

**Energetic, Transpersonal and Integral Psychology: A
Comparative Essay**

Alison K. Hazelbaker

**Energetic, Transpersonal and Integral Psychology
DSRE-717
Union Institute and University
July 2005**

Lois stands about 5'4". She wears a size two, keeps her dark hair short but stylish and sees with "feng shui" eyes (eyes that see what life experience can be cleared for healing to occur). Lois' passion bursts forth from her slight frame, affecting everyone around her. Sometimes it assaults; most times it inspires. Lately, she exudes confidence and radiates serenity. Within the last year, Lois' "authentic" power freed itself from an apology as she realized that her own evolution depended solely on her desire and effort to heal rather than on circumstance or belief. She has traveled a long way, taking a journey that, while not always comfortable, was always designed to deliver her safely into the arms of her fullest, most evolved self. She writes:

I was raised by a mom with mental health issues and the silence around this is deafening! No one in my family can hear this. Of course, I couldn't really let it in either for a long time....I [have] clung to some idea that it was up to ME to heal my mom and heal my family, and this was reinforced by what some people were saying. I was the cause, I thought, of all this suffering and if I could just get better, then the insanity and pain would go away. In therapy, I began to relate to myself as whole and complete; like I had a voice and was worthy of a sane, healthy and amazing life. I realized I can alter this: I can heal my life, manifest my destiny.... I have evolved and grown in extraordinary ways without [my family]. I finally see and experience myself as multidimensional; someone with a wide and deep array of tools, resources, skills, practices, devotions, training and development. I have not arrived anywhere but I possess an increased ability and capacity to experience in any moment the richness, the fullness of being in this body, right now and appreciate, love, feel all of it: pain and joy, but little or no fear. I really, truly belong in this world and I want to stay connected and contribute to this world with this body, these hands and my Feng Shui Eyes!

At one time, Lois bore the label "psychotic". She experienced a break from reality when 14. She was hospitalized, heavily medicated, isolated and provided some cognitive therapy, then was released into the custody of her parents Against Medical Advice and at her own insistence. Her mother has Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD), a mental illness that has both biochemical and traumatic etiologies. The family system that develops around BPD challenges even the strongest and most evolved individuals. People in relationship with the BPD affected person often feel as if the situation is their fault or at least their sole responsibility to correct. They feel constantly under attack. Lois arrived back into this challenging dynamic from a challenging dynamic, ill-prepared to face the reality of the situation. It remained her responsibility to figure out how to navigate these unsafe waters at a very tender age after a very challenging psycho-emotional experience.

At the age of three, Lois was sexually molested by a pedophile janitor at her preschool. At age 7, she was sexually molested by a family member. She

buried these experiences, as so many victims of such violence do, only to have them resurface sometime later as she became healthier and more capable and resourced to handle the experience as a mature adult. These original traumatizing experiences combined with the BPD dynamic in the household of her family-of-origin, contributed to Lois' psychotic break.

When Lois' memories of the molestations surfaced, she had been experiencing uncontrollable rages and puzzling bouts of depression and anxiety. Lois subsequently determined that these behaviors were coping mechanisms formed during periods when she was the most challenged by her environment and circumstances. As survival mechanisms, they worked to pull her through the worst times but were untenable mechanisms as she continued to grow, becoming stronger and more capable.

Through her devotional work and her commitment to finding and living from a more fulfilled and authentic self, Lois worked through the many layers of her traumatizing experiences and her confining coping mechanisms. Through this process work, she was able to reframe her experiences, release the body-centered and stored trauma sensations of being powerless and helpless, and erect healthy boundaries around herself that solidified and developed a stronger sense of self; a stronger Ego.

Through continued process work, Lois recently arrived at a deeper understanding: that she was and is solely responsible and accountable for her own healing and transformation. She discovered that her healing was not dependent on circumstance or external factors but was solely within her control, governed by her internal state and by her ability to ongoingly work with the deeper aspects of her Self. She realized that her primary responsibility is to herself. The significant other people in her life would do only what they are capable of and willing to do regardless of what she wanted or accomplished. This realization freed her authentic expression from its previous bindings: she is now fully able to express herself as broadly and deeply as she so chooses.

