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Transpersonal Psychology and the Methods of Instruction in the A.:A.:

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Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

This paper was sparked by an article in ReVision magazine by John E. Nelson MD. The pupil who sent me the article had some first hand knowledge of the system of Transpersonal psychoanalysis and was interested to see if I thought there was any correlation or possible benefit to the system of A.:A.: Instructor/Pupil relationships. Actually this was not the first suggestion of the sort and as it had become an issue several times, with widely varied personality types, I thought that it bore investigation. When I initially began thinking about the implications of the matter I had the feeling that I would find the system too limiting to be of much use in matters where Spiritual evolution was involved.

The correlation of the so-called Chakra system to the stages of Human psychological - psychic development is not a particularly striking innovation in and of itself, given the predilection of psychologists to insist upon some structure or pathway which a `normal' individual follows on his/her way to adulthood, to psychic balance or whatever the buzzword for that process is this month. Even though Nelson, in his article, claims that "Transpersonal psychology has long been wary of traditional psychiatry and psychology's insistence on making diagnoses"... in other words Nelson is claiming that `they' don't do that, i.e., insist upon a structure that is `normal'. The juxtaposition of an ancient belief system to modern conditions is unusual from the vantage point of the modern European or American

psychoanalyst. The two systems, generally speaking, are concerned with symptoms, organic causes and templates for diagnosis and 'cure'. The most prominent exception to this model is of course Carl Jung, much maligned and mostly misunderstood, or so it seems to me. CG Jung even with his occasional dips into the eastern systems was thoroughly western. His beliefs were much more grounded in western 'magic', neoplatonic thought, alchemy and Gnosticism than in anything else. Still one could look to Jung for a pioneering influence on these 'holistic' and synthetic trends in psychology today. This movement that espouses Transpersonal psychological approaches to Human psychic development is not particularly large and one gleans that the majority of the 'professional' opinion is against it. The lack of numbers of adherents to the principles of Transpersonal psychology should not deter us from examining it in the light of what we know in the A.'.A.'. After all We Goats are considered by the sheep to be far from their 'truth'; And so it is and so glad are We of the fact. On a pragmatic note it is the case that We in the A.'.A.'. have had considerably more experience in the process of psychic development than all 'psychological' schools combined. After all, Our sole aim is the evolution, training and use of the Human psyche! We routinely make use of the 'psychosoma' (the congeries of the energies of the psyche coupled with the intelligent training of those faculties) in ways that seem fantastic to the 'normal' psychologist. One must ask the question then, who is in the best position to evaluate systems of psychoanalysis? We are, of course.

This having been said it must also be noted that it is not Our goal in this paper to evaluate the systems of modern psychoanalysis.... we leave that to the apologists for the sins of the psychoanalytic community.... if there are any such beings. Our goal in this paper is simply to see if a model of the Ancient Hindu system of the Chakras, coupled with the observations of some scientists concerning Human behavior can assist us to better streamline Our approach and thus speed us on our way to Understanding. The A.'.A.'. has as one of Its goals the improvement of the conditions of the Human psyche. We seek this improvement not so much for purely altruistic reasons but for very pragmatic reasons. From the point of view of the Adept if the rest of humanity were more balanced his/her working conditions would improve accordingly. Here lies our concern and our focus for this paper.

THE CHAKRAS

The Chakras were considered, by the Hindus, as the nerve centers of the subtle body of the Human being. These centers of power were thought to be situated at intervals along the spine and could be energized by performing certain practices. Once energized these centers were believed to flood the practitioner with a particular kind of energy according to the nature of the center in question. The concept was linked with the idea of Prana -- or energy of a subtle variety -- which was linked with the idea of the breath and the sexual energy. The aim of the practitioner was to cause the Prana to circulate and this could only be done by first raising it through the centers. Note that this thumbnail outline of the process is simply for quick reference. For more detailed study there are a number of sources available.

In discussing the chakras I will be quoting rather extensively from Nelson's article, as I think that he has presented the views of those who follow his line of thinking very succinctly and articulately. I will also try to fill in some of the gaps left by either space or knowledge constraints on the part of Dr. Nelson.

The Muladhara

The root chakra -- situated in the perineum, that area between the anus and the genitals.

