various psychology conferences. We were very critical of the way in which academic psychology misled and demeaned people, reducing them to the level of stooges or inanimate things in order to study them. We felt that no human psychology could be developed in that way, and that it was all a big confidence trick.

I remember the excitement I felt on picking up on a second-hand bookstall the original American edition of Charles Hampden-Turner's (1971) book *Radical Man*. This was an account of what personal growth was and how it took place, right within the boundaries of Humanistic Psychology as I understood it. Later I met Charles, and liked him very much, though we have never seen eye to eye on the question of patriarchy. What the book said was that the personal and the political are one – that personal growth leads to political radicalism. And the book made it clear that authenticity in the existential sense (a combination of self-respect and self-enactment) was the major factor in any real self-development; it was the key to where one was going, and also the key to getting there. The strong feeling of the real self which I had had in groups connected up with the philosophical idea of authenticity, and I felt a real connection there – that authenticity was one place where the personal and the political came together. One could not be authentic and experience alienation or anomie at the same time. This brought together the two paths (the positive path of personal growth and the negative path of radical psychology) in a way which I found very satisfying.

At the end of 1971 the political group I had been working with fell apart, and I broke up with the woman I had been with. This was an extremely painful time for me. I went back to my wife, and the whole story which is unfolded in my book *The Horned God* (1981) began. I started to take a much more intense interest in group work as such. It seemed to be a natural development, as if one chapter had closed and another one opened. I started leading groups, just following the methods I had picked up bit by bit, as we all used to do in those days, because there were no training courses to speak of. The first humanistic training course I came across was organised by John Andrew Miller, based on Antioch University in the USA, which grew from strength to strength and eventually transmogrified into the Regent's College training course, which is now very successful. One important training is the Metanoia Institute, which was founded by Petruska Clarkson and Sue Fish. Both of these pioneers are now dead, but their legacy lives on in the flourishing organisation they founded. In 1978 the Minster Centre came on to the scene, originally in the house of Helen Davis. Later she took on the house next door, and later again moved into several quite different premises. Her work still continues, though she herself has retired. My first paid workshop was at Kaleidoscope in 1972, and was specifically on Creativity: since then I have done many workshops around that topic, and still regard it as one of the central issues in all growth and self-development.

It is marvellous to see people in these groups dropping their assumptions about what they are capable of, and finding their own creative centre. I find this one of the greatest satisfactions in the whole field, just of seeing people blossom and come forth. You can see their whole body change and become more open, more energised, more relaxed, more approachable. Very often there is an experience of ecstasy, and I myself had more and more peak experiences around this time. I found I could even lay myself open to experiences of ecstasy quite deliberately, along the lines suggested by Joanna Field (1952) in *A Life of One's Own*. It was as if I had hit bottom and could now start coming up again.

This is perhaps a suitable point to say that I regarded then, and still do now, personal growth, counselling, coaching and psychotherapy as all really the same activity under different labels. They are all based on the twin ideas of unhindering and unfolding. Unhindering is about removing the blocks which people have put up in the way of contacting their own centre, and unfolding is about encouraging people to allow that centre to take over and to follow their own process of self-development with confidence and trust. Along the way, the issues around existential choice arise again and again – as Maslow (1973) used to say, at every moment we have a choice between the joys of safety and the joys of growth. And as Mahrer (1978) was to say later, it is all a question of doing justice to our deeper potentials, and really choosing to do that.

So I was mixing with highly experienced and trained people, some of whom were certainly quite radical, and learning as much from them as possible. One of the most exciting events I attended was in 1973, when I went to the AHP Annual Meeting in Montreal. Here I met some of the people I had been reading about and admiring, and actually seeing them in action. In the same year I also went to an international workshop on co-counselling, where I met Harvey Jackins, and again learnt a great deal about myself. I was really getting in amongst a stimulating crowd. Later I went to other AHP conferences in the States, where I met people like Rollo May, Will Schutz, Al Mahrer, Jean Houston, Carl Rogers, Al Huang, and so on.