Lois' process involved many transpersonal therapeutic methods and techniques: cognitive therapy, Landmark Education, cranio-sacral therapy, Sōmenos Process Work™, Feng Shui, Energy Psychology, journaling, yoga, breathwork and trial and error. She discovers more and more about her authentic self as she lives her life and pays attention to what she wants and to what makes her feel comfortable in her own skin.

The thread present in Lois' therapeutic process is her deep-seated urge to continue searching for a more rewarding and enlightened sense of herself. This urge has not let her rest: she felt driven from early on in life to perform multiple acts of discovery; all of which have ultimately led her deeper and deeper into herself and freed her from a trapped and hopeless experience of life.

This drive, this sense of being pressed onward, represents the internal healing force that many believe exists in every human and is the force that transpersonal, energetic, and integral psychologies hope to unleash in the client.

The journey to wholeness, to a greater sense of self, to a self that is fully developed in all domains of human experience is a journey that resides

comfortably in the spiritual domain and constitutes the solid ground upon which the field of transpersonal psychology was built. The transpersonal field grew as theorists and therapists dared to view human experience from a fuller, more expanded view.

Not content to reduce humans to the narrow definitions espoused by previous schools and “forces” in psychology, transpersonal theorists and therapists incorporated into their theories and practices much current and ancient knowledge on the “state” of human experience by marrying Eastern and Western thought on the subject. One such theorist, Ken Wilber, formulated an integrated theory which became a building block for the transpersonal field’s infrastructure. Many theories since Wilber’s *Integral Psychology* have been incorporated to create a greater and more unified understanding of the human transpersonal journey, spawning new methods, such as *Energy Psychology*.

Energy Psychology, a method and technique originally brought to life by transpersonal psychologist Roger Callahan, makes the transpersonal journey easier, faster and more comfortable.

Transpersonal Psychology

As Sri Aurobindo remarked over 80 years ago (Sri Aurobindo in Cortright, 1997 p. 39):

A mass of new material is flowing into us; we have not only to assimilate the influences of the great theistic religions of India and the world and a recovered sense of the meaning of Buddhism, but to take full account of the potent though limited revelations of modern knowledge and seeking; and, beyond that, the remote and dateless past which seemed to be dead is returning upon us with an effulgence of many luminous secrets long lost to the consciousness of mankind but now breaking out again from beyond the veil. All this points to a new, a very rich, a very vast synthesis; a fresh and widely embracing harmonization of our gains is both an intellectual and a spiritual necessity of the future.

In *Psychotherapy and Spirit*, Brant Cortright provides a comprehensive definition of transpersonal psychology which underscores these potent words. He explains that transpersonal psychotherapy goes beyond conventional psychotherapeutic work because it views optimal health as inextricably tied to spiritual health and awareness. “Only touching into a deeper level of spiritual being can produce a profoundly transformative shift, and thus all conventional psychologies can only be palliative or partial solutions at best.” (pp. 41-42). We must contact a deeper level of being for psychological work to become a genuine solution to the human predicament. Therefore, transpersonal psychology includes both the personal and what is beyond it. “Transpersonal psychology studies how the spiritual is expressed in and through the personal, as well as the transcendence of the self.” (Cortright, 1997, p. 10).

“Transpersonal development [forms] a continuum of human functioning or consciousness,” to quote Bruce Scotten, “ranging from the pre-personal (before the formation of a separate ego), to the personal (with a functioning ego), to the transpersonal (in which the ego remains available but is superseded by more inclusive frames of reference.)” (Scotten, Chinen, & Battista, 1996, p. 4). Scotten makes a distinction between spirituality and religion. Religion refers to a belief system around which people congregate; holding it as a context or code for living. Spirituality embraces those aspects of human experience that go beyond the personal. Spiritual experiences reside in the realm of the ineffable, the mystical. These experiences exist in a wide array of contexts and point to that aspect of human experience that is universal in its manifestation.