Nelson says of this chakra "First chakra consciousness forms the cornerstone of human life. During the crucial three-year span that follows conception, the foundations of selfhood fructify within what was initially an unbounded field of consciousness. As elementary psychic boundaries gradually separate self from its universal Source, they form a supporting framework that later bears the weight of human emotions, reason, and relationships." Nelson says further that "The primary mode of first chakra consciousness is survival, and the principle way of relating to the world is through the mouth."

The drug which Nelson maintains operates on a first chakra level is Thorazine. In other words drugs of this class of anti-psychotic can have a beneficial effect on someone who is unbalanced on the level of the first chakra. Nelson says that typical treatment for first-chakra disorders include "simple behavior modification techniques or other methods that improve one's social skills, ability to delay gratification, and firm self-boundaries." Let us imagine for a moment an adult manifesting the first chakra consciousness..... this individual, according to Nelson's formula, would be constantly involved in compulsive consumption, he or she would be clinging and dependent on others for fulfillment. Note how this does not in and of itself describe a "psychotic" individual but rather it describes traits found in many human beings living so-called normal lives in the world today. These symptoms are perfectly acceptable behaviors in certain circles. It is true that to many people the person described by these traits would be insufferable and certainly an annoyance but that individual would not necessarily be looked on as someone with a "problem" requiring psychological or psychiatric intervention. My motive for pointing out the general acceptance of this type of neurotic, at least, and possibly psychotic behavior is simply to show the level of acquiescence to diminished states with in our society today.

The Svadasthana

Traditionally known as the sexual chakra, the svdasthana chakra is located below the navel.

Nelson says of this chakra "The primary mode of second-chakra consciousness is desire, as the child gradually turns away from unlimited communion with Spirit and toward objects and people of the material world." Further he states that "Although emotions rule the consciousness of the second chakra, a kind of thinking and logic first becomes possible as a child grows toward adolescence, although it is not as disciplined and precise as that of the higher chakras. A child tends to make logical connections by linking similarities as if they were identities." Nelson points out that due to this kind of "logic" paranoia of various sorts tend to be predominant troubles for someone stuck as it were in the second chakra mentality. As Nelson puts it, in an example of the kind of thought process typical of this chakra, "The FBI follows guilty people. I feel guilty. Therefore the FBI is following me." Barbiturates, alcohol or opiates are said to "reactivate second chakra consciousness by blurring the line between fantasy and consensual reality...." The Drugs which bring relief from attacks of second chakra consciousness are said to be anitpsychotic medicines. Notice how this second chakra consciousness revolves largely around

guilt. Further reflection will bring the reader to the realization that most of the world's cursed religions rely on this level of "consciousness" to perform their floating lady act. (I.e. convincing, sleepy, lazy, twilight beings that they are anything less than Gods each and every one.) Nelson notes that a person who has regressed to this stage of consciousness sees figures of authority as either all good or all evil, every concept and notion takes on mythic proportions -- all good or all evil, with no intermediate levels. This degraded mode of thinking is responsible for many of the world's atrocities it might be noted. The careful reader should note that the "symptoms" of second chakra regression are visible in large sectors of today's society. So, as with the first chakra "symptoms", the second chakra's indicators are just as prevalent within normal society. As was pointed out in the section on the Muladhara, society accepts these atrocities, for the most part, and doesn't bother much about them. That is not to say that large scale atrocities go unrecognized by all segments of the population but consider this - there are people, who with a straight face, can say that Hitler didn't order the massacre of Jews and Homosexuals and others that he either didn't like or who got in his way. The evidence for these atrocities of Hitler's Reich are overwhelming and yet there are those who can somehow find it within themselves to totally deny it!

