

File Mental Patients Assn.



IN A Nutshell

Winter 2004-05

The True Center

by D. Paul Strashok

Years ago, I did a study in the Hebrew Scriptures on the meaning of the word "heart". The study resulted in the understanding that when the word heart was used, it really meant the "center" of a person. As a matter of fact, the entire Scriptures reveal that the heart is the seat of the conscience, emotions, affections - something the Psalmist called the "reins" (essentially meaning, I suppose, that which guides the whole person) - and even acts in conjunction with the mind as part of the soul. How unusual and in keeping with the modern world that the focus of many spiritual seekers, artists, and pop-psychology gurus has turned to the biological brain and considered it to be far more important than the heart.

In the Eastern religious tradition, the heart is considered to be one of the "chakras" or openings of spiritual awareness. Nevertheless, it is not considered to be the highest centre of spiritual awakening - the third eye, and the centre of the top of the head (mid-brain reticulater?) having precedence over it, as the Eastern belief is that the "kundalini" (also known as serpent-power) is coiled energy potentita at the base of the spine which ascend through the various chakras.

When reading the words of Jesus in the gospels, it is quite amazing how often he uses the heart as an indicator of the spiritual condition of a person. Famous passages such as "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" and "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also", come to mind. I believe that we in the Western world have become too "cerebral", too intellectualized, and too focused on the power of brain over heart. When this happens, we are not able to "weep with them that weep" nor "rejoice with them that rejoice" — we are not able to make that fundamental soul-to-soul, heart-to-heart connection with one another that allows empathy and compassion to flow. The changes in our language even reflect this basic loss. In the Old English of the King James Authorized Version of 1611 the word 'communication'

meant to give of one's material substance to another either in money, food, or clothing. Now, the word has come to mean a sharing of ideas, rather than substance. Another good example of this is the word 'conversation'. In the Old English it meant your conduct or manner of life while today it means simply the words that come out of your mouth.

Of course English is a living language and we must accept that it has changed over 400 years, but the point I make is that these changes reflect a fundamental shift in values; the values of community, church, and concern for humanity. In a world that is headed pell-mell into a global society, the weakest, poorest, and most disenfranchised citizens are just grist for the mill of a One World Order which may or may not be headed up by the United States of America. In a world where ideas and intellectual acuity moving at the speed of electricity translate into acquisition and fortune, what becomes of the ones who speak a little slower or with an impediment or those who are dependant on others even to have a place to sleep or get their meals?

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MPA Society
 122 Powell St.
 Vancouver, B.C.
 V6A 1G1
 Tel: 604-482-3700
 Fax: 604-738-4132
 Website: vmpa.org

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This is the real reason that we must move back to the heart-awareness and heart content and allow "the eyes of our heart to be enlightened" (Eph. 1:18 ASV). Our material wealth is not a substitution for true spiritual wealth, the true treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are found in Christ Jesus. As the events around the world unfold (some foreseen by true prophets), let us fix our hearts on eternal, supernatural, heavenly places and values so that we may be prepared for any eventuality. These are the days Jesus spoke of when men's hearts shall fail them because of fear (Lk. 21:26). So then, let us be motivated not by fear, but by the pure agapé (one of four Greek words translated as love in the New Testament, signifying God's kind of love) of the Messiah, who has loved us perfectly unto

death and resurrection, thereby casting out all fear (1 Jn: 4:18).

It is true that the mind and intellect have their place, but let us never forget that true friendship and companionship occur when the substance and content of our hearts find a place of meeting and understanding that far exceeds mere ideas and intellect. Then, and only then, can true spiritual values be shared and imparted and we will have that which the Scriptures call "fellowship". This can only happen when we allow our hearts to be open and vulnerable to one another and we come to a place where we are able to 'drop our guards' and meet from the centre of our being, the heart. ■

Quotes from the Roundtable by M.D. Arthurs

"psychiatry at work:
wake up and take a tranquilizer."

"psychiatric maxim:
hurry up and wait."

"psychiatry at large:
everything is sexual
there's an endless supply of symptomatology."

"psychiatric policy:
you gotta be crazy to become a shrink."

The Editorial Board of *In A Nutshell* welcomes letters, articles, and poetry on mental health issues from you, our readers.

**Warning! Do not abruptly stop psychiatric medications!
Most psychiatric medications are powerful drugs and should
be withdrawn from gradually under the care of a physician or
other health practitioner.**

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B.C.'s Poor Inherit Scapegoat Role

by Sam Roddan

Every culture produces its own scapegoats. During our short history British Columbia has had a formidable list of whipping boys including the Chinese, East Indians, Native people, Blacks, and the Japanese.

Scapegoating has always been a convenient device for fixing blame and forcing the underdog to take the rap for economic stress and social discontent. It has usually focused on a minority racial group highly visible in the community.

During the Second World War, the Japanese Canadians were blamed for taking over market gardening, the fishing industry, the corner stores. They were accused of high birth rate, disloyalty to the crown, and sabotage of the war effort. None of these charges were true.

Today, the scapegoating of the poor, the dispossessed, and the unemployed in British Columbia poses a new twist for the student of social behavior.

The social context out of which scapegoating originates is always narrow, punitive, and aggressive.

Scapegoating the needy under the pretext of strengthening the economy is typical of bankrupt leadership, low in self-regard and personal esteem.

In his study, *Cruelty and Kindness*, Harvey Hornstein of Columbia University points out that scapegoating has its roots in ancient family patterns and anxieties.

"...scapegoating has its roots in ancient family patterns and anxieties."

Many of our political leaders in government in British Columbia come from highly competitive backgrounds. Their personal lives are insecure, cryptic, suspicious, intense. The legacy of their upbringing makes them judgmental and not easily aroused by another's plight. They are uneasy and clumsy with language, uncomfortable with ideas.

Fortunately in our society there has always been a grudging admiration for justice and fair play. In times of crisis, minority groups still have their freedom fighters. Today, those who would make scapegoats and whipping boys of the unfortunate in British Columbia have seriously underestimated the innate decency and goodwill of a large body of ordinary, everyday citizens. ■

Man Bites Black Dogs - News Briefs From All Over

Compiled by Scott Dixon

Free At Last, Free At Last

A husband and wife in Kansas face slavery charges over their treatment of severely mentally ill adults in their care. The *Wichita Eagle* newspaper says the charges against Arlan Kaufman and his wife Linda stem from an incident in which six mental patients were found on a farm doing chores in the nude. Investigators said that on at least one occasion, a stun gun was used to discipline a resident of the farm. A court heard there were several allegations of sexual abuse as well.

Nurse, Heal Thyself

The *Ottawa Citizen* recently asked: "Should access to treatment for injuries to the mind be handled differently from access to care for physical ailments?" The issue arose after a nurse with bipolar disorder was denied treatment at the same hospital in which she worked.

Oddly enough, the hospital says the policy is intended to reduce the risk of the patient/employee being stigmatized in the workplace. The nurse - told to go to another hospital for treatment - has launched a complaint of discrimination.

No Charge For the Pad, Paddy

Irish prison chaplains have called for an end to sending the mentally ill to jail. A report by the National Prison Chaplains Association recommended that mentally ill people be given the appropriate professional care in the community or in psychiatric institutions. Father Declan Blake, the chaplain of a prison in Dublin, said the courts were often too quick

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to send mentally ill people to prison. "It's my personal opinion that a lot of them might be seen as a nuisance around the streets. I think judges just want them off the streets and prison is a quick solution." The annual report said padded cells were still in use in many prisons, even though their closure had been announced more than a year ago. It said there was particular concern about the use of the cells to punish prisoners rather protecting them from self-harm.

Rush to Judgment

South Florida mental health providers have blasted radio talk-show host Rush Limbaugh for offering "free therapy" to traumatized John Kerry voters, according to United Press International. "He's trying to ridicule the emotional state this presidential election produced

in many of us here in Palm Beach County," said Sheila Cooperman, a licensed clinician with the American Health Association. "Who is he to offer therapy?"

All Politics is Loco

A book by a prominent Washington psychoanalyst says President George W. Bush is a "paranoid megalomaniac" as well as a sadist and untreated alcoholic. Dr. Justin Frank, writing in *Bush on the Couch: Inside the Mind of the President*, also says Bush has a "lifelong streak of sadism, ranging from childhood pranks (using firecrackers to explode frogs) to insulting journalists, gloating over state executions ... and pumping his fist gleefully before the bombing of Baghdad." Hey - nobody's perfect. ■

The Writer's Song

by Frank G. Sterle, Jr.

"You're a writer; so what's holding you back?" Pete scolds Jonny. "Write that damn book!"

"Nah, I don't think so. I don't have what it takes — at least not right now, and especially not now with this bout of chronic depression I'm stuck in," retorts Jonny. "You don't know what it takes: You have to think up a very large quantity of material — interesting and enough to fill up an entire book."

Silence takes hold amongst the two.

"Well, you can think up material as you go along, can't you?" asks Pete.

"Yeah, but for me, that material is a small minority ... Then you have to arrange the material in cohesive order. And you have to remember, at all times while writing, what so-and-so did and said earlier in the book."

More silence, thick.

"I tell you," Jonny breaks in, "this depression I'm in is a real hindrance."

"How long has it lingered?" queries Pete.

"For some years now, on and off — always somewhere between chronic and tolerable. And it's usually quite inhibiting."

"Well, maybe a large writing project, like a book, would help."

"I can't imagine that," says Jonny, cynically. "One would think that the opposite would be the case."

Jonny then continues: "I tried writing a book not too long ago — a year, maybe. When the idea for the book came into my mind, it seemed like an entire book was there; I was quite exited about it all. But once I started writing it, it got smaller and smaller, until I was lucky

that it turned into a small novella. And one that no publication seems to want to use ... I'm reasonably sure that my depression hindered my efforts; the mental blockage was there, behind my psyche's proverbial scenes."

"But then how do you manage to edit those two newsletters and to write those articles and stories?" queries Pete. "I mean with your mental illness and all."

"I don't know ... It's different," replies Jonny. "The articles and stories are usually quite short. And the editing and layout of the two newsletters, if time is on my side, can actually be relaxing — especially if I have my soothing music playing; plus very few copies of those newsletters are printed which means very few readers are catching my writing and editing blunders." Pete suggests: "Well, just look at writing a book — maybe even turning that small novella into a book, after all — as sort of writing a large short story. Take it one step at a time, as you play that relaxing music in the background. And just keep in mind the pleasantry you'll find in editing and laying out your story once it's finished."