According to Cortright (pp. 16-21), eight basic assumptions exist in transpersonal theory:

1. Our essential nature is spiritual
2. Consciousness is multidimensional
3. Human beings have valid urges toward spiritual seeking, expressed as a search for wholeness through deepening individual, social and transcendent awareness
4. Contacting a deeper source of wisdom and guidance within is both possible and helpful to growth
5. Uniting a person’s conscious will and aspiration with the spiritual impulse is a superordinate health value
6. Altered states of consciousness are one way of accessing transpersonal experiences and can be an aide to healing and growth
7. Our life and actions are meaningful
8. The transpersonal contact shapes how the person/client is viewed

These foundational assumptions rise out of two streams of thought: spiritual and psychological. Cortright identifies two spiritual approaches (non-dualism, or Eastern and theistic-relational, or Western) that comprise the spiritual thought stream. Eastern spiritualism includes such philosophical frameworks as Buddhism, Advaita Vedanta and Taoism. Western approaches include Christianity, Judaism and Islam. The psychological thought stream, characterized by the successive historical and conceptual “forces”, includes behaviorism (First Force), psychoanalysis (Second Force), and humanistic (Third Force). Transpersonal psychology, or the Fourth Force, represents a marriage of spiritual philosophies and the concepts and notions of human experience as articulated by in the previous successive waves or “forces” of psychology. (Cortright, 1997, Boorstein, 1996, Scotten, et al, 1996). Transpersonal psychology therefore addresses the “universal aspect of human consciousness that is transpersonal experience and does not propound the belief of any one religion.” (Scotten, et al, 1996, p. 5).

To this end, transpersonal therapy utilizes multiple techniques to engender growth and change on both the psychological and spiritual fronts of human experience. No one technique will do; the range of human experience is so vast

that multiple techniques provide the greatest chance of success. As well, Cortright explains (p.15):

When the goals of therapy are limited, the techniques must necessarily be limited. But when the goal is the expansion of consciousness and widening the entire range of human experiencing, then the techniques are limitless. ...all techniques can be transpersonal, given a transpersonal framework”.

Some of the most discussed techniques include: holotropic breathwork, meditation, shamanic journeying, past-life regression, guided imagery, yoga, hypnotherapy, bodywork, biofeedback and induced altered states of consciousness (either with psychedelics, which are no longer legal in the U.S. but used all over the world in ritual practices, or by special breathing or concentration and focus techniques.) Rather than limit technology, all volumes also discuss the place of psychopharmacology and more mainstream cognitive therapeutic approaches. The most innovative and cutting edge techniques include Energy Psychology and such bodymind techniques as Craniosacral Therapy and Rubenfeld Synergy.

Wilber categorizes techniques according to the result they garner. He makes the point that the level of maturation along the lines of development will determine which type of technique will be the most appropriate, He strongly suggests that people choose several approaches to use concurrently; a transpersonal therapeutic cocktail of sorts. He refers to this method as *integral practice*, which “...exercise[s] body, mind, soul, and spirit in self, culture, and nature.” (Wilber, 2000, p. 114).

In Lois’ case, multiple modalities assisted her process. Each tool presented itself as her growth and development progressed along its unique trajectory. As the saying goes, “When the student is ready, the teacher will appear.” To deal with rages, or plain, everyday upset, Lois developed the following approach based on her experiences with Sōmenos Process Work™, Tai Chi, bodywork and yoga:

She asks herself, “Are you light, at ease?” If not, she continues with: “What is the nature of your upset?” If her witness consciousness cannot give her accurate information about the nature of her upset, she uses breathing techniques, a forced belly laughing technique, and/or a grounding technique that enables her to feel the boundaries of her environment against her skin. One or a combination of all these techniques diffuses her upset, enables her to step back and take a look at what actually organized the upset so that she can work with the content more constructively. Lois’ rages stopped using this approach and she eventually gained access to the main trigger, thereby subverting its hold on her. Lois comments: “Now I have the capacity to sift through all that was given to me by Landmark, and my husband, and [any method], and take with me that which deeply resonates and forwards my life. I don’t have all the answers, but neither do [they].”

Certain theorists criticize transpersonal psychology for neglecting to properly address psychopathology, to whatever degree it manifests. Transpersonalists counter this criticism by noting that transpersonal psychology is not just about supporting the natural progression of human development along the normal trajectory; its goal is to also smooth the process by unblocking those aspects of human experience that frustrate or even make temporarily impossible the normal achievement of expanded consciousness that is the hallmark and the mandate of human spiritual development. Traumatic events and experiences (sometimes manifested as psychopathology) get in the way: transpersonal therapy removes these barriers.

