

PSYCHOLOGY FOR HEART AND SOUL

Know thyself

Robert Sardello



Psychology and psychotherapy, viewed largely, are regions of practical wisdom, many variations backed by the enduring Wisdom of the human being, in essence, as ‘Self’. Think of a circle, rotating at the circumference, seemingly still at the center. The outer circumference displays the visible, tangible and sensory, always in movement, while the innermost central point remains invisible, unknown, seemingly still but strongly noticed inwardly as an orienting toward the ‘True’, even if the exact nature of ‘True’ remains unknown, unless experienced through taking up a disciplined attention to the inner life. Then, there is the ‘between’, the region from the point to the circumference. The whole picture gives a neat, if abstract, rendering of the wholeness of the human being. World-connected at the surface, an invisible yet tangible ‘I’ beyond egoism at the center, and a continual flow between center and periphery, classically named ‘soul’.

The practical wisdom of psychology explores the whole of this Being in terms of the kind of wisdom available through observation, known as science, which goes considerably beyond any of the physical sciences. The practical wisdom of psychotherapy seeks in all sorts of ways, knowingly or not, to bring about the balance of the inner, the between and the surface.

Sometimes, a ‘world-view’ can be quite out of balance, probably reflecting a similar imbalance of the human being that has become so prevalent that it is now a collective, partial view, taking itself as a whole. And, since the flow and the center are absent, the ever-moving, now chaotic surface is called ‘reality’.

When the imbalance occurs inwardly, in the ‘between’, psychopathologies are the visible symptoms indicating need for equanimity among center, between and surface. When thought through carefully, one comes to see that the balance of the between requires some dimension of revelation of the center, that is, if healing is to occur. Otherwise, what occurs is ‘cure’, or simple adjustment.

When imbalance occurs outwardly, it is never something solely individual and private, but always collective, for what prevails in the wisdom of the surface is that we are all reflections of one another. While, on the one hand, such collectivity seems to call for forms of outer organization, in the absence of the sense of invisible

and individual center, and middle-flow, outer organization only as a way of warding off chaos.

It is as if the Wisdom of the human being does not allow imbalance without dire results. With collective chaos, all that remains of any kind of inner is a kind of numbness that the wisdom of psychology, now skewed toward surface only, perhaps mistakenly labels 'depression'. I say 'mistakenly', because within the whole, adjustments are going on all the time, and when the wisdom of reconfiguring requires a deeper inner presence, that movement is often felt as depression – just as the word signifies, a movement inward. The inward movement cannot go very far if the collective world-view has become forgetful of there being any center or between.

Whoever named this journal *Self & Society* quite fully expressed, in a kind of 'koan', the full Wisdom of the human being, for the 'and' here is not a connection between two separate entities, but the true fullness of the human being.

Notes on contributor

Robert Sardello is Director of the School of Spiritual Psychology and Spiritual-Earth Sanctuary. He lives in Texas and offers spiritual conversation centered in many themes throughout the world. He is author of 10 books, most recently *Silence: The Mystery of Wholeness and Heartfulness*. Website: www.heartfulsoul.com