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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Organizational Interest Thriving in Europe-Plus a Few Learnings

This September marked the seventeenth year of the University of York’s SCT training week. Yvonne Agazarian led the Foundation group with Jale Punter as co-trainer-in-training, Ray Haddock the Intermediate Skills Training, Fran Carter the Intermediate Leadership Development track, I led the Organizational track, and Juliet Koprowska coordinated the whole of the training week. This York training week first launched regular SCT training in Europe and continues to be a key European SCT training event each year. Mark your calendar for next year, September 19-23, 2011, as it is truly a special context in which to learn and practice SCT.

Being in the role of Conference Director for the York training stimulated my thinking about the growing focus in our membership on working with organizations and about how far our system has developed in “putting SCT to work.” We first initiated organization-focused training early in SCT in Austin, yet the true emergent energy for applying SCT in organizational contexts has been, and continues to be, our European members. SCT workshops on applying SCT in organizations have been held in both Sweden and England for a number of years now and are well attended. Sweden has three licensed SCT practitioners whose emphasis is working with organizations and has established its own SCT organization (Svenska SCT-Föreningen) and England has one licensed practitioner and five in the licensing process.

As our training has developed, we have become increasingly clear on the importance of recognizing how very different the context and the goals of the organizational context are from the clinical one. For example, when the context is an organization or company, work with the process is in the service of the task; process is not the goal. This contrasts with a training group where the goal is strongly related to the process, to learn about how to take membership in an SCT group and to discover the difference between person and member systems as the group develops and emerges.

For example, in a training group or a therapy group, learning to access and deepen one’s experience of anger as energy is part of the group’s work. Exploring anger in a therapy group then frees the energy for reaching group goals. In contrast, exploring anger or aggression is not the point in an organizational work group; rather, the role in a work group is to use the knowledge and energy of one’s anger and aggression to take one’s role to support the goal of one’s context. A simple example of this is learning to convert frustration and complaints to proposals. In both contexts, SCT relates to the developmental goal of freeing energy for work, yet the pathways to the goal are different in the different contexts.

Similarly, in team development as the team moves through its phases of development, it can be useful to recognize any habitual roles that are interfering with one’s member role in order to learn how to shift back to a centered, member role. For example, learning to shift from the passive “I have to” to an active communication often restores one’s member role. Again, this contrasts with a training group where the goal is not only to discover steps for shifting out of a habitual role but also the steps for exploring the origin of it, work that is not relevant for most work contexts.

This brief highlight is a small taste of what we are all learning as we continue to take SCT to the work context.

-Susan Gantt (sgantt@systemscentered.com)

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Knowledge and Research. A primary purpose for this organization is to contribute to knowledge with the theory of living human systems and to do related research in long- and short-term change strategies.

Education and Training. A primary purpose for this organization is to continue development of methods of systems-centered education and practice and to train systems-centered practitioners to serve the community..

Community Development and Contribution. The organization will introduce SCT strategies for change to organizations, groups and individuals in private, public and clinical settings.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Members,

Welcome to another edition of the SCT News! This issue, like the ones before it, is filled with the news of our organization, the latest thinking of our founder, Yvonne Agazarian, and a thought-provoking collection of articles from our members. Let me give you an overview.

The issue begins with a fascinating article from Yvonne Agazarian about the work of Pat de Maré. In this essay, she gives us both the flavor of her personal relationship with Pat as well as insight into the power of his ideas. This article is also a perfect preamble to her special presentation at this year's Conference on how Pat's theories about the transformation of hatred into fellowship influenced her thinking about the crisis of hatred in SCT. Next we have the first of what will hopefully be a long series of *Questions and Answers* columns, in which members get to ask Yvonne their most burning questions about the Theory of Living Human Systems. Chetan Borkhetaria has come up with three doozies, including a question about what TLHS has to say about God! You will not want to miss her answer!

On to the *Theory, Research and Application* section, this issue contains three thought-provoking columns. The first piece is an article by me, comparing and contrasting the phases of system development in TLHS with the ones used in *Spiral Dynamics Integral*. This piece is longer than the average Newsletter article, so you might want to sit back, make yourself a cup of tea, and prepare yourself for some strong intellectual stimulation! The next article is by Ray Haddock about the power of feedback. In this article he tells us how the feedback that he received during his presentation at last years SCT Conference, profoundly influenced him. In this article he also helps us to understand the deep utility of the SCT concept of roles in the treatment of personality disorders. The final article in this section is from Bettie Banks. In her article, Bettie writes with great elegance about how SCT meets seven criteria for effective psychotherapy as outlined by Dr. Jay Shedler in his recent article in the *American Psychologist*.