"It's an interesting way of looking at it all," Jonny replies, "but there's always the depression ..."

"Screw the depression!" snaps Pete. "When the depression comes, deal with it then; try to find a silver lining to everything that you're depressed about."

Then Jonny sarcastically suggests, "Maybe I'll dial you up whenever I need the positive inspiration at my computer keyboard."

"Well, I ..."

"Screw the depression — remember." ■

Minute Particulars

by Andrew Feldmár

I've been thinking about *corruption*, specifically amongst the police. The word is from the Latin *corrumpere*, to break entirely, hence to break up morally. The dictionary says, "impairment of integrity, virtue, or moral principle: depravity."

In a dream, while wandering about in a forest, I arrived at a clearing. At its center, I saw the entire Solar System in miniature, levitating in mid-air, with the sun at the core, and each planet moving spectacularly in its orbit. As I was marveling, a voice that identified itself as God spoke to me and entrusted me with keeping an eye on the Solar System, while He was going to be busy with something else. My task was simply to attend steadfastly, without allowing my eyes to stray. I did all right for some time, but I got distracted by a seductive, voluptuous, naked woman, who seemed to have appeared from nowhere. By the time I turned my attention back to my task, the entire System had gone out of kilter: Earth had collided with Mars, Venus with Saturn, there was smoke, fire, and mayhem. God returned and called me to account:

"What have you done?" I felt immediately and excruciatingly ashamed, and I knew that I was guilty of neglect.

The dictionary defines *neglect* as "giving insufficient attention to something that has a claim to one's attention; to leave undone or unattended to, esp. through carelessness."

Gregory Bateson used to talk of a small, medieval devil, called *Accidie*, who would sit on your shoulder and whisper in your ear, "It's not worth doing, don't bother!" In theology, this would be the devil of Sloth, Spiritual Torpor, and Apathy. It feeds, and feeds on, a deep sense of utter hopelessness. This particular devil seems to have been very successful in promoting its gospel over the last 50 years or more. The etymology of *Accidie* indicates that this devil certainly has to do with neglect (*A* = no; *kedos* = care).

Neglect, then, has to do with ignoring, perhaps forgetting. I propose that neglect is the source of suffering, because it is a breach of *Telos*. David Bakan defined *Telos*, as "that which determines form," an organizing principle. He showed that disease was the result of the decentralization of the higher *telos* of the organism, and its loss of dominance over the many lower *tele*. *Telic* decentralization implies a reduction in

communication between nesting levels of hierarchical structures. Michael Polanyi illustrates such nesting when he writes, "All living functions rely on the laws of inanimate nature in controlling the boundary conditions left open by these laws; the vegetative functions sustaining life at its lowest levels, leave open, both in plants and animals, the possibilities of growth and leave animals open also to the possibilities of muscular action; the principles governing muscular action leave open their integration to innate patterns of behavior; such patterns are open in their turn to be shaped by intelligence, and the working of intelligence can be made to serve the still higher principles of man's responsible choices."

Neglect, I claim, is always a breach of *Telos*. How would I know if I were negligent? Bakan suggests an answer: "the psychic manifestation of *telic* disorganization, is pain." Feelings of shame and guilt are varieties of psychic pain that could alert us to, and urge us to rectify, neglect. I sense, however, that more and more of us pride ourselves on our shamelessness. The more in sin we are, the less aware of being in sin we are.

God, in my dream, represents the highest *Telos*, the organizing principle of all organizing principles. I ignored it for a moment, and listened to, gave in to, a desire coming from much lower in the hierarchy of voices, desires that can command our attention. Burning shame was the result. Kierkegaard is clear and precise when he

writes, "As soon as the individual would assert himself in his particularity over against the universal he sins, and only by recognizing this can he again reconcile himself with the universal." Sin is ignorance, sin is neglect. Kierkegaard shows what happens when two very high *tele* compete and demand contradictory action simultaneously: a double bind extraordinaire! He writes, "The ethical expression for what Abraham did is, that he would murder Isaac; the religious expression is, that he would sacrifice Isaac; but precisely in this contradiction consists the dread which can well make a man sleepless, and yet Abraham is not what he is without his dread."

"God, in my dream, represents the highest... organizing principle..."

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If my task is to police, my allegiance is to serving and protecting. The moment I assert an individual desire of my own for gain or pleasure, I sin against my universal mandate that is signaled by my uniform. The temptation to use the powers invested in me for my personal gain or pleasure can be overwhelming. Corruption and depravity are flowers of evil growing out of the soil of neglect.

In my own experience, victims of brutality often recall a certain look in the eyes of their abuser or torturer. It seems to say, "I am hurting you, and I am getting off on hurting you, because I can get away with it!" How cut off, how lonely, how angry must one be, how spiritually deaf one must be, to assert oneself so shamelessly, behind society's back. In a sense, one is always playing with the possibility of being caught, of being dishonored, shamed, and punished. In a sense, using the power invested in one for selfish purposes is suicidal.

Thinking about my dream, I wondered why a beneficent and omniscient divinity would set me up to

destroy His creation. Temptation is ever-present in every situation that arouses multiple desires from different levels of the hierarchies that govern our existence. My son, when he could only crawl, was fascinated by the electric sockets sprinkled all over our house. His curiosity drove him again and again to try to stick his little finger into the socket. Each time, I would pick him up and re-orient him, saying, "No, no, no! Don't do that, it'll hurt you!" Next day I observed him crawling towards a socket, pausing, shaking his head, and saying out loud to himself, "No, no, no!" Then, he changed direction and occupied himself with some other curiosity. He internalized my warnings, and my internalized voice, my desire for his safety, won out over his desire to explore the unknown. Had he persisted, he would have experienced pain.

People in positions of power, fathers, mothers, clergy, police, doctors, etc., need to be educated about the temptations inherent in power *over* another human life. There is truth in the adage, "Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." We need to see it, talk about it, wrestle with it. ■

Death

by Oliver Cross

"Theories are like patches on a coat, one day they just wear off."

—Tibetan saying

The dying process is nothing more than an extension of one's life. Where can we find death in life?

Deaths are endings, deaths are events or circumstances we cannot change, like it or not.

Death is doubt. We don't control death, death comes to us: time, place and form.

Uncertainty may lead to fear, but not necessarily. Why spend energy being afraid of something about which nothing can be done? This is hard work, however, and takes courage, practice. We all enjoy selfishness.

We don't exist for or from ourselves. None of us chose to be in this life, so here is one example of why it may be natural not to have control over death.

That we should try to, or be able to, choose for ourselves about everything else in our lives is an illusion, though the first and foremost goal for many, it

seems. We vibrate, we oscillate, besides doing what we want we also listen, things pass through us – permeate us; from food to air to water to ideas to relationships... these things come and go.

And so does everything else.

We are membranes, we are flexible, we are in it together, we are ultimately soft: "It's all fun and games until someone loses an eye," and then we are humble, there is humility, there stands our vulnerability.

Of all the things we cannot change, their shadow is the gift of life, what we do have that cannot be replaced once gone. With experience losing something we will never replace, the gifts we take for granted become recognizable.

Ultimately consciousness is better than ignorance. It has the power to protect.

Illnesses can die too... so can attachments... and addictions... we exist for and from each other... it is always that way, no matter what they tell us. Practice. ■

Satya's Soapbox

Minuets from Lotus Land on the Fault-line

by Satya Devi

Last month marked a visit from my brother - long overdue and much anticipated. Among our talks, Ron said that he found a lot of my writing distasteful and disturbing. So I promised him a happy, fun column, called: "Minuets from Lotus Land on the Fault-line."

There is an Old Indian Prophecy that when the Iron Horse stops and a white buffalo calf is born, a New Age of Enlightenment will have begun - but I say no! The Cape Breton Prophecy has been fulfilled - the Iron Horse stopped at Main and Terminal, and we followed the light up Main Street till we came to a Planet named "Bingo!" And thus it is that all shall live happily chanting the empowering mantra, "Bingo!"

In about 1999, Al and I went to the PNE - it was supposed to be its last year at that location, and as we sat on the grass having a chai, we noticed a commotion at this new ride where one goes up fast, stops and then swings violently and then drops back down at an alarming speed. At the top was a couple, the girl screaming, "Help me, Gary, help me! Make them stop the ride! I'm gonna die!" The two of them screeched a lot and finally got off the ride, looking very stoned and drunk, which they were, and the girl was flapping around on the grass like a fish out of water, and the guy was staggering around shaking turds out of the legs of his pants. Then he took out a flask and took a few swigs and gave the girl some. Then they shared a joint of dope and staggered off. By then, it was getting near dusk and so Al and I decided to walk once around the Fair and then head home. No more than 15 minutes had passed and we were on our way out, when suddenly we heard, "Help me, Gary, help me! Make them stop the ride!" The two goons were on the Roller Coaster!

All this reminds me of my own idyllic summer trip to the circus. Melvyn, on the pretence of going to the Synagogue, and me, on the pretence of going to the Knights of Columbus dance, met at the circus on a Friday night. We had just arrived and we were standing, looking to decide what games we wanted to go on. There's a ride called the Scrambler and there are sets of 4 seats in a circle which rotate very fast while the whole ride rotated and someone - we will never

know who - went EEACCK and plastered the two of us. We hadn't been there 5 minutes, and it wasn't just a little a little motion sickness; it was a macaroni and milkshake job - our sunglasses, my waist-length hair and lady of the canyon skirt and sandals and Melvyn's black-leather jacket and Beatle boots. It was definitely not a "The Fonz goes to the Circus" moment, and we just had to leave and walk the streets till it was time to go home.

Al was in the hospital throughout some of Ron's visit and Ron and I and Mohandas, our little Pom, went regularly to see him. He was soon home and we enjoyed the rest of the visit. Now I've got to clear up something: there may be those who think my brother's name is Ron Swann - not true, altho I think it's catchy, no. His name is Lewis - the family name was originally Swann, but they all changed their name to Lewis on account of me. So, we covered a lot of cafes and Ron found Common Ground magazine, not to mention him helping with the repairs around the apartment while we got on our feet and visiting with our dear friends. Now, Al needed a few helping devices for around the apartment, and I had to go down to the Red Cross Society and pick them up. So down to Commercial I go and transfer to the Victoria bus and asked the really cool driver if he would let me know which stop. Then a young lady with a pop and chocolate bar gets on the bus and says to the driver, "I don't have any money but I'll lap-dance you to 41st." The driver just laughed and sat her across his lap and they were giggling and he was driving with one hand - but still, he let me off at the Red Cross.