Transpersonal psychology even goes so far as to interpret psychopathology within the framework of spirituality, coining the term spiritual emergency to describe states of psycho-emotional expression (such as psychosis). Transpersonalists identify psychopathological states as potential expressions of frustrated spiritual evolvment. Such interpretation brings an expanded view that can enrich the treatment approaches used to assist people in these states.

And herein lays the major difference between transpersonal psychology and every other wave of psychological theory: Transpersonal psychotherapy seeks to support the human progression toward transcendence. Aptly described in the words of Boorstein: "Know thyself, transcend defenses, transferences, projections, and even beliefs, and attain the station of one who has outgrown the need for such childish things, as the great humans beings of all times and all places have done!" In traditional psychotherapy, therapy seems to stop at "Know thyself and adjust to the absurd." (Boorstein, Ed. 1996, p. 3).

A transpersonal approach utilized at the time of Lois' psychotic break may have generated a faster and more complete integration of that experience, leaving her more capable of addressing the multiple challenges she faced in her home environment, and preventing the development of coping mechanisms that ultimately became barriers to her spiritual development down the road. That is not to say that medication and cognitive therapy are wrong for the treatment of psychopathology. Theorists maintain that many techniques may be necessary to support people to move from stuck-ness to evolution without hurting themselves or others in the process. Such evolvment can take time and require multi-modal support.

Richness characterizes the transpersonal field. Its integrated theory creates a heavily textured warp and woof of theory, method and practice that leaves one awestruck. Ken Wilber, one of the field's main theorists, has made major contributions to the complex and elegant transpersonal theoretical foundation via his *Integral Psychology*.

Integral Psychology

Integral Psychology represents an ambitious effort to create and articulate a vision of human consciousness along multiple developmental lines in multiple

domains of human experience. As the architect of this framework of massive proportions, Ken Wilber states it thus (p. 1):

Psychology is the study of human consciousness and its manifestations in behavior. The *functions* of consciousness include perceiving, desiring, willing, and acting. The *structures* of consciousness, some facets of which can be unconscious, include body, mind, soul, and spirit. The *states* of consciousness include normal (e.g., waking, dreaming, sleeping) and altered (e.g., non-ordinary, meditative). The *modes* of consciousness include aesthetic, moral and scientific. The *development* of consciousness spans an entire spectrum from prepersonal to personal to transpersonal, subconscious to self-conscious to superconscious, id to ego to Spirit. The *relational* and *behavioral* aspects of consciousness refer to its mutual interaction with the objective, exterior world and the sociocultural world of shared values and perceptions. ...The endeavor to honor and embrace every legitimate aspect of human consciousness is the goal of an *integral psychology*.

Wilber organizes his theory along the lines expressed in the Perennial Philosophy, (the universal philosophy expressed in all the world's great spiritual traditions), and termed the "Great Nest of Being". Wilber (p. 27) depicts the Great Nest of Being as "a great morphogenetic field that provides a developmental space in which human potentials can unfold." The basic waves of that unfolding are *matter* to *body* to *mind* to *soul* to *spirit*. These waves represent a holarchy, with each wave a whole unto itself: a whole within a whole within a whole as each wave is integrated into the next as the human develops. In fact, one must fully develop within each wave before complete passage into the next can be realized. This represents the notion of the Great Chain of Being; the "pathway" the human follows on his or her way from stage to stage of development, as articulated in the Perennial Philosophy.

That the human wants to follow this path is a given: how he or she follows it will vary somewhat. That every human will pass through every stage of development is a given only if nothing substantially blocks progress. That every human reaches the ultimate goal is given only by the effort put forth in life or lives. We can get stuck at various stages. But each and every human arrives on this planet with the potential to make the journey. Wilber names this given potential the *spectrum of consciousness*.

The path is long, arduous and labyrinthine. It includes several lines or streams of developmental endeavor: cognitive; moral; affective; interpersonal; and spiritual. These five cited represent, in Wilber's mind, major streams of development, within which some of the other two dozen or so streams reside. Wilber stresses that development along these streams appears to be hierarchical as each level of the "Great Nest of Being" is reached. However, he reminds us, development, in fact, represents a holarchy, meaning that "the senior dimension [level] embraces the junior so that the senior is more holistic and encompassing." (p.31) just as the progression of waves is holarchical. The streams or lines are

linear progressions *and* are laterally linked thereby affecting one another for good or ill.