In the rest of this issue, we have our usual *Reports and Updates* and the *Members Forum*. In this section you get the feel of SCTRI as it lives and breathes in the many Action Groups and activities that it sponsors in both the U.S. and Europe.

I hope that you enjoy this issue. If I may be so bold as to speak for the entire Newsletter Group, we had a lot of fun putting it together! I hope that it shows! As always, deep bows of gratitude go to Bettie Banks, Connie Robinson, Verena Murphy, Kathy Lum, Jan Vadell and especially to you, our members, without whom this Newsletter would simply be empty words sailing on the wind going nowhere. Without you, there would be no newsletter, and no SCTRI! So thanks for being there!

I wish you happy reading, and much peace, success and satisfaction in every area of your lives. Until our paths cross again.

-Michael Robbins (michaelrobbins@rcn.com)

THE LEGACY OF PATRICK DE MARÉ —

Pat de Maré died in 2008. He left behind him an orientation to group psychotherapy that is very particular and very important. As well as being a theoretician, Pat was also an innovator. He was deeply interested not only in small groups and large groups, but also in what he called the median group, which is discussed later in this article.

Most important to us in SCT, is Pat's understanding of hatred as potential creativity. It is through my communications with Pat that my own confidence in the importance of metabolizing the creative energy in hatred was affirmed and led to its central place in the development of systems at all levels in the hierarchy.

I first got to know Pat in the Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen in 1985. What I remember best is how much we laughed and when I reluctantly parted from him after dinner I left with warmth that is still with me as I remember him. This article has a dual goal. It is written to share the flavor of Pat's influence on the theory and practice of SCT, and second to underline the significant contribution that Pat has made with his thinking about hatred, and how his thinking supports and reinforces our SCT focus on what we call the crisis of hatred as a fulcrum event in the developmental journey all systems take towards a functional integration of our differences.

It was in London in 1990 that I had my longest talks with Pat. I was then immersed in developing a systems theory for group, and very excited that Pat also insisted that groups needed to be understood in terms of group variables and not confined to interpretations based on the more familiar psychodynamics. His major innovation in the field of group was his introduction of the median group dynamics to the more familiar small and large group dynamics. However, he dismissed, with little interest, my conviction that the small, median and large groups were more similar than different. I was thinking system isomorphy. "All groups are systems" I said, "all exist in a hierarchy. Therefore, they qualify as isomorphic systems, similar in structure and function." Pat's eyes seemed to get bluer! He lost all interest and changed the subject. Such a firm but gentle giant! It was of course, Pat's insistence on differences that led him to discriminate between the three manifestations of small, median and large groups. I on the other hand, was committed to recognizing similarities between all groups, however large or small.

Where we did discover similarity was that we both shared a life-long interest in communication and both had been influenced by Shannon (Shannon & Weaver, 1964) and Lewin (1951). My major interest was in applying Lewin's force field of driving and restraining forces to the transfer of information that would influence how groups developed. Pat's interest was more universal. It was in *Koinonia* ... "communion, fellowship, intercourse ... from the ... language Koin ... which united pre-classical Greece...belonging to everybody because

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it belonged to nobody ... *Koinonia*, implying not personal and individualistic but impersonal friendship... 'communion' as it is understood in the Greek Orthodox Church" (de Maré, 1991, pp 1-2). Pat stated that the appropriate context to develop *Koinonia* was the median group (small groups being too vulnerable to family transferences and large groups too vulnerable to chaos). Pat wondered if it might take up to ten years to establish *Koinonian* dialogue.

Ten years, for me, was too long. I insisted that by introducing certain norms of communication at the very beginning of a group, whether the group be small, median or large, all groups could develop the equivalent of his *Koinonian* communication within the first few hours of their life. I am referring here to the practice of introducing the systems-centered method of functional subgrouping at the very beginning of every group: requiring members to join each other empathically and then to build on each other's ideas (Agazarian, 1997). This, I said, would contribute to the discrimination and integration of differences which was, perhaps, both the necessary and sufficient condition for the survival, development and transformation of all group systems.