One more reason to live in Lotus Land: Our little pooch, Mohandas, got sick so I had to call a cab to the Vet, gave my last name and said I had a small dog. So the cabbie pulls up and across his driver's board is "Swann and small dog". He says to me, "I don't have no problem with a small dog, lady, but you better not let that swan shit all over my back seat!" People have some strange pets in Kitsilano, but a pet swan?

Well, dear Bro, we had a beautiful time with your visit, every day its own novel or cartoon - don'tcha dare wait so long to come again. ■

House of Bread

by D. Paul Strashok

It was a cool evening in December, years ago, and I was attending a Christian Assembly in North Vancouver with some of my acquaintances. It was actually a special Yuletide event that was being put on by the church as a form of outreach to the larger community on the North Shore.

I remember that, as the choir began to sing "O, Little Town of Bethlehem", my spirit began to sink as I thought, "Oh no, this is the point at which we go back to that little babe in a manger story and must relive this seasonal madness!" I left the meeting place and went outside, my mind reeling, unable to bear the thought of going back two thousand years to a little babe, knowing full well that He was no longer that little child. Yet, even as I pondered that fact of the name "Bethlehem", it came to me so clearly, Bethlehem means 'House of bread' and Jesus spoke of Himself as the Bread of Life in John, Chapter 6. I thought, "Not only did the bread of heaven come to us at that little town, but it had to go to Golgotha where it was

broken, and eventually into resurrection so it could be distributed to all those who would believe."

Being encouraged by this thought of Bethlehem as the 'House of Bread', I re-entered the church building and sat down to listen to the remainder of the choir's presentation. To my amazement, they were doing a cantata, and as I sat and listened, the songs went right through the life of Christ, His death at Calvary, and even His resurrection and ascension. I was amazed at the power and spiritual presence accessed in this beautiful, thorough presentation. At the end, I was rejoicing with all the members in that assembly, rejoicing not only in the birth, but also the life of Christ, His atoning death and His powerful resurrection.

At this time of year, there is so much going on, so many details to remember, but one of my favourite memories will be the day that I realized that Bethlehem means 'House of Bread'. ■

From Mental Patient to Survivor

by Jim Gifford

In the Biblical Book of Ecclesiastes, a memorable chapter begins 'to everything there is a season'. One particular verse reads 'a time to breakdown, and a time to build up'.

The transition from one phase to the other for those afflicted by mental/emotional illness is one from victim to survivor. It is a period of psychic death and psychic rebirth.

In her groundbreaking work, *On Death And Dying*, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross defined a number of stages one goes through upon being given a terminal diagnosis by the medical profession. In adapting her terminology, I would like to offer four stages that occur on the journey from breakdown to survival status. They are denial, anger, grief, and acceptance.

They are not clearcut and, in fact, are marked by crossing over each other, and by setbacks and by occasional forward leaps of insight. Yet, allow me to talk about each phase in the order in which they tend to occur.

First, when we have psychological distress, we find ourselves labeled by the psychiatric community. Subsequently, we are perhaps involuntarily hospitalized, medicated, receive therapy, and even may have electroshock treatment administered. All of those procedures are devastating to our ego identity, yet we may nevertheless express denial that there is anything detrimental in our behaviour or health.

A mentality exists of 'there is nothing wrong with me'. During this period, we may go off medications and generally be uncooperative as consumers of the mental health system. This denial suppresses psychic pain, leading to unfulfilled emotional needs and even bitterness. This situation often overlaps with a mood of indignation.

Feeling betrayed and abused by others, dehumanized by institutionalization, and ignored, rejected or ridiculed by the mainstream populace, we retaliate. Frustration may lead to aggressive tendencies, rage and, infrequently, violence. This is a time of

conflict and confrontation that we must go through rather than get over. When it has run its course, grief emerges.

Our exasperation at our predicament brings with it a time of mourning over unfulfilled, and lost, dreams and aspirations. Regrets over missed opportunities, and unused abilities, talents, and gifts, may result in a sense of morose.

It is important to remember that grief is a natural emotion when there is loss in one's life. Unlike despair, which is devastating and has a core sense of meaninglessness, grief is a time for the person to experience painful life passages and emerge healed.

We must acknowledge we do not become cured. Yet, by means of evolving past denial, anger and grief, we may realize new ways of viewing the world. Our fate may be that of a 'wounded healer', allowing our scars to be of benefit in the compassionate and caring manner we approach others who are struggling with dis-ease. Eventually we will reach a place on the journey where we have a deep acceptance of and contentment with the choices we've made.

After years of strife, we may see that, as the writer Dostoevsky wrote, 'out of chaos comes order'. It will be intuited that there has been a plan all along, that everything is okay, as it is... and you are a survivor.

Bookworm

Trust

By *Alphonso Lingis*
University of Minnesota Press, 2004

Reviewed by Andrew Feldmár

Lingis is now 71 years old and when I last met him in St. Catharines, at Brock University, he talked enthusiastically about his newly acquired Argus Pheasants, members of an almost extinct species of spectacular birds. When we parted he gave me a discarded wing feather that defies Darwinian evolution, its complex pattern simulating a string of three-dimensional balls, shaded with exquisite colors, created god-knows how. His innocent delight was infectious, we both forgot our age, and our joy was perennial and childlike. The two-day conference on *A Postmodern Ethics of Joy and Coronation Glory* was organized in Lingis's honor. Most speakers referred to his most recently published book, *Trust*.

On the conference brochure you can read, "Alphonso Lingis has brought together three areas of expertise with such brilliance that he has become one of North America's most insightful philosophers. He knows the tradition exceedingly well. He is one of the finest experts on contemporary philosophy. As a constant, reflective and appreciative traveler he is in conversation with the peoples of the earth today. As he brings the best of traditional wisdom and contemporary exploration together with the joys and sorrows of the human family, his reading and writing, his speaking and listening, his dreaming and thinking take on such an affirmative creativity that he lets all of existence shine within the various realms of manifesting glory."

Lingis wrote, "Deep is the world, deeper than day had been aware, and deep its woe, said Zarathustra. But deeper still is joy. Joy is the most comprehensive state, he said; it alone is antimetaphysical, alone able to affirm love and hatred, woe, hell, disgrace, the cripple, world – this world, oh, you know it!" *Trust*, the book under review, emanates joy through orchids, ocean fog, ancient ruins, giant sequoias, markets and feasts.

Erik H. Erikson, in his groundbreaking work on identity and the life cycle done during the late 1940s, places the first component of a healthy personality in a sense of *basic trust*, which we develop, hopefully, in the first year of life. Should the mother/infant interactions go awry, a solid sense of mistrust of oneself and the world could take hold, impairing the further development of one's faculties, such as *autonomy, initiative, industry, intimacy*, and one may end up struggling with *shame, guilt, inferiority, isolation, and despair*. During the first year of life, the infant lives through, and loves through, and loves with, his mouth; and the mother lives through, and loves with, her breasts. Language, at first, yields little reassuring, or useful, information; we are all born foreigners, having to acquire the tongue of our parents.

(Continued page over)

When we travel, we are at the mercy of strangers, whose language, culture, and motivations we may not understand. Lingis writes, "Travel far enough, and we find ourselves happily back in the infantile world." Happily, perhaps, but often unhappily: many young people have their first so-called "*psychotic break*," in a country whose language is totally foreign, such as Japanese or Korean would be to a Canadian. If in our personal history we experienced the early maternal environment as hostile, unpredictable, persecutory in any way, then being a tourist could be a terrifying reminder of our earliest trust-destroying moments.

For Lingis, trust is a force, not unlike laughter and sexual craving and courage. His is an optimistic view, for regardless of one's more or less traumatic history, one can practise and get better, more accurate, more spontaneous in surrendering to laughter, lust, courage, and trust. He concludes, "Trust is courageous, giddy, and lustful."

In the chapter called *Vodou*, Lingis bemoans the fact that "we have ceased to trust the good, as we no longer trust beauty, truth, or virtue." We fear ecstasy, which used to be considered an ascent to the good or to God, which was the good personified. A psychiatrist I knew spoke of ecstasy as cerebral disorganization, and wondered why on earth would anyone want *that*?! Lingis says, "Since ecstasy is communication with what is sacred, remote from ourselves, it is communication with others, too. There is no such thing as a private ecstasy. Since ecstasy is a breaking out of solitude, out of the self, since it is a communication, it appears as an event in history." As an example, he writes about Aristide's arrival to the palace in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and the ecstatic reception that greeted him. Lingis remarks, "Life is most intensely, profoundly alive when it hurls itself toward the unknown in order to become ignorant, stupefied, dazzled. When all their forces are released, humans seek out the greatest dangers. Life is essentially extravagant; life is an extravagance in the interlockings and gearings of the world."

Love Junkies tells the story of two Australian convicts, Cheryl and Wayne. Since Cheryl still has her penis, she can share a cell in the men's section of the jail. "The authorities like homosexual couples forming,—it reduces the general aggression in the jail," Lingis learns. Cheryl helps other transsexuals, Wayne is an AIDS peer educator, and they both have been

HIV-positive for over ten years. Lingis writes, "No police force could hope to prosecute and incarcerate all thieves, addicts, and perverts. Every convict is an expiatory sacrifice who suffers his or her life for all."

"A neurotic is someone who is traumatized," Lingis remarks, "that is, cannot get over these disasters. Cannot laugh. Psychotherapists are hardly any help. How tight-assed they are, by and large! They take everything the neurotic dreams over, broods over, so seriously. Every put-down from earliest childhood, every humiliation. They seal the neurotic in his neurosis." Quite an eloquent accusation, rings true to me, yet at times it seems impossible to cajole some people out of their misery. Many feel that it would be a betrayal of their former suffering selves if they were to simply get on with their lives, nevertheless. They fear that their pain, agony, the injustice committed against them would be all forgotten. So they remain, adamantly locked into frozen misery, a visible monument to the atrocities they witnessed or in which they played the role of victim. Neither laughter nor the tears and sobbing of genuine grief are allowed to shake life into their constricting snit. How can one suddenly come alive after feigning a living death for decades, without a loss of face? How to admit, to oneself especially, the mistake of opting out of living and loving? Lingis is aware of the ever-present option of "the leap, with all the forces of the present, into what is ahead. It makes possible hope. Hope is hope by rejecting the evidence of the past, by being against all odds."