The Council of Group Studies was an interesting group of such people, who decided in the end to start up a Diploma course. This was adopted by the Polytechnic of North London, under the able and continually innovative leadership of John Southgate, and I duly joined this course and eventually (in 1975) got my Diploma in Applied Behavioural Science. This covered group work, individual counselling, theory and research, organisation development and so on. This was my first introduction to one-to-one work, which took the form of co-counselling (Kauffman and New, 2004), because that was more politically acceptable than any other form. In the same year I had an important breakthrough in therapy, all about my mother, which I wrote up (Rowan, 1975) in *Self & Society* a little later, and which made a big difference to my whole life. I could now relate to women as real people.

At this point I wrote a book called *Ordinary Ecstasy: Humanistic Psychology in Action*, which put a lot of what I had discovered into print and made a sort of milestone in my progress so far. In a way it put me on the map as a person seriously interested in the whole area of personal growth, counselling and psychotherapy. (Later it went into second and third editions.) I had already written a critical chapter on research methodology for a book edited by Nigel Armistead (one of the other people on *Humpty Dumpty)* which came out from Penguin (Armistead, 1974).

Red Therapy

At the same time (1973–8) I was working intensively with a self-help group called Red Therapy, which was dedicated to finding out more about the relationship between therapy and politics. It had started as a result of a meeting put on by *Quaesitor*, then the biggest growth centre in Europe, and was an interesting example of personal growth and radicalism coming together once again. In 1978 it produced a big pamphlet about its work, which I helped to write and put together. I learned a great deal in this group, both about myself and about the political implications of psychotherapy. Many of the lessons of this group were written up later in the excellent book by Sheila Ernst and Lucy Goodison (1981), *In Our Own Hands*.

What I finally learned from this group was that personal change and political change could both be worked on in the same group. Often in seems that the growth person is opposed to the political person, and the politico is opposed to the groupie – in the US they called it the conflict between the Wheelies and the Feelies. I also learned the same thing in another organisation which existed at about the same time, founded by Keith Paton – Mothersson, as he later became – called *Alternative Socialism*. Here again we found that the two things could be combined, rather than having to be contrasted with one another. Of course the women's movement had discovered this for themselves long ago, but men were rather left out of this, and had to make their own (our own) discoveries.

So at the end of this phase I had run the full gamut of group work, and had made many discoveries there. I was by now a fully developed and functioning encounter group leader, specialising in work on creativity, sex roles and subpersonalities. And I was also a researcher, now having seen that the old paradigm of empirical research most used in Psychology actually reduced people to something less than human, so that anything that might be discovered in that way could not really be about human beings at all. In 1977 I initiated the New Paradigm Research Group to push forward this insight. It included some very interesting people, including Peter Reason and John Heron, and this later led to the production of a big multi-author book (Reason and Rowan 1981), which became very influential in the development of qualitative research, and stayed in print for twenty years.

But it was in 1977 that an important turning point came, when I interviewed Bill Swartley for a special Primal issue of *Self & Society. I*t was as a result of that meeting that I discovered that he was just about to start a training course in Primal Integration therapy in London; I promptly joined it, and found it an absolutely extraordinary experience. The course was a very intensive one, with one weekend every two weeks; these later became residential, which made them even more intense. On the Friday night there would be a lecture or

seminar, where we would examine some theoretical points, do tests, look at a case or whatever, usually with written notes supplied by Swartley. The Saturday and Sunday would be simply an experiential group, where we would work spontaneously with whatever came up out of the initial go-round. As well as seeing Swartley in action himself, plus guest leaders such as William Emerson (a great therapist with whom I spent some time later), Jim Diamond and Paco, we worked with each other in small groups, learning how to do it ourselves. I did some deep primal work which was very important to me, including a lot of work on my father, and perhaps most of all working through my Oedipal material in a vivid, face-to-face way.

Primal Integration therapy is a holistic approach, which says that the four functions which Jung speaks of – sensing, feeling, thinking and intuiting – all have to be dealt with and done justice to in any therapy worthy of the name. So we all had to work in all four of these modes, learning how to use body work, cathartic work, analytic work and transpersonal work, all in their proper place at their proper time. It was a deep and far-reaching discipline which put tremendous demands upon all of us. I have described it at length elsewhere (Rowan, 1988).