The navigator of the “Great River of Life” or combined streams is the *Self*. The *Self* contains two aspects: the proximate and distal selves. The proximal self is that aspect which observes; the distal, that which is being observed. Many spiritual traditions relate to the proximate self as “witness consciousness.” The distal self encompasses the personality, the roles we play, our beliefs, and our actions. What the distal self identifies with in one stage of development becomes dis-identified with at the next stage of development. The proximate self navigates all the stages of development, steering the craft that the distal self builds along the way. Ultimately, the *Self* “as the locus of integration...is responsible for *balancing and integrating all of the levels, lines and states in the individual.*” (Wilber, 2000, p.37). The *Self*, using its functions of:

identification (what to call “I”), *will* (or choices that are free within the constraints and limitations of its present level), *defenses* (which are laid down hierarchically), *metabolism* (which converts states into traits) and most important of all, *integration* (the self is responsible for balancing and integrating whatever elements are present)

safely delivers itself back to the ground state of Spirit, from which it came into being. (Wilber, 2000, pp. 36-37). The *Self* experiences and develops each level of consciousness through a process of identification. To “step up to” the next level of consciousness, the *Self* must then dis-identify with each previous level and integrate them until “its capacity for growth is exhausted.” (Wilber, 2000, p. 38). This stage-by-stage progression culminates in a supreme level of integration where body, mind and spirit become one. Wilber relates to this achievement as non-dual consciousness or enlightenment.

This journey of the self by the *Self* does not take place solely within. Each domain in which the self interacts comprises an aspect of the path. Wilber suggests that there are four quadrants of human interaction that make up the path for the journey: Interior-Individual or Intentional; Exterior-Individual or Behavioral; Interior-Collective or Cultural; and Exterior-Collective or Social. Within each of these quadrants, the human being experiences life. Those experiences create a laboratory within which humans experiment with ways of being; trying out new combinations and putting together new formulae with which they realize and cultivate an understanding of what it means to be fully human. Spirit-in-action.

Lois’ efforts on behalf of herself cogently illustrate Wilber’s theory. Her life serves as her laboratory. The events, despite their content, their level of challenge, and the perceived level of pain experienced as a result of those events, served as the dynamic tension that pushed Lois to self-actualize. Misery does that to a person. When one cannot stand life as it is, as Lois could not, one makes change.

Lois experienced a greater and greater sense of herself as she experimented with new formulae. In turn, her efforts at change became more

productive and satisfying. With each new level of development, she discovered aspects of herself that took her deeper into the spiritual realm. The deeper she went, the more peace and contentment she felt; the more she felt “at home” both within herself and in the world outside of herself. Lois developed strength and solidity during her journey. The storminess of life now has no ability to knock her off course. Her path leads her directly to the ultimate: Eros, the Spirit from within turned outward to the world.

Once a central theory of transpersonal psychology, Wilber’s articulation has recently come under greater scrutiny, not because it is substantially flawed, but because, as in all fields of endeavor, new information becomes available as the field grows, and gaps in understanding become more apparent. This scrutiny does not, however, undermine the amazing scope of Wilber’s work or negate the foundational principles of his theory. As Wilber explains it himself (p. 194):

Evolution, as Spirit-in-action, is starting to awaken on a more collective scale. Cosmic evolution is now producing theories and performances of its own integral embrace. This Eros moves through you and me, urging us to include, to diversify, to honor, to enfold. The Love that moves the sun and other stars is moving theories such as this, and it will move many others, as Eros connects the previously unconnected, and pulls together fragments of a world too weary to endure.

Energy Psychology

“Human Beings are by nature spiritual beings....As we mature, the faith in our parents, the ability to trust, and the feeling that we are part of life on this hospitable planet transfers (on the unconscious level) to a sense of connection with a power greater than ourselves. During a traumatic shock, people feel betrayed by and disconnected from this “higher power”. (Swack in Gallo, 2002, p. 66). It is the goal of Energy Psychology, via its various techniques, to reconnect people to this higher power; to link the ego to the Self.