"The act of trust is a leap into the unknown... Trust binds one ever more deeply to another; it is an energy that becomes ever stronger and more intoxicated... Knowledge induces belief in what one sees clearly or in a coherent and consistent account that supplies evidence or proof. Trust, which is as compelling as belief, is not produced by knowledge. In trust one adheres to something one sees only partially or unclearly or understands only vaguely or ambiguously. One attaches to someone whose words or whose movements one does not understand, whose reasons or motives one does not see... Once one puts one's trust in him, this trust can only generate yet more trust," writes Lingis, sharing what he has learned from his experience.

Should we trust him? Or is he a naïve innocent who survives by sheer good luck? Read the book and see for yourself!

Ode: to the Pill Popper

by Frank G. Sterle, Jr.

'Tis hell when one's a popper of the pill
no matter what is the type of the drug,
it is the hole into which one has dug
a hole that has the potential to kill
its inhabitant, be it Jack or Jill;
this addiction's a chain and ball to lug,
much worse than a pint of beer in a mug
that's turned into a gallon that does spill.
So, as high as one gets in 'Pleasantville'
popping pills instead of a whiskey jug,
one can go further than having their fill
to the point of requiring a mouth plug
to slow the flow of drugs like Mellaril,
Ativan or drugs that feel like a slug.

An Ode to Anxiety

by Frank G. Sterle, Jr.

Through you, my unwanted companion,
I get to feel like nothing's sufficient,
nothing's enough to satisfy my lively cravings,
my needs according to my psyche — and addictions,
for everyone's addicted to something to some degree,
physically or mentally. Thus I query of my mind:
to be or not to be, self-maintenance or self-destruction?
Since I (currently) choose the former, my unwanted
companion, I must bear you until that day that time
demands I separate from you.

In Winter Time the Christmas Lights

by reinhart

In winter time the Christmas lights
Shine lovely and shine bright;
It warms the heart to see them glow
Throughout the long, cold night.

When snow doth gently descend on the city,
The flakes fall everywhere;
When icicles glisten like diamonds and glass
And there's magic in the air.

Christmas lights adorn the windows,
The railings, eaves and doors.
The streets are white, the sunlight bright
As through a patch of blue it pours.

The clouds will part, the sky will clear;
The heavens blue will shimmer.
A honey golden sun peeks down
And on the melting snow will glimmer.

The colours of the season gleam
In Christmas lights and scenes;
Red, blue, yellow, green.
And many more other shades in between.

Santa wears a suit of red,
He makes the children smile.
Wrappings, decorations and ornaments blue
Are always and everywhere in style.

The Advent candle flames flicker yellow;
Reminding us of Bethlehem;
And reminding us of the burning star
That the First Noel marked then.

The Christmas tree grows lush and green
Throughout the whole, long year.
It represents eternity and life
And the Christ that we hold dear.

Streets they bustle with people;
Coloured lights twinkle like stars above,
While shoppers run their errands
To buy presents for those they love.

And thus the whole, white city abuzz
With noises and children and laughing.
The traffic of cars and trucks and buses;
The sound of the ringing and crashing.

And everywhere the Christmas lights
Beckon friendly far and near;
Spreading joy and happiness
To all those of good cheer.

The coloured lights do lift our spirits;
Our souls well up with joy.
We seek to share this happiness
With family, friend, girl and boy.

And thus we feel as little children,
When all the colours hone like new.
And when the world was enchanted;
When everything was true.

When life is kind and full with hope,
And love is all around upon us.
When magic is good and beauty alive
And when angels protect each one of us.

Now these rainbows of colour
Beam and flare and blaze strong;
And they strengthen our faith and show us the light
As we gleefully burst into song.

Aside and Asunder

by D. Paul Strashok

Have you been turned aside
to be turned asunder from now on?
Will you stop in your tracks and then wonder
when mystery and beauty are strong?

Then a voice may come forth from that mystery
that will alter the course of your life.
It may change the course of your history
mending your soul from the knife.

Have you been to that well of refreshing?
Have you striven for justice and truth?
Have you altered and changed your persuasion
to return to the call of your youth?

Have you stood there at that mountain,
a shepherd, no longer to be crowned
except for the staff of freedom
and the roar of the Angels' sound?

Have you been through the vale of affliction
only to rise to the challenge of morn?
Have you altered and changed your add-diction
when that voice came forth from the warm?

It is not in the freedom of fashion,
not the colour of cloth that we wear,
but in the all-consuming passion
of the One who called us here.

Now sunshine and meadow are calling
to listen, to hear, to forbear,
and the sound of the songbirds singing
calls out constant awareness there.

The covenant of grace that is given –
charis and matters of the heart
when the Rock once struck was riven
bids us heavenly rule impart.

And lightning or lightening parousias
The presence of that Sovereign One
Will manifest the rule of El Dios
As our hearts move on in the Son.

Prefatory Word

The following article is a slightly revised version of the original which was first written and published over 10 years ago shortly after I had emerged (in Sept., '92) from a 5-year stint in jail and psychiatric prison. It was conceived mostly as an extended bibliographical essay, with some autobiographical elements thrown in, under the overarching rubric of a kind of "General Address to the Anti-Psychiatry Movement" (such as it was, back then). Somewhat unwieldy, amateurish and rough-hewn - I realize now, in retrospect - these "reflections" nevertheless enjoyed a fairly widespread "unofficial" circulation, and were felt by many people to have some merit, or at least the kernels of some significant or relevant thoughts. One of these was our IAN editor, Jim Gifford, who I first met around 1996, and who commented that my brief account of experiencing some psychosis attendant to mystical/paranormal states paralleled, in many respects, his own mental "illness" travails—a theme which he, of course, subsequently went on to do a lot of original work extrapolating on, both in writing and in talks-to-groups, here locally.

In any case, Jim said that he wanted to publish the piece in its entirety one day, however, space-considerations were a little bit prohibitive for presenting it properly just then. In the event, I finally got around to refurbishing "the treatise", adding the footnotes it really required, and smoothing out some of the more egregious rough-edges. So I hope this makes for a considerably improved read, as well as being of genuine value as a reference-guide and fruitful template-of-sorts that will continue to benefit others. I believe much of the subject matter is still as timely as ever.

With these thoughts in mind, I would like to dedicate this "new edition" of *New Breakthrough* to our mentor and seminal pioneer of "Breakthrough"-analysis, who has given new hope and meaning to the lives of so many, in so many ways: Jim Gifford.

— B.F. (Nov., '04)

New Breakthrough : Schizophrenia Cured!!! -Some Reflections on Lowen, Leary, Chopra and Liberation From Psychiatry

(First published in *The Colonist* of May, 1994)

By Byron Fraser

Since the psychiatric establishment is in the habit of coming up with a new cure-all drug which isn't really very toxic, has few known (yet) side-effects, and which will finally treat that disease— mental "illness" —at its biochemical core (a veritable "magic bullet") every six months or so, I thought it incumbent upon those of us in the anti-psychiatry underground to also get into the habit of proclaiming our own alternative "cure to end all cures"...every six months or so. While they can claim the mantle of modernity and the best that reason engrossed in materialism have to offer, we can find solace in the ancient wisdom and sure knowledge that God is truly on our side. Then we'll just see who loses credibility first.

Seriously though, the truth is that the Psycho-Pharmaceutical Complex, with its billions of vested interest dollars in drug company profits and well-salaried bureaucrat-professionals, is nowhere nearer a real cure to what is called "schizophrenia" than it was back in the 1950s when "chemical lobotomies" were first hailed as a "humanistic" advance over the real thing. These aficionados cling ever more desperately to the Big Lie of their "progress" myth while the dying edifice of their teetering Medical Model lurches forward threatened with imminent extinction. Whole careers dedicated to mindless conformity to institutionalized malpractice hang in the balance while the rotting structure is mercilessly exposed by a few valiant outsiders like Szasz, Mancuso, Breggin and Farber [1]. Even the hapless victims of psychiatry's coercive interventions have begun to realize that The Emperor truly has "no clothes"— and that behind all the pseudo-scientific posturing lies an empty shell of bold-faced ignorance, which will collapse in the wake of even cursory intellectual inquiry. The crux of the problem is that orthodox psychiatry has been stuck, for decades now, in a totally outmoded worldview, spinning its wheels and looking for answers in all the wrong places, because of the error of attempting to treat at a materialistic level a problem which is **fundamentally nonmaterial**. The good news is that genuine cutting-edge science is proving that it is no longer meaningful to talk about existence-in-general— and subjective mental reality, in particular —exclusively in terms of nothing but discrete/quantifiable categories of matter (see, for instance, *The Matter Myth* [2], by Paul Davies and John Gribbin). The work of such once-obscure philosophers as Max Stirner [3] and Bishop Berkeley[4] on the primary reality of the Creative Ideal (or no-"thing") is being vindicated and the confluence of the occult and the scientific is being realized more and more every day (see especially, Michael Talbot's *Mysticism and The New Physics*[5]). Indeed, we stand on the brink of a societal paradigm shift of monumental proportions which will sweep orthodox

psychiatry (“biopsychiatry”) in its wake, confining it appropriately— and at last! —to the dustbin of history.