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This training seemed to put together everything I knew and give it a coherent framework. As a result of this training, I felt ready now to work on my own. But I was working hard at other things, first of all as a freelance market researcher, then spending a year as a researcher for the British Psychological Society located in the Occupational Psychology Department at Birkbeck College, London, and then another year and a half heading up the Behavioural Science Unit at the Greater London Council's headquarters in County Hall. In 1978 the radical psychotherapist Giora Doron had the idea of starting up a psychotherapy training centre running a three-year part-time course, and very kindly asked me to take part in running seminars for it. This I did, and quickly found myself more and more involved in the Institute of Psychotherapy and Social Studies, which it later became. But it was still difficult to have more than a very minor private practice as a psychotherapist, because of the demands of my work and other interests. For example, I was on the committee of the Association for Humanistic Psychology, and also helping to produce the magazine *Achilles Heel* for anti-sexist men at this time. It was also at this time that I was meeting and going out with Sue, and at the end of 1978 I moved in with her. This relationship has proved to be one of the most important parts of my life, and Sue has encouraged me enormously at all the turning points which came from then on. This was helped very much by another breakthrough which came about in my own therapy in the Primal Integration group. What happened was that I seemed to go back down the channel of time to a fork in the road where I had made a decision about how to live my life. It was as if I had decided to do without other people, and to make it on my own. It was a lonely, thumb-sucking sort of a decision, and had led to what I referred to earlier as 'the pathology of autonomy'. It seemed incredibly early, as if it were the first decision I had ever made, not to rely on anyone else. And I just went back to that fork in the road, and took the other path. The phrase that came into my mind was 'I don't want to be alone', and it even came with a tune – an old tune from the 1930s called 'We don't want to go to bed'. And as I came back up, clutching as it were this tune, it became louder and louder. And I could feel, as it were, relays clicking and connections making and unmaking themselves all through my brain and my body. As if the implications of that changed decision were working their way through the system. And when I came back from that weekend I found that my relationship with Sue was much more meaningful;

that I could let her in to my deepest places in a way which I had not known was possible before. I could experience intimacy with her.

This may not sound very impressive. What's so new or remarkable about intimacy? But for me it was an enormous change. It was like opening up a whole other side of my brain and body, so to speak. The ability to let go of my fixed boundaries, which I first found with Sue, later extended to others too, and I found it extremely valuable in my work as a therapist. I could actually allow myself to know what other people were feeling, from the inside, as it were. So that when later I discovered a form of psychotherapy which necessitated just this opening of boundaries (Mahrer, 1996) I was able to take it on and practise it with relatively little difficulty.

I became a psychotherapist proper in November 1980, when the tenant downstairs moved out, and I took over his room and turned it into a therapy room. It still had the old wardrobe and chest of drawers in there, but I installed a mattress and a futon and two chairs and some big cushions and a tennis racquet and a baby's bottle and some massage oil and some boxes of tissues, and I was in business. Before that I had taken individual sessions in various hired premises, but this was now my own place, and I began to see more people and more regularly.

It seems that I was already regarded as a therapist by many people, so it did not make any great ripples in my circle of acquaintances. It was more or less expected. It was as if the only question was – what took you so long?

As an individual therapist, I did all the same things I had done in groups. In the kind of groups I was most involved with, much of the work is done with one person at a time, with the rest of the group looking on and sometimes participating in various ways. So there was no fundamental difference between working with one person in a group and working with one person on their own. In theoretical terms there is an important point here, in that it is generally laid down that people shall not practise any form of therapy which they have not been through themselves. And I had not been through the long-term one-to-one therapy which I was now offering. But it seems that there are exceptions to every rule, and I found no difficulty in adapting what I was doing in the way required. I had certainly done several years of work on myself in co-counselling, which is a one-to-one method, and I suppose this must have helped too, though the assumptions are significantly different. I don't really know why it worked so well, but I seemed to find that I could do it adequately. However, there are some qualifications, which we shall come to shortly.

One of the main ways in which I learned more about psychotherapy was by teaching it, through seminars, group leadership and the supervision of trainees. In a way there is no quicker way of learning something than by teaching it. And as I learned the lessons, I tried to pass them on again. In this way came about my 1983 book, which was all about how to be a humanistic counsellor or psychotherapist (second edition in 1998). People keep telling me it is a very practical and useful book, and it was certainly very useful for me to write it.