The Manipura

This center is located in the solar plexus and is generally known as the power chakra. The ego is intimately related to this chakra. The ego with its mission to claim ultimate ascendancy and to, in Nelson's words, "keep the psyche myopically close to the five senses and blind to Spirit." Second Grade HOOR members will note this last statement and be appropriately informed (actually a good deal better informed than Mr. Nelson but that is a different issue entirely). The point is that people who are manifesting the third chakra "symptoms" are mainly concerned with acquiring and holding power. Their methods are more often than not aggressive and violent. This is also the point, from the vantage of an aware HOOR member that the issues of "moral insanity", a term so often used in our literature and so often mis-understood, become rife. We talk of people who are morally insane and when we do picture Mr. Nelson's third chakra casualty and know the truth of the matter. Here again society accepts this kind of individual and may even encourage and honor them by purchasing their product or buying their service so that the individual becomes wealthy and thus wields more power. This process is a viscous spiral in some ways. Fortunately for the world, he or she who is on the pedestal today is likely on the shit list tomorrow.... such is the fickle nature of public opinion. It may be interesting to note that part of this process has been assisted by the emerging electronic media of the 1990's ev. Almost everyone can catch a glimpse of this chimera and even contribute in some small way to its shimmering evanescence through the power of today's electronic information distribution systems; be they satellite TV or the Internet.

Cocaine is, as Nelson puts it "A classic power drug.... which fuels the aggressiveness and exuberant acquisitiveness that characterizes a materialistic orientation to life." Therapies for a person who is out of balance with the third chakra are "psychoanalysis, which traditionally focuses on removing lower-chakra impediments to successful work and mating, and other `rational' therapies that employ cognitive strategies and intellectual insight to aid an individual to become more `mature' and effective within social hierarchies.", says Nelson.

The Anahata

The Anataha chakra is also known as the Heart chakra. This chakra is located, according to tradition, in the mid-chest region. Nelson says of this chakra "the Anahata chakra opens the heart to universal love that transcends the impetus to possess or manipulate that characterizes relationships in the second and third chakras."

Nelson has an interesting observation regarding the forth chakra personality; he says, "The aim of lower-chakra love is to quell a feeling of emptiness. But at the heart chakra, love is no longer tainted by need or craving; instead, one feels an inner abundance that saturates the self with a desire to share freely for the good of all," Thelemites in general and A.'.A.'. aspirants especially should take note of this description and contrast it to what is traditionally said concerning the Adeptus Minor in Tiphereth. One who has attained the so-called Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel is in a very similar condition and has some interesting issues to work through in this regard. Remember the Adept character in Zanonni and how his `vice' effected him. This is a poignant warning to those who have found the Lover in the yew groves of yama, here is where they who Aspire to the City of the Pyramids risk all if they succumb to the Vice of the Seperoth. In fact to merely Aspire to That they risk much.... again this is another story entirely. The drug that Dr. Nelson attributes to the Heart chakra is MDMA, Adam or XTC. Nelson says that "Appropriate therapy at the heart level is designed to increase awareness of subtle inner feelings, body states, and connectedness to our fellow humans on a deep compassionate level." Actually We in the A.'.A.'. know that it is absolutely essential to someone Aspiring to this level of awareness that they be fully conversant in the techniques of concentration, body awareness (practices like Asana and Pranayama) before the realization of such a state can be assimilated `normally'. Others are bound for trouble.

The Vishuddi

Located in the throat the vishuddi chakra traditionally rules the aspects of self-expression and inspiration. In the Qabala of Thelema Daath is indicated. Daath is usually translated as Knowledge or the false crown and is thought to be a sort of phantom sepheroth. By phantom I mean that it is not really considered to be on the Tree at all and is roughly situated in the Abyss between the Ego and the Not Ego -- Ruach and Neschama. There is also an `evil' aspect put on this false sepheroth by traditional Qabalists. The reasoning behind this attribution of evil to Daath runs thus: Daath or Knowledge is the culmination of the process of Ego. Ego claims that Knowledge is all, in other words the Crown. Ego denies that there is any state beyond Knowledge, thereby denying Understanding, Wisdom and the True Crown -- Binah, Chokmah and Kether. The True Adept realizes that the perfection of the Ego is but a tool and a Door to Understanding and to Wisdom and thereby to the True Crown. He or She uses that tool, knowledge, to bridge the gap, to leap across the Abyss which separates Self from Not Self.

Nelson gives these examples of fifth chakra drugs; "low doses of psychedelics, such as peyote or psylocybin, and marijuana, although the latter agent can also inhibit creativity because of its unfortunate propensity to diminish memory, concentration and the will." Further Nelson gives these examples of

appropriate therapies; "therapies (which) aim at disrupting the past remnants of narrow, ego-based thinking, opening the individual to direct perception of archetypal forms and enhancing awareness of long-term, cause-and-effect relationships."