As I pointed out in my review of Seth Farber’s *Madness, Heresy, and the Rumor of Angels: The Revolt against the Mental Health System* [6], our main anti-psychiatric line of attack must emphasize the bioenergetic/spiritualistic in contradistinction to the biochemical/materialistic. We need to have an answer to the question: “Well, what would you do to replace drugging?” And the fact is that numerous effective alternative treatment modalities exist, but they are almost universally shunned by the psychiatric establishment which claims an exclusively superior know-how based on its grounding in— or tie to —physiological medicine. Actually, however, this pretense of expertise is an elaborate farce which can only maintain its status through the restrictive trade practice of deliberately selective coercive exclusion (“barriers to entry”) via governmental medical licensure. And, as with all monopolies, the structure is designed to bilk the maximum amount of money out of the public while providing the least amount of product/service and, at the same time, benefiting a privileged few. This State-granted largesse is jealously guarded for, without it, they would have to share the wealth with an abundant array of alternative health care practitioners providing vastly more services at greatly reduced cost. As things stand, psychiatry has taken the predictably easy (“cost-effective” for them) way out which entails drugging the patient, patting them on the head, and sending them on their way. If the patient recovers from their temporary irrationality— which is often achieved independently and spontaneously by the individual simply having some time and space to re-orient their thinking —then the drug has “worked” and they have responded well to “treatment”. If not, then it is simply the etiology of the “disease” which is deemed chronic, lifelong and incurable. Never mind the fact that in cases of enduring “illness” no attempt whatever has been made to deal with symptoms at a cognitive level. That would involve “talk-therapy” and bodywork and genuine transformations on an ideational-energetic level. It would mean that psychiatrists would have to get their hands dirty, acquire some real psychological skills, and be able to shake free from their chauvinistic allegiance to consensus reality-tunnels so as to empathize with the meaningfulness of the alternative realities which are often part and parcel of the “schizophrenic’s” evolutionary growth process. To act as a guide to— and facilitator of —a new plateau of coherence, should be the goal.

One of the most promising therapeutic approaches which I endorse, with reservations, is the bioenergetics of psychiatrist, Alexander Lowen. Lowen was a major disciple and interpreter of Wilhelm Reich who built a considerable arsenal of efficacious technique and theory which has had an enduring impact. The necessary rehabilitation of psychiatrists who need to “get off drugs” will have come a long way when the essence of Lowen is incorporated into mainstream practice. It wouldn’t hurt either to re-affirm the validity of Reich’s seminal contribution to character analysis with his theory of “armoring” in the musculature of the body. That the road to mental health lies along the path of integrating the ideational-energetic contents of the body into conscious awareness is now beyond dispute.

The definitive sourcebook of Lowen’s therapy is *Bioenergetics* [7], billed on the cover as “the revolutionary therapy that uses the language of the body to heal the problems of the mind”. Therein, Lowen recollects his relationship to Reich, delineates his personality typology, and outlines his therapeutic orientation with applications to a variety of subjects and case studies. His therapy is a variant of Westernized Yoga involving physical and breathing exercises with some massage work. At its core is the appealing concept of cultivating an “open heart”. This sounds simplistic, I know, but a full realization of his meaning entails considerable unpacking. In general, Lowen’s analytical tools represent a useful addition to any psychiatrist’s repertory, however, I fear he would relegate all saints and holy men to the ranks of psychopathic power-trippers—who were “in denial” (of course, of course) of their REAL needs. Which brings me to my main bone of contention with— and point of dissension from —Lowen/Reich : their theory of sex. Lowen buys into Reich’s axiom that “orgastic potency” defines mental health. The notion is that sexual release and discharge breaks down characterological armoring and causes a diminution of tension in the musculature. I would argue, on the contrary, that sexual release causes a weakening of bioenergetic integrity and a consequent reinforcing and reimposition of the armored character structure. As unfashionable as it may sound, I am in essential agreement with the 19th Century alienists (the precursors of modern psychiatry) who taught that excessive sex leads to mental and emotional instability and neurosis. I believe, in fact, that Reich’s views on sex— which were a hold-over from Freud’s reduction of spirituality to sexuality —contributed significantly to his own experience of madness towards the end of his career. Specifically, while he had many intimations of the evolutionarily advanced dimensions of consciousness circuitry (as Leary would say), he was held back by his sexual hang-DOWN to old energy patterns which were in conflict with emergent realities. As Leary would also say, “pathology precedes potential” [8]. Or, as Shakti Gawain expresses it in *The Path of Transformation* [9], all “healing crisis” appear when we have outgrown an old pattern, or way of being, but are still unconsciously holding on to it. But to return more precisely to the subject at hand, I advocate the Catholic orthodoxy of the East Indian practice of brahmacharya [10]. And I think we all would all be well-advised to heed the words of Thoreau who wrote:

“ ‘A command over our passions and over the external senses of the body; and good acts, are declared by the Ved to be indispensable in the mind’s approximation to God.’ Yet the spirit can for the time pervade and control every member and function of the body, and transmute what in form is the grossest sensuality into purity and devotion. The generative energy, which, when we are loose, dissipates and makes us unclean, when we are continent invigorates and inspires us. Chastity is the flowering of man; and what are called Genius, Heroism, Holiness, and the like, are but various fruits which succeed it. By turns our purity inspires and our impurity casts us down. He is blessed who is assured that the animal is dying out in him day by day, and the divine being established.” [11]

For those interested in a more extensive exposition of the philosophy of the conservation and transmutation of reproductive energy, I refer you to the masterful treatment of C.J. Van Vliet in *The Coiled Serpent* [12]. He is especially good around refuting notions of the pleasure principle and the alleged necessity of sex for health. Another volume along the same lines, which is more widely available, is Mahatma Gandhi’s *Self-restraint v. Self-indulgence* [13].

My second nominee for the title of “Mental Health Expert of the Century” is the indomitable Tim Leary. This Eminent Emissary of Evolutionary Mind, Higher Consciousness and Intelligence Agent *par excellence* has done pioneering work which will still be being talked about for many centuries to come. His shining example of courage in the face of adversity was also an especial inspiration to me during those potentially dark days when I was confined to “the hole” for six months [14]. But his legacy will go far beyond mere Media Myth and the celebrity status of a momentary counter-cultural guru. For there is a substantive scientific theoretical and factual basis for his brain-change technology, and this has many implications for the mental health field. Paradoxical as this may sound coming from one who shares Peter Breggin’s abhorrence of neuroleptic drugs (see *Toxic Psychiatry*, footnote No. 1)—especially when they are used to induce “chemical lobotomies” or an institutionally-friendly genial stupor—I am not at all opposed to the use of all drugs to treat “mental illness”. Nor is this a concession to the Medical Model or the alleged biochemical basis of “the disease”. Instead, what I submit is that psychedelic drugs have the proven potential to radically alter the mind and behavior—in the direction of mental health—via “metaprogramming the human biocomputer” (in John Lilly’s phrase) through serial imprinting of the brain. Furthermore—and here I don’t know how much Leary would be in agreement with me—I would want to claim that the relevant change induced, that comes about by a release of energy and transformation of extant patterns (what’s usually referred to as the creation of new “neural pathways”), represents not only—or even fundamentally—static inscription or encoding that is quantitatively identifiable at a discrete molecular level of any given neuron. Indeed we know that all the atoms and molecules of one’s anatomy are totally changed every year or so—yet the “Self”, intellect and memory, remains. Again, science continues to confirm the non-material nature of consciousness, with the most efficacious model of the mind being that of a holograph which stores information “non-locally” (see especially, Michael Talbot’s chapter, “A Holographic Model of Consciousness”, in *Mysticism and the New Physics* [footnote No. 5]).

Unfortunately the radical beneficial therapeutic potential of psychedelics was stymied by ignorant and reactionary statism. And we are still living in the legal limbo of drug prohibition. But, as Robert Anton Wilson says, what else would you expect on “the planet of the apes”? [15] For an account of Leary’s early experiments with psilocybin and prisoners, the dramatic success in reducing the recidivism rate, and much else pertinent to the broader implications of his work, see: *Changing My Mind, Among Others* [16]. And, for many of the other brilliant books he has written since he got out of jail, contact: New Falcon Publications (www.newfalcon.com).

The third co-conspirator I want to discuss has been propelled into well-deserved celebrity status of late and bids fair to be the catalyst for major changes in the way we view modern medicine, including mental health: I speak of Deepak Chopra. Chopra is a medical doctor, practicing in the U.S., who combines the best teachings of East Indian Philosophy with the latest findings of quantum physics to come up with a unique approach to health which is part revelation and part inspiration. His journey to stardom began when he quit his post as head of a major Boston hospital, returned to his native India, and hooked up with the ancient healing tradition known as Ayurveda. He also connected with the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and started practicing TM. Upon returning to the U.S., he set up a special clinic in Lancaster, Mass., devoted to Ayurveda and during this last year he has established centers affiliated with a major hospital chain. For a number of years he was thought of in New Age circles as merely “the Maharishi’s medicine man” but that, too, has changed as he has grown in stature. He has now officially disassociated himself from the TM Movement—mainly due to their lack of credibility when it comes to making extravagant claims about being able to teach people how to levitate and walk through walls, etc.—although he remains on amiable terms with the Maharishi.

Summarizing Chopra’s theoretical orientation here is beyond my capacity, as I have only read a couple or three of his books, however, from all that I know of it, he seems to be in perfect sync with the dominant direction of anti-

psychiatry. He quite frankly embraces Spirit— and I think we should too—but he does not rely on sentimental belief. Rather he grounds his gnosis in hard science. He recommends, for instance, *God and the New Physics* [17] by Paul Davies and quotes, with favor, the great English astronomer, Sir Arthur Eddington, who stated flatly that the raw material of the whole universe is “mind-stuff”. He concretizes conceptually the quantum realm and, in his book, *Quantum Healing—Exploring The Frontiers of Mind/Body Medicine* [18], he points the way to accessing “the gap” between normal waking awareness and the Deep Self where there is abundant energy and intelligence. He notes, insightfully, that “the first thing to understand is that you are not a human being having occasional spiritual experiences but a spiritual being having occasional human experiences”. Then, in another small and delightful book called *Creating Affluence—Wealth Consciousness in the Field of All Possibilities* [19], Chopra relates how the Maharishi asked a number of physicists to characterize the Einsteinian unified field. Among other things, they said that at the most basic sub-atomic particle level all that exists is energy and information—and that it is living. It could also be characterized as sheer potential. In sum, the universe is alive and thinking [20]. Can you dig it?!

This last correlates perfectly with my own experience of “god-consciousness” which I achieved via the full awakening of kundalini at the age of 22 back in 1973. The story is worth recounting for the sake of science and for the sake of others who will one day tread the same path. It is a statistically rare occurrence (something many advanced adepts often spend a lifetime unsuccessfully trying to achieve), though not unknown in the annals of mysticism (see especially, *Cosmic Consciousness* [21], by the famous Canadian psychiatrist— and noted associate of Walt Whitman —R.M. Bucke).