Pat was interested in the idea, but felt it to be outside the tradition of the conductor (leader). He pointed out that the group matrix, as the total communicational network, gets laid down in the course of time and gradually emerges as a result of group interactions. So whereas I was arguing that group size was not the major variable in achieving this, Pat was emphasizing that the size was a variable of great impact and that the median group (of between 12 and 20 members) was ideal for the development of "*Koinonic*" communication, being small enough to experience face to face communication, not so small that it evoked family transferences, large enough to represent society, and small enough for all members to communicate to each other.

Pat heartily endorsed the importance of hatred – which he framed as a universal variable. "Hate ... then constitutes the basis for psychic energy, which is transformed and expressed in the form of thinking dialogue and learning as distinct from an instinctual instinct. ... through the containment of hate ... the transformation of energy into the socializing process of impersonal friendship and dialogue." (de Maré, 1991, p.4.) Pat thus transformed the understanding of hatred in groups from a destructive affect into a natural, inevitable response to frustration – an energy that carries high potential for both destructive and constructive transformation.

I was also, at that time, deeply involved in understanding (and reversing) the dynamics of scapegoating in groups, which I attributed to the failure of understanding the normal human aggression that is universally aroused when confronted with unacceptable differences. I argued that by denying normal human aggression it was converted into hatred. Our challenge then is to re-convert hatred into exploratory energy, i.e., energy that requires aggression if it is to be proactive.

Commentary

Much of our attitude towards human aggression is generated by our disapproval of it, and our disapproval is directly related to our super-ego fear of our unconscious potential. There is no question that we owe a great debt to Freud for his gift to us of the unconscious. But his gift came at a price. Super-ego pathology has long been connected to a nightmare of demonic ideas – colluding with the profound fear of the unconscious that is inevitable if the unconscious is to contain Thanatos as well as Eros. What is more, the common psychodynamic understanding of hatred is closely linked to the destructive super-ego and super-ego guilt.

Freud claimed that the energy of the super-ego is derived from the id. It is at this theoretical point that Pat introduced a seminal difference. Pat's argument (that may well turn the world of psychology upside down) is that the energy of the super-ego is not derived from the id, nor is it biological, nor is hatred and super-ego guilt a necessary corollary. Whilst love is linked to Eros, hate is not linked to Thanatos. "Hate is not the adversary of Eros but the inevitable irreversible outcome of the frustration of Eros: if there is any adversary to Eros, it is ... *ananke* ... external necessity" (de Maré, 1991, p.12).

Perhaps Pat's greatest contribution is his transformation of Freudian pessimism into optimism by reversing Freud's thesis that civilization is built upon the passive renunciation of instinctual gratification. On the contrary says Pat, "it is the active frustration of hate to which the evolution of culture owes its origins ..." (de Maré, 1991, p.61) Whereas for Freud the solution is passive, for Pat it is active... "It has become ... clear to us that hate, arising out of the frustrating situation of the larger group, provides the incentive for dialogue and becomes transformed, through dialogue, into the impersonal fellowship of *Koinonia*..." (de Maré, 1991, p.4) .

We, as inheritors of the wisdom of Freud's discoveries, his theoretical interpretations of the unconscious and the derivations of the super-ego, have been left with many insights into the unconscious as well as an understanding of our vulnerability to its tyranny. Perhaps the most destructive misunderstanding is to fail to see the difference between super-ego pathology and normal human aggression. Human aggression is the potential energy fundamental to fueling the flow of energy and information between all levels of human exchange. It is also the potential energy necessary to manage the inevitable frustrations that occur in everyday life. It is only when normal human aggression is viewed through the lens of the punitive super-ego that it becomes pathological.

All in all, the contribution of Pat's that has had the most impact on me - and indeed, perhaps on the conductors and leaders of groups in the future - is his re-interpretation of super-ego hatred into the raw material for creative energy. Framing as pathological what could be otherwise interpreted as normal human conflict has important clinical consequences. For example: the exogenous depression that comes from people turning the other cheek and turning their aggression back in on themselves; the super-ego criticism of sadism and masochism that prevents the conflicts that they contain from being explored

without judgment; the anger management techniques that teach people to act nice instead of acting out, without understanding that it is not just their angry hatred that is being modified but also their living energy. Perhaps most serious of all is the acquired fear of aggression. Fear of aggression goes hand in hand with fear of feeling, and fear of feeling is too often resolved by rationalization. It may be common knowledge, but perhaps not common understanding, that feelings feel the same whether they are generated by thoughts or whether generated by our basic sensory experience of the world. From this confusion, communication norms develop that are manifested in anxiety-laden explanations of the past, present or future, repetitive stories about childhood and a basic split between good and evil. When perception is based on projection, people become enmeshed in the anguish of personalizing.