Appearing under the rubric of Energy Psychology is a passel of techniques: Shapiro’s *Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing* (EMDR); Gallo’s *Energy Diagnostic and Treatment Methods*, Tapas’ the *Tapas Acupressure Technique*sm; Swack’s *Healing from the Body Level Up*; Clinton’s *Seemorg Matrix Work*TM; Hammond-Newman’s *Dynamic Energetic Healing*TM; Nim’s *Be Set Free Fast* and the collected techniques of Callahan and Diamond known as *Thought Field Therapy*. Various offshoots of thought field therapy have appeared and include the likes of the *Emotional Freedom Technique*, *BodyTalk* and *NAET*.

“Thought field therapy [and its derivatives],” writes John Diepold in *Energy Psychology* (Gallo, ed. 2002, p. 3), “is an integrated, meridian-based, mind-body-energy psychotherapy that includes diagnostic and treatment procedures performed while patients are attuned to their problem.” The “negative”, or problematic emotions, are then neutralized or deactivated by stimulating the related acupuncture points or chakras involved in the negative pattern. Rubbing

or tapping the indicated points usually accomplishes this activation. In most of these techniques, the practitioner/therapist uses protocols to both determine the nature of the problem and to apply treatment, i.e. a belief system developed after a traumatizing event would be neutralized or “tapped out” by tapping a certain sequence of acupressure points. Any such belief system in any affected person would be tapped out in the same way using the same protocol.

The Energy Psychology practitioner uses a technique known as applied kinesiology, or muscle testing, to determine which issue to address and which protocol is best for neutralizing the issue. Well-researched and highly accurate, applied kinesiology serves as a valuable tool in the therapeutic uncovering process. The practitioner uses applied kinesiology to test the client at every step of the diagnostic and treatment process. In this way, the practitioner targets the issues and problems to be neutralized without waste of precious time, energy and money; achieves highly effective and lasting results; and shortens the time it takes for the client to reach their stated goals.

The foundational and philosophical underpinnings of these treatment techniques include the notion that the human body and mind are, in fact, different aspects of a whole. They either exist on a continuum, are linked by subtle energies, or are nesting aspects of the Greater Self, depending on whose text you read. (Phillips, 2000; Gallo, 2000; Swack in Gallo, ed. 2002; Eden, 1998; Hover-Kramer, 2002). Therefore, the body-mind or body-mind-spirit is affected as a whole by life’s events and traumas and should therefore be treated as a whole.

Energy Psychology accesses disturbances in the body-mind-spirit via its subtle energy system or “thought-fields”. The subtle energy system includes the bio-meridians, the chakras and the bioenergetic life fields (as conceptualized by Robert Becker in The Body Electric.) Energetically encoded information appears in the thought or life field as a perturbation (Diepold in Gallo, ed, 2002, p. 5). Gallo suggests that “energy disruption is equivalent to emotional disturbance.” (Gallo, 2002, p. xxiv). Several perturbations may exist in a matrix as an energy disturbance pattern.

Callahan, borrowing a term from Arthur Koestler, named an energy pattern causing multiple perturbations in the energy or life field a holon. A client’s psychological disturbances may be one holon or many holons intertwined. The number of disturbances in their energy system determines the complexity of the client’s issues. These disturbances manifest then as psychological and/or physical issues, accounting for any dis-ease states. Energy Psychology makes no distinction between somatic and psychological dis-ease because the body-mind acts as a whole: an emotionally based disturbance can appear or manifest as a somatic illness; a body-trauma can manifest as an emotional or psychological disturbance. Either way, the entire functioning of the human is involved and compromised.

In all Energy Psychology treatment techniques, the client’s body serves as the treatment session guide. The practitioner does not presume to know what needs accessing and treatment prior to the start of the session. Via applied kinesiology, the client’s body-mind will communicate what issues need to be addressed and in what sequence. Unlike the mind, the body never lies.

Sessions require that the practitioner and client act in concert or as a team. The practitioner brings a high level of presence into the interaction, maintaining a neutral attitude during the treatment process, while refraining to set themselves up as the fixer or ultimate authority. The client “attunes” to their issues by thinking about them. Attunement “instantly brings to the fore the entirety of energetically encoded information.” (Diepold in Gallo, ed., 2002, p. 5). This gives both the practitioner and the client access to the most germane information about the negative patterns so that they can be addressed efficiently, effectively, and swiftly.