The Ajna

Traditionally the Ajna chakra symbolized the third eye and is located between and just above the eyes in the forehead. Nelson calls it the "Shamanic Chakra.... awakening spirit within the domain of secret knowledge." Further he says "The primary mode of sixth-chakra consciousness is intuition, which essentially replaces observation and logic as a reliable means of apprehending reality." Ajna in a Qabalistic scheme might well encompass Binah and Chockmah. Binah, being understanding and intimately connected with the idea of intuition, fits the first part of Nelson's argument quite well. The aspect of the shaman that Nelson discusses has to do with causing things to occur at will; the Thelemite will recall immediately the definition of Magick and be satisfied that he or she is on solid ground Qabalistically if he or she associates the Ajna with the Will or Chockmah. Drugs assigned to this chakra include peyote, psilocybin mushrooms, ibogaine and ayuasca, I would add LSD and Atropine to this list. Nelson lists various "esoteric siddha yoga techniques, intensive breathing control methods, various advanced asanas, and other contemplative tactics designed to break down the last vestiges of separateness..." as methods of therapy for persons having difficulties with the sixth chakra. This, to the A.'.A.'. aspirant and or Adept, may seem naive and inadequate but from the view point of someone not acquainted with these concepts it may seem a far reaching concept. Still this concept might have some value to the A.'.A.'. Instructor who finds himself or herself confronted with a Student who suddenly breaks through to such Intuitive levels without the proper grounding. The experienced Instructor will know that the breakthrough is only a temporary state and that the aspirant will (a) remember little of it when it is gone or (b) remember just enough to get themselves into difficulty. The recommended 'therapy' might well have some value in this situation. If applied it could afford the Instructor a way to bring the Aspirant back to his or her level without serious damage and with the added benefit of affording the Aspirant some valuable insight into what lies ahead. This kind of insight can keep a student on track for many years, giving them the chance to truly attain.

The Sahasrara

The Thousand petaled Lotus, the Crown, "the Unity chakra" are some of the appellations tied to this seventh chakra. The chakra is said to lie upon the top of the head. Nelson says of the seventh chakra "The hallmark of the Sahasrara chakra.... is the mystical experience, described with remarkable similarity by saints, sages, monks, yogi, and comtemplatives throughout the ages." Nelson says that there are no drugs known to him which can duplicate the state of the seventh chakra....while this may be true the Western tradition knows of several methods to temporarily induce the state. The knowledge of this practice has been severely limited for hundreds of years and is part of what the Thelemic revolution is all about. The Book of the Law makes it quite plain that the dissemination of the practice is to be a primary goal of the Adepts in this Aeon. Liber AL makes it clear to the Adepts that the key to the revolution of the Spirit, the freedom of humanity lies in this simple practice. The practice has only to be presented in such a way as to a. keep its sanctity b. introduce its controlled practice to all.

Here ends the brief introduction to the Chakras, more information can be obtained in such books as the "Serpent Power" by A. Avalon and in "777" by Aleister Crowley. There are many books on the subject actually, the trouble is that so many of them are very woolly and unreliable.... skepticism and careful reading is advised for the most part.

THEORY OF OPERATION

The process of Spiritual development is not an easy topic to categorize. However, to understand how the rudimentary beginnings of this section can culminate in such lofty peaks it is important to think of the process as exponentially expanding. From very small initial values a number multiplied by itself increases in magnitude at an astounding rate; The Human consciousness is just such an equation. This equation is astounding in its simplicity yet manifold in its complexity. This kind of equation is also very reminiscent of fractal equations. (With very similar results; i.e. complexity on all scales of measurement developed by re-applying the output of an equation to its input. In other words, developing a function from a simple equation and through many iterations of the function plotting the results of the function as a `picture'). In one very important sense such a picture is not so much a simple chart or graph of a numerical calculation but rather it has become something in and of itself. Such a picture has taken on a life of its own in a sense and has, thus, `transcended' its origins. This idea is a nice thought model for the human consciousness. It could be said that the neurons which make up the brain group themselves and link themselves to the point where automatic interconnections become the rule and consciousness develops. Once a critical mass has been reached in this process the interconnections develop in increasingly complex ways.... thus consciousness springs from this chaotic ever developing matrix. This matrix seems to follow the model of the attractor, in that basins of attraction develop within the matrix allowing an individual to emerge; or said another way causing a monad to develop by differentiating itself from the "universal ground". Nelson talks of this differentiation in relation to the most primitive of the conscious states, that is the first chakra consciousness. It is obvious to the thoughtful reader and to the A.'.A.'. Instructor that this differentiation process takes place again and again during the process of Initiation. This process is, in fact, what is called in Thelemic literature the "natural growth of the child" and it is the model for Spiritual development or Initiation in this Aeon!