Formation of the AHPP

When Anne Dickson was Chair of the AHP(B), she and Alix Pirani called a meeting, held at the Kalptaru Centre in Belmont Street on Wednesday 28 November 1979. This was a follow-up to a previous meeting in June of that year. It was seen as a meeting for group leaders, designed to get our humanistic house in order and establish what Alix Pirani called 'a strong body, professional and responsible'. There had been a lot of discussion in the previous year, in the press and elsewhere, of the Sieghart Report, which recommended that psychotherapy should put its house in order generally, and this is what ultimately led to the formation of the UKCP; but this was not very much in our minds at the time. In fact, our interest was much more in group leaders getting together than it was in psychotherapists as such.

There was some discussion as to whether the new group should be part of AHP(B) or separate from it. Anne Dickson thought it should be a professional branch of the AHP(B). Steve Gans wanted to see it as a standing committee of the AHP(B). Anna Wise thought that it could use the credentials and standing of the AHP(B). I moved that we be the 'AHP Practitioners Group', and this motion was carried by an overwhelming majority. Anne Dickson then moved that we set up a working party to write a constitution: the people elected to do this were Jym MacRitchie, Anna Farrow, Alix Pirani, Elliott Leighton, Maureen Yeomans and Brian Hamilton.

On the 14th February 1980 the whole group met at Playspace, in Peto Place. Jym MacRitchie was in the

Chair. A document was presented by the working party, entitled 'The Bye-Laws of the Association of Humanistic Psychology Practitioners'. This was amended a good deal before being accepted. Standing committees were agreed as follows: Finance; Membership; Public Relations; Standards and Ethics; and Education and Training.

On the 29th June 1980 the inaugural meeting took place at the Minster Centre in Cricklewood. An interim Board had been elected at the March AGM of the AHP(B), consisting of : John Heron (Chair); Helen Davis (Deputy Chair); Joe Wesolowski (Executive Secretary); Maureen Yeomans (Treasurer); John Rowan, Dolores Bate and Jym MacRitchie (Representatives).

At this stage the aims and objects were declared as follows:

- To promote training, education and the practice of Humanistic Psychology;
- To promote and further the research and development of the theory and practice of Humanistic Psychology for the benefit of the general public;
- To provide information and referral services to the general public;
- To establish and maintain standards of practice and ethics;
- To aid and encourage mutual support for members in their practices; and
- To do such other and further acts as may be in furtherance of the above.

Two things stand out for me as I go over these bare details. One is that there is no mention of accreditation. The other is that very few of these people are still with us. In fact, some of them I couldn't remember at all.

The issue of accreditation is interesting, I think, because nowadays people think of the AHPP mainly as an accrediting organisation. What happened already in 1980 was that as soon as the Membership Committee came into being, it set itself the task of drawing up membership criteria. But this was done in a very interesting way. I quote from a note sent out in December 1980:

> The core of this approach is the individual's act of self-assessment, which is the basis of her/his application for membership. It affirms the primacy of individual self-determination and personal responsibility. No general criteria of adequate experience or adequate preparation/ training will be laid down in advance. Rather these criteria will be gradually evolved by the Membership Sub-Committee (subject to the scrutiny of AHPP as a whole at its general meetings) on the basis of the self-assessments which they consider, including their own.

In other words, the whole thing was set up on the basis of humanistic thinking, rather than adopting someone else's thinking and applying it in some way.

The Membership Committee was always seen as very central to the work of the AHPP, and it attracted a high quality of membership. Indeed, it sometimes seemed to be stronger than the Board itself. At the beginning it did not have a formal Chair, and the chairing varied from meeting to meeting, often depending on whose house the meeting was held in. People on this Committee in the first year were: Joel Badaines, Helen Davis, Anne Dickson, Ursula Fausset, Tom Feldberg, John Andrew Miller, Alix Pirani and myself. The first people accepted into membership were: John Heron, Joel Badaines, Dolores Bate, Diana Becchetti-Whitmore, Peter Clark, Helen Davis, Anne Dickson, Ursula Fausset, Tom Feldberg, John Andrew Miller, Alix Pirani, Joe Wesolowski and myself. Again I find it rather sad that so many of these are no longer with us. John Heron is of course running his own centre, first in Italy and then in New Zealand. Joel Badaines went to Australia and changed his name to Ari. Anne Dickson seems to have dropped out of sight, though I still see her books in the bookshops. Ursula Fausset has rather dropped out of sight too; the last time I saw her she was deeply involved in a discipline called Mind Clearing; I don't know if she still is. Dolores Bate works in Canada now, and I think has remained true to Gestalt. Diana Becchetti-Whitmore of course dropped the Becchetti and is the great leader and teacher at the Psychosynthesis and Education Trust. Peter Clark was into Co-Counselling the last I heard of him. Helen Davis of course headed up the Minster Centre, which later did some very interesting projects. Tom Feldberg is still around, and last time I met him was very interested in Da Love Ananda. John Andrew Miller is still around, though not a member any more. Alix Pirani seems to have gone very quiet. Joe Wesolowski went to Germany, and for all I know is still there. Maureen Yeomans started up the magazine *Human Potential Resources* in 1981, and it did sterling service to Humanistic Psychology for a number of years.