My step by step cultivation of the ability to raise kundalini began with the study of hypnosis on the recommendation of Nathaniel Branden, the prominent psychologist and onetime disciple of Ayn Rand. I practiced daily and recorded my adventures in a journal. Thus began a systematic “mental-mapping” in which I identified, among other things, numerous instances of “vegetative streamings” (Reich’s term) while in Deep Trance. The keys to my system were twofold: 1) developing the ability to focus conscious awareness narrowly— “like a flashlight” —deep into below-the-head body regions and IDENTIFYING emotional-energetic substance on those levels, and 2) developing the ability to focus conscious awareness broadly— to “let go” and do what I termed “dissolve” or “eat/digest” data—to INTEGRATE material normally outside of conscious awareness. I was working on Ayn Rand’s definition of reason as “the identification and integration of the data provided by man’s senses”. It’s worth noting, too, that right up to and including the time I experienced “god-consciousness” I had never even seen or heard the word “kundalini” and had no exposure to literature on the subject. I was an adamant atheist well-schooled in all the philosophical arguments against God and the last thing I was seeking was a meeting with Him/Her/It.

In any case, I began to experience more and more powerful streamings and pulsations while in trance and these were accompanied more and more often by states of conscious bliss and ecstasy. The seemingly most powerful state— that of a steady continuous stream of bioenergy from the base of my spine to my head —I labeled “Supreme Integration”. But there was to be an even higher state than this—what I now know to be the state identical with what the yogis term “Nirvikalpa Samadhi”. That is when you get to meet God face to face.

Without going into detail as to time or place, I will do my best to describe what is essentially an ineffable experience. It began, as usual, with a deep hypnotic trance. I soon experienced steady pulsations of bioenergy going up my back. These then became a solid stream moving back and forth, like a snake across the grass. Gradually the side to side motion stopped and turned into a powerful torrent flowing straight up and down. Then, suddenly, I was propelled in consciousness to the very top of my head. My mind was simultaneously expanded and I seemed to see from “beyond” and “above”. I lost all consciousness of time and had the inescapable feeling that I “knew everything”. There was also light, an effulgence of light reverberating through every aspect of my being. (This lasted fully two weeks after I “came down” from my initial god-consciousness high.) But the most phenomenal thing that occurred was my immediate and unmistakable awareness of an overwhelming and vast conscious presence stretching off in all directions to infinity. He/She/It was right there next to me and there was no room for doubt; it was in some ways like being a child again, saying your prayers, and being absolutely sure that God is there to answer them. But this was no regressive fantasy; I maintained awareness of my mature-self consciousness. One of the distinctive things I remember about this encounter with Cosmic Consciousness— and this may seem odd to some people — was that He/She/It seemed to be laughing the whole time: God was literally “intoxicated with joy”! This must be where the Smiling Buddha Tradition comes from.

To bring this chapter to a close, be it known that I “came down” from my communion after approximately an hour or two but continued to experience the free flow of kundalini for a period of two weeks or so after this. During that time I was in an almost continuous “body of bliss” and I experienced many marvelous paranormal phenomena (of which more, another time) but eventually my condition degenerated into fairly acute psychosis. This is not an uncommon phenomena when you “do it without a guru” and has been examined in detail, notably by the author

and psychiatrist, Dr. Lee Sannella, in his book *Kundalini: Psychosis or Transcendence* [22], among many others. In any case, I wound up spending two weeks in a psychiatric clinic, drugged into oblivious stupefaction, until I checked myself out. Luckily, the symptoms of this, my first “psychotic episode”, abated right away as soon as I threw away the neuroleptic drugs I had been told to maintain myself on for months. It was not until a couple of years later, however, that the discovery of several books on kundalini, plus going over my journal notes, allowed me to piece together what had happened to me.

Western and English-translation literature on kundalini was sparse when I first stumbled across it but has grown significantly over the years. Gopi Krishna's many books are a good introduction to the subject—especially his *The Awakening of Kundalini*, *Kundalini: The Evolutionary Energy in Man*, and *The Dawn of A New Science* [23]. Also worth looking at is John White's *Kundalini, Evolution, and Enlightenment* [24] and Mary Scott's *Kundalini in the Physical World* [25].

Needless to say, kundalini energy has continued to be active in my total biosystem manifesting in various ways. I do not regret its early appearance in my life—psychosis and all—because it has enabled me to avail myself of theoretical and experiential data outside the realm of most peoples' awareness. And this knowledge has had—and will continue to have—many significant applications in interpersonal dimensions. Concluding on this subject, I would have to say that it is a phenomena that Western medical science in general, and psychiatry in particular, can no longer afford to ignore.

Having outlined the work of several thinkers who have important things to say to the anti-psychiatry movement, I would like to round out the discussion with a brief analysis of my own case (of more extensive involvement with institutional psychiatry) by dint of which an extrapolation of further “breakthrough” concepts may emerge. I know I may appear inappropriately self-centered or—wait for it!—“narcissistic”, for offering myself up as Exhibit A like this, but then I am the subject which I know best and, if I don't do this work, no one else will. It might just be of some help or instructive use to others. I'll try to be brief.

My “case”, then, revolved around an incident which happened when I was working on a job-site (as a floorlayer) and got into an argument, and then a physical confrontation, with several other people. The police were called, a single officer showed up who I flagged down, giving my statement first and stating my intention to press charges against those who had initiated the altercation. Then, while taking additional statements from the other disputants, one who had been told to stand apart separately (the individual actually responsible for the original breach of the peace) began yelling at some of his colleagues attempting to coach them with their stories. He also yelled at me. And I yelled back, but—it should be stressed—without making any threat in word or deed. Unfortunately, however, in this emotionally charged atmosphere, this rookie police officer apparently came to the conclusion that he needed to interject violently, although all the parties were widely separated and there was no immediate obvious concern about any further altercation. He, therefore, at this point, took it upon himself to march towards me with a wild gleam in his eye and announcing “There's nobody causing trouble here but you”. And, although I was completely passive, unarmed, and had not moved an inch from where he had asked me to stand (some 30 feet distant from the others he was interviewing, etc.), he proceeded to make a threatening butterfly-motion with his hand next to his gun in an effort to intimidate me, then flipped the button on his holster and started to draw his gun. Seeing this, I reached for an iron bar that was close to hand (on the seat of my truck) and struck him twice, effectively disarming him. Then I ran into a nearby structure and, after a brief interval, surrendered peacefully to other police who had arrived on the scene. The injuries to the policeman were not serious—he was hospitalized for observation less than a day—but, nevertheless, I was charged with attempted murder—a charge which was later thrown out in court by a judge and reduced to aggravated assault.

The case went to pretrial and, acting on my own behalf, I presented a brief outlining the bare facts plus some related “esoteric” musings. These may have appeared somewhat irrational on the face of them, due to being composed at a time of considerable stress, though I subsequently came to view them as actually reflecting broader verities I had become aware of but simply could not articulate—at that time—with sufficient coherence. Consequently, this document was to prove instrumental in the resolution of my case as “not guilty by reason of insanity”. But the real deciding factor was that the young policeman who had clearly violated the well-known rules of police procedure by precipitously attempting to shoot an unarmed, non-threatening man, without even stating any intention to arrest, etc., then also committed blatant perjury when describing the event and his actions to the preliminary hearing judge. And, since no other witnesses were in a position to corroborate my testimony (his action vis-à-vis drawing his gun was blocked from their view by a van, etc.), we were left with my word against his. And whose word was the State likely to accept when dealing with one of their own? So I was faced with telling the truth—that the officer illegally threatened me (arguably committing attempted murder and assault himself while clearly not performing his duty) and pleading “not guilty” due to having acted in legitimate self-defense—which

would not matter and, therefore, land me in jail doing “hard time” in the most dangerous and violent environment imaginable. Or, I could plead NGRI and do what I supposed would be the “softer”—but probably longer—time in the Forensic System (Psychiatric Prison) where I reasoned that such endemic violence would be minimal by comparison. On the other hand, if we went the former route, all the evidence about what this young rookie policeman had done would have come out and he would have either had his employment terminated or his entire future career seriously jeopardized (regardless of what the Court did with me)—at least, so I was told. So, not wishing this young man any harm (I sincerely forgave him virtually immediately, having personally known and seen many inexperienced men “flip out” irrationally in like circumstances; I had honestly felt no malice against the man—at any time), I (we) opted for a rapprochement of sorts whereby I took the latter route and none of the true details were made a matter of public court-record. That, in a nutshell, was the bare bones of my “case”.

I see several broad lessons I have learned. First of all, taking as axiomatic the well-known New Age dictum that “you create your own reality”, it is only a brief conceptual leap to the realization that the broader manifest reality is a collective product, to a significant degree, of group consciousness (for further implications of this idea see Shakti Gawain’s, *The Path of Transformation* [footnote No. 9]). What Berger and Luckmann intimated in their *The Social Construction of Reality* [26] is true at an even more subtle, refined, level. It follows, too, that at any given time there is a competition in reality production. In short, there is a proverbial “war in heaven” with individualities and group-mind (mental and/or morphic “fields”, as biologist, Rupert Sheldrake, would say) or group-soul (as the religious philosopher, Sri Aurobindo, would say) collectivities constantly vying for minds and bodies to work through. Some will have more soul force and/or mental fortitude than others. And, as Robert Anton Wilson says in *Prometheus Rising* [27]: “what the thinker thinks, the prover proves”. A concrete and relevant example of this would be psychiatrists who predict that patients will relapse if they go off drugs and therefore should stay on them for life. Their whole investment in an image of themselves as having “scientific expertise” is at stake so they, and their associated colleagues, will try their best to “produce” or “manufacture” madness in any individual who rejects drugging. Similarly, the compliant individual who doesn’t know any better—or who simply hasn’t made the necessary conceptual and energetic changes to arm himself against such depredations—will consistently produce behavior to validate the drugging thesis.

What I deduce from all of this is that my brush with the law was a socially produced phenomena due, in part, to certain reactionary forces wanting to shut me up verbally and/or physically and due, in part, to internal forces in conflict over the need to grow and change. In a broader dimension, I was conscious of having an ongoing dialogue with a group-mind aspect of the Collective Consciousness. Seen in their proper context, then, my more esoteric writings which seemed “objectively” irrational—and the perceptions they were based on—were not inaccurate in the least. In short, at no time was I “delusional”.