As we in SCT continue to explore the developmental issues that move us from flight, through fight, through the crisis of hatred into intimacy and integration, I feel that Pat de Maré has our back.

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Q & A – (ANSWERS BY YVONNE AGAZARIAN)

Editors note: If Yvonne's answers to Chetan's questions spark more questions for you, please send them to her at agazarian@aol.com . Understanding the Theory of Living Human Systems is a long journey! We will continue to run this column as long as there are questions to answer, which will probably be a quite a while!

Michael Robbins, Newsletter Editor

Question One from Chetan Borkhetaria

Reality is so complex that no theory can accurately represent it – have you encountered anything that doesn't quite fit into the Theory of Living Human Systems?

Interesting question, Chetan. The way I see it is that theory defines a reality by putting words to a concept. Like a blueprint for a building. Each word is then a building block – and it is made useful by defining it operationally (the particular mix of the bricks – the kind of wood, the balance of height and length and depth). Following the blueprint lets you build in reality – and when it is flawed it requires going back to the drawing board.

For example, a Theory of Living Human Systems is a blue

print. It defines a hierarchy of living human systems that are energy-organizing, goal-directed and self-correcting.

The operational definition of hierarchy is a system of systems, each one of which exists in the context of the one above, and is the context of the one below. From then on, this formula defines the laws of hierarchy. This may or may not be useful in reality. It is simply a definition which is only useful in the real world if it allows people to see or do things that they were not able to do before they conceptualized it in that way. It's useful to us in SCT because it requires us to see things from more than one perspective, thus making it less likely that we will personalize our experience or take things just personally.

The same is true for isomorphy: "all systems are similar in structure and function" (thanks to von Bertalanffy). This then allows us see every system as similar in terms of the defined "laws" or "rules" of structure (boundaries) and function (process).

Energy-organizing is defined in terms of discrimination and integration of differences (I don't remember where that came from, but I'm sure I "borrowed" it!)

Goal-directed is defined in terms of vectors (from physics – with a direction, a velocity, and a point of application that can be defined as a goal).

Self-correcting is defined in terms of a force field which, as Lewin says, is a balance of driving and restraining forces that describes how a system is kept in equilibrium. Thus, weakening the restraining force enables the system to "vector" in the direction of its goal, and increasing the restraining forces allows change in the direction away from the defined goal. The defined system goal is survival, development and transformation. In the real world, we use this blueprint to influence the way systems develop by weakening the restraining forces that are inherent to each phase. If it works, then all systems change in the direction that is useful to the goals of development.

All of these definitions make a coherent argument for describing living human systems within the confines of the theory. If you refer to the Theory Chart (available on the SCT website in the Member section under "SCT Papers"), you will discover it defines the constructs and makes the definitions operational.

Theory is not much use without research. From a researcher's point of view, every intervention we make to a system within the SCT orientation tests both the validity of the theory and the reliability of its practice.

TLHS only works if one stays inside its definitions. To go outside these definitions requires the development of a new theory: declaring a different concept and different definitions for the constructs and a different name.

The way I see it, theorizing is a game – a life-consuming, compelling game for those of us who are theoreticians. BUT, I don't know what relationship it has to whatever reality really is!!! That is up to the researchers!

Question Two from Chetan Borkhetaria

What does TLHS say about the existence of God?

Chetan – you are asking about belief in God! The short answer is that "belief" is a blueprint that tests a theory, useful if it enables one to do things, and see things, that one cannot do or see without the theory. I, with many others, am still trying to understand the long answer.

Question Three from Chetan Borkhetaria

Is it a coincidence that there are three phases of system development and also three goals: survival, development and transformation?

No indeed, Chetan - more like serendipity - the first phase is restoring survival, the second phase restores development through reworking of separation and individuation, and the third phase is the context for ongoing transformation.