If one desires to relate the chakras to the Tree of Life then one might consider the attributes of the first chakra as partaking of the qliphoth and the last chakra as partaking of the Crown. It should be obvious that the intervening stages of development represent vast changes in powers, both cognitive and Spiritual. Once one grasps the idea of exponentially in regards the growth of human consciousness then one could begin to use this model to assist Students. There is still a problem with this model, at least intuitively, in that the stages between major trances (here I use the term Trance as Crowley uses it in "Little Essays Toward Truth") are missing. This fact makes it all the more difficult to assist students along the Way.

As stated at the outset of this paper the goal of the paper is mainly to give the A.'.A.'. Instructor another tool to help him or her assist the students in his or her charge. To this end it must be clearly recognized

that we, in this paper, are not relating to Humanities lowest common denominator but rather to the exception to the rule i.e. the person who is attempting, through Our Methods, to know themselves (and Themselves). This recognized we can eliminate one cause for mixture of the planes. We must realize that there are levels of dysfunction that an Aspirant may never suffer from e.g. an aspirant may never suffer from total regression into the first or second chakra symptoms. Such a regression might well mean the end of the usefulness of that client to the Angel associated with them. Thus we must recognize that if a Student or Aspirant manifests some trait or symptom of lower chakra consciousness that this manifestation is likely a reaction to some new problem presented on the Road to Initiation and is addressable through various methods of therapy. As a result, if this method of diagnosis is to assist us at all it will have to be specific enough to point out an area of problem as well as point to a method of control or compensation for the particular symptom. Preliminary findings indicate that this may indeed be the case but much more research should be done before the method can be accepted as sound practice. Therefore this paper should be studied by each Instructor and its methods tested cautiously, recording the results, this done we can compile those results as evidence to the validity or non-validity of the method.

The Tree of Life is more or less a linear equation. A simplistic example would be to imagine that we begin in the lowest qlipoth in the lowest of the four worlds and move ever onwards through the 10 spheres and 22 paths of each of the four worlds; finally we arrive at the Crown in Atziluth. The problem with the former example of the chakras is resolution. With so few values between the highest goal and the beginning point it is very hard to say much about one's position. With the later example of the Tree of Life one's resolution improves drastically. It is now much easier to say where an Aspirant is in his or her journey using the Tree as a model. One is still faced with the conversion of an essentially exponential phenomenon (human conscious growth), into a linear format (the Tree of Life). This conversion need not be too trying however as the qabala is equipped with a model that fits the situation quite well. This is the model of the cosmos which proposes that the four worlds are arranged thus: The world of Assiah - the material world - attributed to the qlipoth and the Kingdom, the sephiroth from the Yesod to Chesed are attributed to Yetzirah - the formative world - the sephiroth Binah and Chokmah are attributed to the world of Briah - the creative world - and lastly the sphere of Kether and the limitless light are attributed to Atziluth - the archetypal world.

As has become apparent there are two systems here, the traditional Tree of Life diagram and the Chakras, which need to become integrated if the knowledge of the Chakra system of psychological diagnosis is to have any usefulness to the A.'.A.'. Instructor. The Instructor depends on the Tree of Life system to gauge progress over all but the implications of the chakra system are that this system could help gauge progress within a Grade. More specifically the Chakra could help troubleshoot problems which arise during transits of the various Grades in the A.'.A.'. Thus making those transits more certain and more rapid.

Love is the law, love under will.

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