During the course of Lois’ treatment, one of her facilitators employed several Energy Psychology techniques. Lois recalls that in one particular session she had difficulty getting at the organizing events associated with her feeling of impending doom. Underneath her ever-present outward demeanor of optimism and enthusiasm was a strongly held belief that nothing she did or said would ever make a difference. This belief created the “doomed” feeling. After “tapping out” the belief that she was ineffective in life (tapping gently on the acupressure points associated with trauma), Lois discovered that she also believed herself to be unworthy to be alive. Using the phrasing “I love and accept myself fully and completely even though I am unworthy of being here”, Lois repeated the statement out loud as she rubbed the neurolymphatic point on her left shoulder (just above her heart). As she spoke, a sense of peace, calm and joy replaced the feeling of impending doom.

This hidden belief system contributed significantly to Lois’ general feelings of isolation and invisibility. After this session, Lois felt freer, less vulnerable and able to *genuinely* express optimism and enthusiasm. She knew, deep within and for the first time that she would make a significant contribution to her family and society no matter what form that contribution assumed.

Energy Psychology allows both the client and the practitioner to access powerful and hidden aspects of psycho-somato-emotional dis-ease processes. Its emphasis on transformation and its recognition of the spiritual aspects of human experience and function makes it a very effective transpersonal method. In Lois’ case, Energy Psychology served as a targeted approach to getting at hidden aspects of her experience that served as barriers to her evolution and development.

Summary

It is the “intrapersonal rather than the interpersonal that is the primary focus of transpersonal psychology.” (Sutich in Boorstein, ed. 1996, p. 11). And although the two influence one another, transpersonal theory places its emphasis on the former as a means whereby to affect the latter. In so doing, optimal development can occur in domains and realms not typically attended to in traditional psychotherapy models or theories. More than the mind and its “normal” state of consciousness comprise human experience. Certain aspects of human experience transcend or bypass “normal” consciousness. Walsh and Vaughn state it this way (in Boorstein, 1996, p. 17):

Transpersonal experiences may be defined as experiences in which the sense of identity or self extends beyond (*trans-*) the individual or personal to encompass wider aspects of humankind, life, psyche, and cosmos. *Transpersonal psychology* is the area of psychology that focuses on the study of transpersonal experiences and related phenomena. These phenomena include the causes, effects, and correlates of transpersonal experiences and development, as well as the disciplines and practices inspired by them.

Ken Wilber's theory *Integral Psychology* contributed heavily to the formation of the transpersonal field, making it possible, in part, for transpersonal methods and techniques like *Energy Psychology* to take root, grow and flower. Cortright (p. 22) charges: "Much of transpersonal psychotherapy during its first two decades was simply an additive mixture -- adding psychology to spirituality without changing either one very much. But more recent formulations see this as a new synthesis in which both are changed and modified as part of a new whole."

As the Fourth Force of psychological exploration, transpersonal psychology facilitates exciting new understandings and enables people to achieve higher levels of evolution and deeper levels of self-understanding than ever before. What was once relegated to the domain of mystics or theologians has now become mainstream and accessible to all.

References

- Boorstein, S. (Ed.). (1996). *Transpersonal psychotherapy*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Bucke, R. M. (1923). *Cosmic consciousness*. New York: Penguin Putnam Inc.
- Cortright, B. (1997). *Psychotherapy and spirit*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Eden, D. (1998). *Energy medicine*. New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam.
- Gallo, F. (2000). *Energy diagnostic and treatment methods*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Gallo, F. (1999). *Energy psychology: explorations at the interface of energy, cognition, behavior and health*. Boca Raton: CRC Press.
- Gallo, F. (Ed.). (2002). *Energy psychology in psychotherapy*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Grof, S. (2000). *Psychology of the future*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Hover-Kramer, D. (2002). *Creative energies*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Phillips, M. (2000). *Finding the energy to heal*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Scotten, B. W., Chinen, A. B., & Battista, J. R. (Eds.). (1996). *Textbook of transpersonal psychiatry and psychology*. New York: Basic Books.
- Smith, H. (1992). *Forgotten truth*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco.
- Wilber, K. (2000). *Integral psychology*. Boston: Shambala Publications, Inc.