THEORY, RESEARCH AND APPLICATION

SPIRAL DYNAMICS INTEGRAL AND THE THEORY OF LIVING HUMAN SYSTEMS: PART 1

-Michael Robbins (michaelrobbins@rcn.com)

Spiral Dynamics (SD) is based on Clare Graves' research into the evolution of value systems (Graves, 1971). Spiral Dynamics Integral (SDI) is a modern adaptation of Spiral Dynamics developed by Don Beck in collaboration with Ken Wilber. (Beck, 2006, Wilber 2009) This article will compare and contrast the basic theory of Spiral Dynamics Integral (not SD) with the phases of system development proposed by the Theory of Living Human Systems (TLHS) (Agazarian, 1997).

Spiral Dynamics Integral proposes that by studying the similarities and differences between value systems that emerge

in different cultures, we can uncover the essential codes underlying the development of human civilization from simple to complex. Each value system expresses a culture's most adaptive response to surviving, developing and transforming in the context of their perceived life conditions. SDI hypothesizes that by studying the dynamics that result in the emergence of these different value systems we can understand something about the spiral of human systems evolution.

SDI also hypothesizes that the waves or levels of value system development that can be discovered in cultures also apply to the development of individuals. The waves of values move between levels that focus on issues concerning autonomy and issues concerning connection or communion, in a classic dialectical pattern of thesis, antithesis, synthesis. According to SDI, the same developmental spiral that can be observed in the development of cultures can be observed at all levels of human existence, from the complex structures of a society to

the psychological development of an individual. This systems understanding of human development, which Wilber likens to a hologram (Wilber, 2005), is similar if not identical to the principle of isomorphy in the Theory of Living Human Systems. Although the development of values can be followed in individuals, in this article I will be focusing on the cultural level of value systems development.

In the first part of this two part series, I will present an overview of the first seven levels or waves of value systems uncovered by SDI (and SD), and compare and contrast them with the phases of system development in TLHS.

Agazarian proposes three levels of human system development: *authority*, *intimacy*, and *work, love and play* (Agazarian, 1997). My hypothesis is that at each level of the spiral of values system evolution proposed by SDI, human beings are confronting either their conflicts around *authority* or *intimacy* and move through progressively deeper iterations of the phases of system development. My second hypothesis is that as human beings make the jump from what SDI calls first tier, *subsistence* level value systems, to second tier, *being* level value systems, human systems are stabilizing their emotional and cognitive center of gravity in the third phase of system development: *work, love and play*. I will examine the first hypothesis in the first part of this series and the second in the next newsletter. In the second part of this series, I will also examine the Theory of Living Human Systems as a second tier theory.

Before we look at either of these hypotheses, it is important to have a basic understanding of Spiral Dynamics Integral.

An Overview of Spiral Dynamics Integral

Graves' original theory proposes an "*emergent, cyclical, double helix model of ... bio-psycho-social systems development*" (www.spiraldynamics.org). Although there are important differences between Graves original theory and SDI, there are enough similarities between SD and SDI that a deeper examination of this rather complex sentence can serve as a window to begin to understand Spiral Dynamics Integral.

"*Emergent*" refers to the observation that these "bio-psycho-social systems of development" emerge naturally as adaptive responses to the developmental tasks that all human systems face as they evolve from simple to complex. Similar to Agazarian's phases of systems development, SDI proposes that these phases of value systems development emerge naturally and can be observed empirically. Unlike SCT, SDI hypothesizes that as human system develop, new levels will continue to emerge in response to new contexts.

Each emergent value system is dependent on the level preceding it. Wilber introduced the principal of "transcend and include" (Wilber, 2005) into SDI to help understand the relationship between one level of complexity and the next. This idea is similar, if not identical, to the systems understanding of the principal of *hierarchy* (Agazarian, 1997).

The practice of Spiral Dynamics Integral tests the hypothesis that if we can understand the dynamics that underlie evolving bio-psycho-social systems and the value systems that are the expressions of these dynamics, we will better understand how to release the inherent evolutionary force that exists in all human systems. All of the practical

methods of Spiral Dynamics Integral evolve from a basic understanding of the dynamics behind evolving value systems. This project is resonant with the spirit of Agazarian's Theory of Living Human Systems (Agazarian, 1997). From the perspective of TLHS, one might propose that understanding the dynamics behind the development of value systems helps us to identify the driving and restraining forces towards the goal of the healthy development of human systems. Similar to TLHS, in SDI this development is understood to be a natural, organic process that occurs as human beings interface with their existential life conditions. It is only important to consult to this process when systems are stuck in redundant, destructive loops that inhibit the natural transitions from one wave of consciousness to the next.