"The introduction of the term I-positions instead of subpersonalities was a great advance theoretically, obviating the dangers of reification and making it easier to work with superior entities..."

Of course as time has gone on, everything has tightened up considerably, and we have now got a very well-worked-out application form and membership procedure. One thing which many people don't know is that when the British Association for Counselling was devising its own accreditation scheme, a couple of years after ours, I was on the committee which set that up, and we used a great deal of the experience and the forms devised by AHPP in organising the BAC scheme. Similarly, many people do not realise that when the UKCP HIP Section was devising its criteria and basic statement, this was written by Joan Evans, Courtenay Young and me. In other words, two out of the three were AHPP members, and our influence was enormous.

From all this we can see that AHPP has been a leader rather than a follower in the field of humanistic practice. We are now moving into the field of accrediting supervisors, and it remains to be seen how effective we shall be in that area. The AHPP is unique in the world: no other country has an umbrella organisation which covers the whole range of activities characteristic of Humanistic Psychology.

Multiplicity within the Person

I should say something about my work with *subpersonalities*, and later with I-positions. It all started when I went to a group led by Jay Stattman, where he was exploring something he called 'symboldrama', and where I discovered several of my subpersonalities. For about three years in the early 1970s I started to explore, in a rather on-and-off manner, my own subpersonalities. Some experiences in Gestalt therapy also contributed. My first step was to write down, over a period of two or three months, all the separate aspects of myself I could discover. For example, No.1 was 'Enthusiastic project-doer; intense absorption for short period. Very sensitive in this phase, but very selectively'.

After a certain point, I didn't seem to be adding any more. And one day it suddenly occurred to me that these were aspects, rather than personalities. Some of them could be grouped together to make personalities. At first I grouped them together into five personalities, and then one of them seemed to split more naturally into two, to make six in all. I gave each one of them a name, which at first was quite arbitrary, having to do with how they had appeared; but later I gave each one a more explicit name, making it clearer to me what function it was performing. I started talking and writing about the internal society.

Then I took an LSD trip (perhaps more common then than now, but in any case something familiar to me – I regarded myself as something of an astronaut of inner space), with the explicit object of getting into each of these personalities in turn, and asking the same eleven questions of each of them. These questions were quite obvious ones: What do you look like? How old are you? What kind of situations bring you out? – and so on. This was an extremely useful exercise, which made a number of things very much clearer to me, and made me feel that here was something quite powerful, which could be pushed quite a long way in terms of self-understanding and self-acceptance.

The next step was to ask the question – if this works for me, does it work for anyone else? So in 1974 I got together 14 people who wanted to explore this area with me, and we held six meetings (four evenings and two whole days) for the purpose. The people taking part were a mixture of sexes and ages, but all had in common that they had done a certain amount of group work involving self-examination and the acknowledgement of

unconscious aspects of themselves. At the first meeting, the mean number of subpersonalities reported was 6.5, with a range of from zero to 18. I thought later that from 4 to 9 is the normal range, and that anything outside this bears traces of insufficient coverage, at one end, or of duplication, at the other. But it seems also that some people have a different character structure, which does not lend itself to talking in terms of subpersonalities. The following year, this research was presented at the annual conference of the British Psychological Society, and aroused a good deal of interest.