An interesting aspect of my total encounter with psychiatry was my assessment by one court-appointed doctor (who shall remain nameless) and his subsequent trial-testimony. In the course of my first interview with him he learned that I was a “known-killer”, a committed anarchist who would not scruple at exercising his British Common Law right to “take the law into his own hands” to see that justice was done, and a kundalini-adept who had had a previous psychotic episode. And, apparently, this combination summed in his mind to something very akin to my being the virtual Devil-Incarnate! The “killer” stigma relates to the fact that I was forced to kill my father in the course of intervening in a violent domestic dispute between he and my mother when I was 17 years old. It was a tragic incident (he was extremely drunk and out-of-control due to a long-standing [many years] situation of daily discord and scenes with my mother having come to a head with his just learning that she had finally initiated divorce proceedings against him), a clear case of legitimate self-defense (after getting my siblings to safety at the neighbors, I returned to find the circumstance whereby, to quote the presiding judge at the later inquiry: “I am accepting the evidence that...his mother, might [have been] killed; I am prepared to accept this as...a real and substantial probability and not in the slightest way an imaginary or fanciful fear”—whereupon I was attacked and, after retreating over the course of a lengthy distance, responded with necessary force only when there was no alternative [this is also clearly stated in the judge’s findings]), and I was fully acquitted of a manslaughter charge which was brought mainly as a mere formality to bring out the facts. (Incredibly, I was to learn in later years that the major interpretive rendition passed along to posterity via local “social gossip” [as to why this event occurred] was that this violent scene supposedly had something to do with some conflict with myself and my father over my—again supposedly—having been “made to play hockey” as a youth—which was averred to have turned me into an inordinately violent young man. This was total B.S., but it apparently served to shield The Familial Collective Consensus from focusing on the pretty horrific husband/wife strife ongoing, at the root of precipitating “the problem”—a frank recognition of which would have hit altogether too close to the many, many homes living an unadmitted domestic reality only too similar. [I say this without any thought of moralistically “blaming” either of

my parents, both of whom I view as outstanding individuals who always attempted to do their best in trying circumstances, like most people.)

In any case, I conveyed all of this information to the doctor in question and he, in turn, wrote in his report— in bold capital letters —“Mr. Fraser admitted to me that he killed his father”, as if this was some sort of special confession elicited from me at an unguarded moment. He also wrote that I had “attacked” my father. A blatant inversion of the true facts of which he was well-aware. And no mention was made of my full acquittal. Plus the rest of the report was filled with factual inaccuracies and outright distortions. But the topper came in court when this doctor described me as “an extremely dangerous man” and “a walking time bomb”. A reporter from the local paper, picking up on this, even ran a story on me under the headline: “Doctor Says Man Is Walking Time Bomb”.

It might have been comforting to write these comments off as just another psychiatrist with paranoid delusions—and that was my first inclination—but then I got to thinking that the man had actually said something prescient, whether he consciously apprehended its implications or not. For having the capability to release kundalini energy is precisely analogous to being able to detonate an atomic bomb; it's a secret weapon of mass consciousness destruction/creation, only on a bioenergetic level. Its potential for “reality creation” (“destruction”) is tremendous. This doctor, I came to realize, had actually paid me a very great compliment: he had sensed the power of my soul-force and intellect, and correctly anticipated that I was capable of toppling the whole rotting edifice of establishment values and practices which he held sacred. Which is, of course, what I am now doing. (One footnote should be added: I am actually no more physically dangerous or prone to violence than the average hockey player who might be reasonably expected to get into an occasional fight, given such a “context” where that's simply an unavoidable aspect of that particular “game”.)

A significant phase of my incarceration-time was spent, as alluded to above, in solitary confinement, and it merits a few comments. The circumstance came about not through any violence on my part but as a result of a brief verbal dispute I had with a guard (after having spent about 6 months on a regular jail unit at a Pretrial Center). Because of this, I was sentenced to 3 days “in the hole” but found I liked it so much that I asked to stay and the powers-that-were graciously obliged. Whether they realized it or not, they had put me in complete control!

Solitary confinement is a perfect place to get down to serious reality creation. It's the next best thing to an isolation tank. Being locked in a small cell for 23 hours a day allows one to really focus awareness. There's a wonderful peace and quiet. And I was not without company. Nietzsche was my constant companion and I thoroughly imbibed his *Will to Power* [28]. Together with “Europe's first consummate nihilist” I plumbed the depths of the abyss, revalued all values, and “invented new lies as principles” calling them “truths” out of biological necessity. I also managed to read Bohm-Bawerk's 3-volume *Capital and Interest* [29] (the first definitive refutation of Marx's *Capital*), among many other works.

From Nietzsche I learned that, if one would stay the course of “the self-overcoming of nihilism” one needs must become a conscious “murderer of God”—which is to say Jehovah. Indeed, I came to see that he had the first explicit “Jehovah Contract” (see further the superb novel by Victor Koman of that title). Further, it became apparent to me that, once you realize you “are in this world but not of it”, you also realize that “the god of this world” often sees you coming and does its best to prevent your emergence. (I call this “the King Herod syndrome”.) The teachings of certain early Gnostic sects that Jehovah was really the “Demiurge” and, in fact, a matriarchal godform split off from the Egyptian father-god (the ORIGIN-al “Source”) took on more meaning. The notion that Jehovah is an avenging bitch-goddess who killed Jesus Christ [30] for the alleged sins of man-kind (for which he is not guilty) gained a certain plausibility. Was it the fact that Paul had been woman-eyes-ed when he was “swept DOWN into ‘the 3rd heaven’ ” that had caused him, henceforth, to view the wisdom of men with contempt “born again” of fee-male conceit (from that lower realm of false consciousness [Mr. Cohen] where “everybody [only thinks they] knows [everything]”)? Had Moses really been in touch with the “I” in the triangle when he spoke to her “burning bush”? Were prisons really male-energy warehouses where “mean mothers” could get their subliminal “fixes”? These, and other timeless speculations, kept me amused while I was busy transforming the world from my 6 by 10.

In conclusion, I would like to say a word or two about revolutionary strategy. Robert Anton Wilson has identified what he calls “the tar baby syndrome” [31] – i.e., where you get stuck to the object of your hatred. Whether you are opposing the State or Psychiatry, then, it is imperative to do so with the maximum of good humor, to always find some levity in the gravity of the situation. We must realize that our oppressors are sick, misguided, devolved—and desperately in need of “healing”—but conscious criminals, nevertheless. We must not fall into the trap of being “perpetual victims” no matter how much they need our help. We need to claim our rightful restitution but, ultimately, we must let go of these dependents and not allow them to sabotage any further our potential to grow UP.

Notes

- 1) See, for instance: Thomas Szasz, *The Myth of Mental Illness—Foundations of a Theory of Personal Conduct* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), *Schizophrenia—The Sacred Symbol of Psychiatry* (New York: Basic Books, 1976), *Thomas Szasz—primary values and major contentions* (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1983), ed. By Richard E. Vatz and Lee S. Weinberg; James Mancuso and Theodore Sarbin, *Schizophrenia: Medical Diagnosis or Moral Verdict?* (New York: Pergamon, 1980); Peter Breggin, *Toxic Psychiatry: Why Therapy, Empathy, and Love Must Replace the Drugs, Electroshock, and Biochemical Theories of the 'New Psychiatry'* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991); Seth Farber, *Madness, Heresy, and the Rumor of Angels: The Revolt against the Mental Health System* (Chicago, Ill.: Open Court, 1993).
- 2) Paul Davies and John Gribbin, *The Matter Myth—Dramatic Discoveries That Challenge Our Understanding of Physical Reality* (New York: Simon & Schuster/Touchstone, 1992).
- 3) Author of the anarchist classic, *The Ego and His Own—The Case of the Individual Against Authority* (New York: Libertarian Book Club, 1963 [Original German edition, 1845; first English edition published by Benjamin Tucker, 1907]), edited and introduced by James J. Martin—which famously begins: "All things are nothing to me"; and concludes, similarly: "They say of God, 'Names name thee not.' That holds good of me: no concept expresses me, nothing that is designated as my essence exhausts me; they are only names. Likewise they say of God that he is perfect and has no calling to strive after perfection. That too holds good of me alone.
I am owner of my might, and am so when I know myself as unique. In the unique one the owner himself returns into his creative nothing, of which he is born...." — pp. 3 & 366.
- 4) George Berkeley (1685-1753), Irish philosopher of English ancestry and Anglican bishop of Cloyne. A noted historical exponent of immaterialism.
- 5) Michael Talbot, *Mysticism and The New Physics* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981; revised and updated edition: Arkana/Penguin, 1992).
- 6) See footnote No. 1. This review was first published in *The Colonist*, Winter '93, and subsequently in *In A Nutshell*, Fall '96.
- 7) Alexander Lowen, *Bioenergetics* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, Inc., 1975).
- 8) Timothy Leary, *The Intelligence Agents* (Culver City, CA: Peace Press, 1979), p. 142.
- 9) Shakti Gawain, *The Path of Transformation—How Healing Ourselves Can Change the World* (San Rafael, CA: New World Library, 1993).
- 10) See especially: Swami Narayanananda, *The Way to Peace, Power and Long Life (Brahmacharya)* (Rishikesh, India: Shri Narayana Press, 1945). "Brahmacharya literally means that mode of life which leads to the realization of God. That realization is impossible without practicing self-restraint." — Gandhi, *Key to Health*, 1960, p. 42.
- 11) Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, "Higher Laws", in *Walden and Other Writings* by Henry David Thoreau (New York, N.Y.: Bantam Books, 1962), pp. 267-68.
- 12) C.J. Van Vliet, *The Coiled Serpent—A Philosophy of Conservation and Transmutation of Reproductive Energy* (Ahmedabad, India: Navajivan Press, 1963). See also the shorter companion volume from the same author and publisher: *Conquest of the Serpent—A Way to Solve the Sex Problem*, 1962.
- 13) Mahatma Gandhi, *Self-restraint v. Self-indulgence* (Ahmedabad, India: Navajivan Press, 1958). "Great causes cannot be served by intellectual equipment alone; they call for spiritual effort or soul-force." — p. 141.
- 14) Actually, I spent about 9 months in solitary altogether, including the 3 additional months in a psychiatric prison sideroom following directly upon this. All without threatening anyone or doing anything violent, believe it or not!—more about which, presently.
- 15) "We're living on the Planet of the Apes. Is that funny or serious?" — R.A. Wilson, *The Illuminati Papers* (Berkeley, CA: And/ Or Press, 1980), p. 24.
- 16) Timothy Leary, *Changing My Mind, Among Others—Lifetime writings, selected and introduced by the author* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1982).
- 17) Paul Davies, *God and the New Physics* (London: Penguin, 1984).
- 18) Deepak Chopra, *Quantum Healing—Exploring the Frontiers of Mind/Body Medicine* (New York: Bantam Books, 1989).
- 19) Deepak Chopra, *Creating Affluence—Wealth Consciousness in the Field of All Possibilities* (San Rafael, CA: New World Library, 1993).
- 20) Two excellent and in-depth scientific confirmations of this thesis are: *The Self-Aware Universe—How Consciousness Creates the Material World* (New York: Tarcher/ Putnam, 1993) by Amit Goswami and *In The Beginning—The Birth of the Living Universe* (London: Penguin, 1993) by John Gribbin.
- 21) R.M. Bucke, *Cosmic Consciousness—A Study in the Evolution of the Human Mind* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1901).
- 22) Lee Sannella, *Kundalini—Psychosis or Transcendence?* (San Francisco, CA: H.S. Dakin Co., 1976). Subsequently republished by Integral Publishing (Lower Lake, CA) in 1987.
- 23) Gopi Krishna, *The Awakening of Kundalini* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1975), *Kundalini –The Evolutionary Energy in Man* (Berkeley, CA: Shambala, 1967), *The Dawn of a New Science* (New Delhi: Kundalini Research and Publication Trust, 1978).
- 24) John White, ed., *Kundalini, Evolution and Enlightenment* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1979).
- 25) Mary Scott, *Kundalini in the Physical World* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983).
- 26) Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality—A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Anchor/Doubleday, 1966).
- 27) Robert Anton Wilson, *Prometheus Rising* (Phoenix, AZ: Falcon Press, 1983), Ch. 1: "The Thinker and The Prover".
- 28) Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power* (New York: Vintage Books, 1968 [First edition: 1901]).
- 29) Eugen von Bohm-Bawerk, *Capital and Interest* (South Holland, Ill.: Libertarian Press, 3 vols., 1202 p., 1959).
- 30) It is nevertheless important here to cleave fast, in our understanding, to the vital truth expressed so succinctly in the formula of French Marxist writer, Roger Garaudy, as : "The Christ of Paul is not Jesus". (From his book on Christian Fundamentalism: *Toward a War of Religion*.)
- 31) Robert Anton Wilson, *Cosmic Trigger—Final Secret of the Illuminati* (Berkeley, CA: And/ Or Press, 1977).