"*Cyclical*" refers to the movement between systems that value the individual and systems that value the group. SDI observes that the evolution of values proceeds by ringing these two basic tones all the way up the spiral of human development. In one tone, value systems emphasize individual autonomy and furthering the agenda of the individual. In the other tone, they emphasize communion and connection and sacrificing the goals of the individual for the good of the whole. This might be understood in Agazarian's theory as a dialectic between the "person system" and the "member system" (Agazarian, 1997). This dialectic between the individual and the group is both similar and different from Agazarian's and poses some interesting theoretical questions that we will examine later.

A "*double helix model*" introduces a rather important concept. Double helix refers to the interaction between existential problems and the genetic, neurobiological possibilities of human systems. As the neurobiological possibilities of human systems interact with existential problems, different waves of value systems development unfold organically. In other words, we live both inside of the context of our brains' potential for development and integration, and inside of the environmental pressures of society and our natural environment. The interaction of these systems creates the evolution of values that SDI proposes.

The double helix also reminds us of the human gene. This reference to the genetics of cultural systems foreshadows the modern discipline of memetics that Beck and Cowan integrated into Spiral Dynamics (Beck & Cowan, 1996). Webster defines a meme as "an idea, behavior, style, or usage that spreads from person to person within a culture." The theory of memes (Dawkins, 1989) proposes that memes are the behavioral equivalent of biological genes and as such are responsive to the same pressures of natural selection and competition for survival as biological genes.

An example of a meme might be the differences in the ways that people greet each other in the Orient versus the way they greet each other in the West, i.e., a bow vs. a handshake. Although I am not aware of any studies that trace the history of these differences in customs, we can hypothesize that there was some form of evolutionary natural selection that led to this difference. (Perhaps, in the Orient, this was a way that human systems discovered how to control the transmission of disease.) The particular expressions of cultural memes are as varied as human cultures. However, according to SDI, underlying these unique expressions, or memes, are memetic

codes of values that exist across cultures.

“Bio-psycho-social systems of development” lets us know that Spiral Dynamics Integral is interested in developing an understanding that cuts across the disciplines of the biological sciences, sociology, and psychology. In Wilber’s Integral Model, this idea is expressed as the four quadrants of the subjective, inter-subjective, objective, and inter-objective dimensions (Wilber, 2009; Robbins, 2009). If SDI is correct, each level of the spiral will emerge simultaneously in the subjective, psychological dimension, the inter-subjective, social dimension, the objective, scientific, neuro-biological dimension, and the inter-objective dimension of the particular technologies that cultures use to convey energy and information.

Given the new discoveries in brain science, it is particularly interesting to note that each level of the spiral may activate a new area of the brain. According to SDI, as human value systems become progressively more complex, it is hypothesized that the human brain will also become more integrated. If this hypothesis can be fully researched and tested, it may help us to more fully understand the neuro-biological dimension of human cultural evolution. This resonates strongly with Dan Siegel’s assertion that an integrated brain, an attuned relationship and a coherent, healthy mind are all aspects of the same phenomenon (Siegel, 2007).

With this as a basic introduction to Spiral Dynamics Integral, let us now examine the spiral itself.

The Spiral Evolution of Human Bio-psycho-social Systems

Each level or wave of the spiral in SDI refers to a state of consciousness that people and cultures pass through, not to people themselves. Individuals who identify strongly with a particular level may become exemplary leaders for that level, but the individuals themselves will continue to evolve through the levels as they understand and integrate the challenges posed by each level. Each level may also be conceptualized as a wave that bleeds through into the next wave. Each wave of mastery is dependent on the wave that goes before it. As stated earlier, no level or wave disappears; it is simply transcended and included in the next. This is equally true in both individuals and in cultures.

Spiral Dynamics Integral divides the levels into first tier, second tier and third tier systems. In this article I will only address first tier value systems and the first level of the second tier. For a more complete description of all of the levels please refer to Ken Wilber’s course *“The Integral Approach”* (Wilber, 2009).