In 1980 my book *Subpersonalities* was published, and a few years later it was followed up with a more practice-oriented book called *Discover your Subpersonalities* (1993), showing how the idea could be used in workshops. After a few years had passed, Mick Cooper and I got the idea of a follow-up book extending the idea into various other fields, and this book, entitled *The Plural Psyche*, was published in 1999. A few years later I discovered the work of Hubert Hermans and his colleagues on the dialogical self, and went to several of his conferences in different countries, as a result of which my book *Personification* (2010) was published, and later my chapter in the *Handbook of Dialogical Self Theory* (2012) appeared (Hermans and Gieser, 2012). The introduction of the term I-positions instead of subpersonalities was a great advance theoretically, both obviating the dangers of reification and also making it easier to work with superior entities, such as the soul, the spirit and God.

The Transpersonal

About 1981 I began to feel that I had done the full humanistic trip. I was self-actualised, I was a fully functioning person, I was in touch with my authenticity. And the thought began to come – what next? There was a vague feeling of 'next-step-ness'. I explored the spiritual market-place, but did not find anything that quite met my needs. Then someone said at a party, 'You ought to read Ken Wilber, he writes a lot like you do'. I did read his work (e.g. Wilber et al., 1986), and it made a lot of sense to me, because it was so accurate about the path I had taken so far. So from 1982 onward I acquired a new appreciation of spirituality, I began to acknowledge myself as a spiritual being with a path to be followed. I started to meditate every morning, a practice which continues to this day. This has led to an increase in the extent to which I work in a transpersonal way, using symbols rather than words. I actually believe that this ability to use symbols and to live and breathe symbols is what is meant by the phrase 'Opening the third eye'. It really is a different way of perceiving the world. I found Ken Wilber the best guide into the whole field of spirituality, and have continued to gain benefit from his thinking, though I do not believe his map is quite complete or adequate.

But I combined this with my continuing interest in sexual politics, and what came out was a deep appreciation and some understanding of paganism. The old religion of paganism holds the Great Goddess to be primary, and links her with the earth and with the underworld. I particularly liked the approach of Monica Sjoo (e.g. Sjoo and Mor, 1987) and of Starhawk, both of whom also link feminism with paganism. Seen in this way, many of the usual transpersonal symbols are unwittingly patriarchal: for example, the identification of height with spirituality, and depth with the primitive unconscious, is a patriarchal distortion of the earlier conception of spirituality being essentially a downward movement. I started to write about these matters from various angles (Rowan, 1996, 1998a, 1998b, 2003, 2005, 2010).

In my recent work I have been going more into the transpersonal area, but I do not regard that as in any sense an abandonment of the humanistic outlook. The transpersonal work in Britain began in 1973, with the work of Ian Gordon-Brown and Barbara Somers, and also Joan and Roger Evans. There was considerable growth in trainings in the 1980s, and most of the current training centres were founded then. Particularly prominent was the work in psychosynthesis, which has now spread worldwide. But Maura Sills was remarkable in founding a training centre based on Buddhist thinking, running in the West Country. Recently Nigel Hamilton of CCPE (having a Sufi connection) has stepped forward to help the UKCP Transpersonal SIG get off the ground.

Transpersonal journals began to appear in the 1970s, and there are now two in the United States, two in the UK, one in Italy and one in Spain. All these are respectable and produce serious research and review articles. The British Psychological Society surprised us all by allowing a Transpersonal Psychology Section to be set up in 1995, which has since flourished and produced many papers and conferences of a high standard. One of the prime movers in this was of course David Fontana, who unfortunately died recently.

The Association of Transpersonal Psychology in the USA has a considerable international reach, including countries such as Australia, Japan, Brazil and many others. In Europe the umbrella organisation is EUROTAS, which has member Transpersonal Associations in Austria (the headquarters), Belgium, Bulgaria, Catalonia, Croatia, Estonia, France, Holland, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Germany (3), Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Moldova, Poland, Portugal, Romania (2), Russia (2), Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the United States. There is an International Transpersonal Association, led by Stanislav Grof, but it seems to come and go at different times.

Much remains to be said about all this, but I hope this essay has been sufficient to say something about the early days of these methods in Britain.

John Rowan is now well known as a humanistic therapist and writer, and has also done a good deal of work in the transpersonal area. His more recent efforts in the area of the Dialogical Self have borne fruit both in his work and in his writing. He is a Fellow of the British Psychological Society, and also of the BACP and UKCP. He has consistently pushed for more attention to the Primal and to the Transpersonal, which he has dubbed the Terrible Twins of Therapy. His most recent book is *Personification*.

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