Bulletin Board

Byron Fraser's Fall 2000 In A Nutshell review of Drs. Peter Breggin and David Cohen's book, **Your Drug May Be Your Problem: How and Why to Stop Taking Psychiatric Medications**, has recently been republished online at the ifeminists.com website of noted Canadian author, Wendy McElroy. To download this succinct summary (which has already enjoyed widespread circulation as a convenient and informative handout for groups and meetings), go to:

www.ifeminists.net/introduction/editorials/2004/1117fraser.html

The Self-Help Resource Association of B.C. (SHRA) conducts regular Facilitator Training Workshops for Self-Help and Mutual Aid Support Groups. They also publish a quarterly newsletter and the Directory of Self-Help/Support Groups in Greater Vancouver with approximately 600 listings, many of them dealing with mental health. The latest edition (2004-2005) of the Directory is now available for \$12.00 or \$10.00 at the office if you drop by and pick it up. SHRA is located at Suite 306 – 1212 West Broadway, Van. B.C. V6H 3V1. Tel: 604-733-6186. Fax: 604-730-1015. www.vcn.bc.ca/shra

The Alternative & Integrative Medical Society (AIMS) at UBC publishes the free AIMS Wellness Directory: Lower Mainland Guide to Complementary Health. It contains approximately 250 paid and many unpaid listings dealing with a broad spectrum of mental, physical, and spiritual aspects of healing. For a Directory and/or more info. about the Society, phone 604-822-7604. Fax: 604-822-2495. E-mail info@aims.ubc.ca. Web: www.aims.ubc.ca. AIMS, University of British Columbia, Box 81 – 6138 SUB Boulevard, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z1. Office: B80A Woodward Building, UBC.

Vancouver/Richmond Mental Health Network sponsors many self-help groups including a Women's Circle. Their address is #109 - 96 E. Broadway, Vancouver, B.C., V5T 4N9 and the Co-ordinator of the Network may be reached at 604-733-5570.

Named after Vincent van Gough's homeopathic doctor, Paul Gachet, **Gallery Gachet** works to provide a safe, borderless place of artistic expression. It strives to be a place of healing and a center of artistic excellence. Founded in 1994 we provide opportunities to exhibit, perform, publish and sell work and to offer a place for support and community. We aim to use the canvas of the outside world to educate and demystify the public on issues related to mental health and abuse.

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Public Resource Centre in the Areas of Mental Health, Wellness and Mental Illness. Books, videos, journals on loan for 2 weeks. Working and reading space, and internet access computers available.

Open: 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Location: CMHA (Vancouver-Burnaby), 175 West Broadway Phone: 604-872-4902, Ext. 236 (Alan)

* Our newsletter 'All About Us' is created by Resource Centre volunteers and staff.

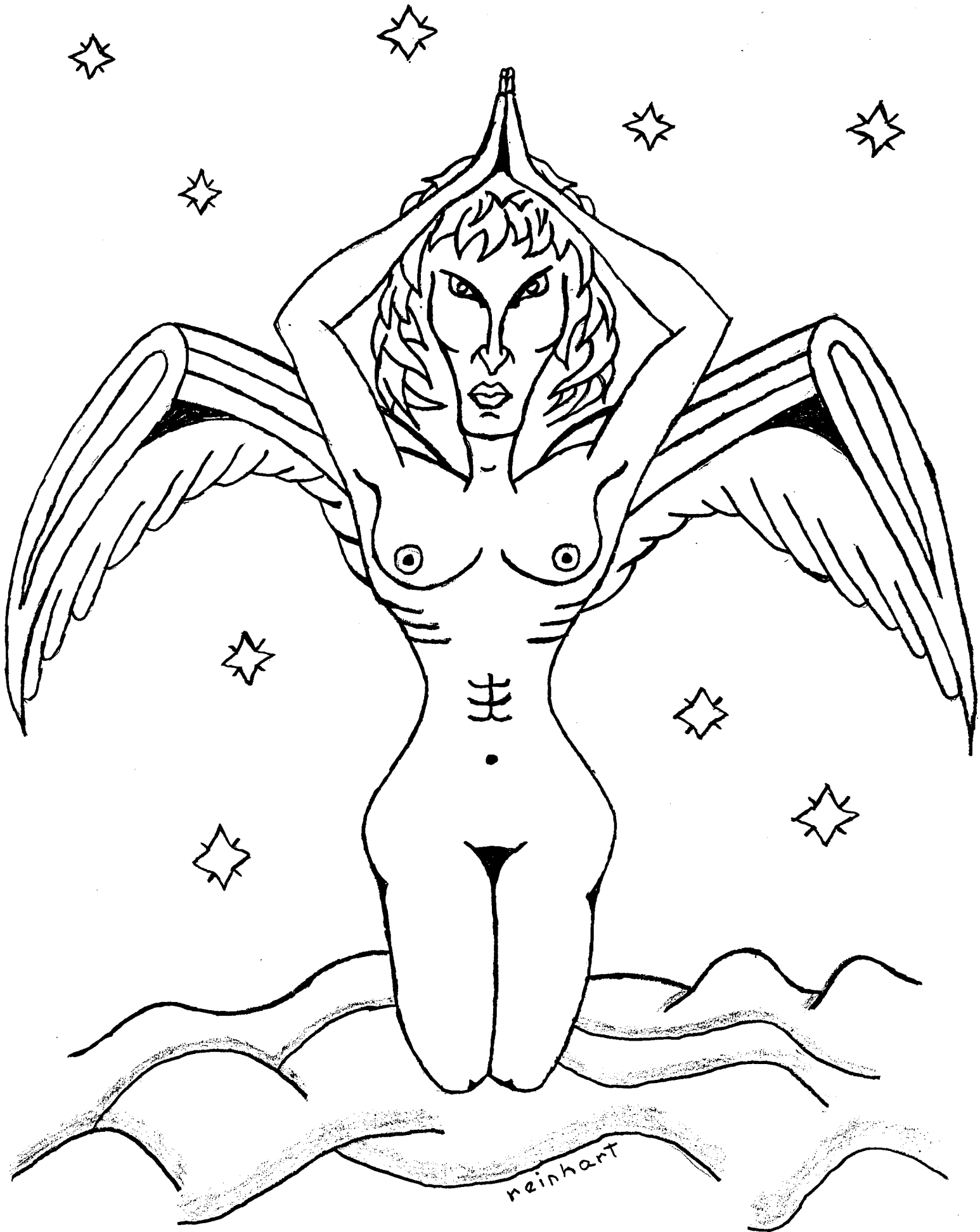
The University of Ottawa in cooperation with Our Voice present Alternatives Site

<http://aix1.uottawa.ca/~nstaman/alternatives/>

*Our Voice is a publication containing viewpoints of the psychiatricized since 1987.

THEO BC provides education and employment services to people within the mental health community. Drop - in orientation sessions are held at our Vancouver location every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month starting at 9:30 a.m. We are located at #100 – 112 E. 3rd Ave (one block west of Main.). For more information contact us at 604-872-0770 or check us out at www.theobc.org.

The National Empowerment Center (NEC) may be found on the Internet at www.power2u.org or by phoning toll-free 800-power2u. The NEC is a C/S/X information and self-help organization headed by Dr. Daniel B. Fisher and Laurie Ahern, both of whom have successfully recovered from psychiatric disorders.



reinhart