A brief word about colors. In the practice of Spiral Dynamics Integral, it is common to refer to the different levels by a color. This shorthand seems useful. As most practitioners of Spiral Dynamics Integral use this shorthand, I will do so as well. (These colors are purely arbitrary and do not have any special meaning or resonance with other systems that use colors such as the chakra system or Chinese five element theory.)

First Tier Systems

Beige – Archaic consciousness

This first level emerges as human systems confront the demands of survival in the natural world. This level emerged

approximately 100,000 years ago and is associated with the emergence of the first homo-sapiens on the planet.

At this level, human systems are confronted with the basic needs of shelter, food and survival in a threatening world. At this level there is no “self” per se. This level is concerned with the basic instinctual drive to survive as an organism. Biologically the primary level of neural activation is the brain stem. Here, the instinctual forces rule and consciousness is preoccupied with staying alive. The needs for warmth, food, and procreation are primary. In modern times, when a human system is confronted with a great calamity such as a natural disaster, a life threatening physical or mental illness, or war, a partial, temporary regression to this stage of consciousness may occur in response to the re-emergence of Beige level survival concerns. We also see this stage in infants.

Purple – Tribal Consciousness

Tribal consciousness is humanity’s first attempt to master the natural environment as a group. At this level human systems recognize that they are stronger as a group than they are individually. Life conditions are perceived to be quite threatening and consciousness interprets these realities by hypothesizing that the natural world is controlled by mysterious spiritual forces that must be placated if it is to survive. This is consciousness’ first attempt to piece together a mythology and rationale for the environment that it finds itself in. This is the level of magic and magical thinking. At this level consciousness starts to make correlations between the inner and outer world and believes that through rituals and taboos it can control the natural world and create a sense of harmony and safety.

The value system at this stage is to sacrifice the individual for the tribe, to follow tribal customs, and to respect and obey tribal elders. The particular memes that appear at this level are sacred rituals that honor the ancestors, nature spirits as well as sacred objects and places. There are also strong tribal taboos forbidding certain kinds of behaviors.

On the inter-objective dimension, the tribe learns how to survive as a group by foraging, hunting and herding and early forms of agriculture.

It is hypothesized that the average level of neurological activation at this level is in the limbic system. (McIntosh, 2007). This is not to imply that there is no access to the neo-frontal cortex, (particularly the right brain, which may also be quite involved at this level) only that the primary locus of control may be centered in the limbic system. This hypothesis needs to be rigorously tested before any conclusions can be made.

It is estimated that 5% of the world’s population is identified predominantly at the Tribal level and that they control less than 1% of the world’s wealth and political power (McIntosh, 2007). (It is important to remember that even though a portion of the world’s population may be predominantly identified at any given level, these are systems that exist in all people, everywhere. Whenever the existential problems that give rise to tribal values emerge, tribal value systems re-emerge.)

When consciousness emerges into the next wave it begins to develop a separate sense of self. Individuals who progress

into the next wave have risked separating themselves from their group and discovered that the superstitious belief that breaking the taboos of the tribe results in death or “bad luck” is not always true. This discovery of a separate self leads to the development of *warrior consciousness*. The transition to the next level of consciousness is triggered by the allure of freedom and power available for individuals in a warrior culture, rebellion against the conformity of tribal norms, the fear of death, or the attack of outsiders.

Red – Warrior Consciousness

At this level consciousness is responding to a perception that the conformity of tribal life is oppressive. The solution to the perceived life conditions of a threatening world of human and animal predators is now found in the dynamics of power. This is a dog eat dog world, and the overriding value is to be more powerful than the next guy. The priority here is to gain control and to dominate one’s environment at any cost. Leaders at this level are the members of society who can command the most loyalty by virtue of their ruthless pursuit of personal power. At this level, consciousness seeks to gratify itself and to hell with anyone else. This is also the level where personal honor is paramount and the fear of shame is most intense. We can see this consciousness acted out in gangs when a gang member is killed because he “dissed” another gang member.

On the positive side, a great deal of individual initiative and creative action is explored at this level.

In the inter-objective dimension, human systems develop the arts of weaving, metallurgy, stone architecture and calendars. The spiritual systems at this level worship Gods that have qualities of power and dominance.

It is hypothesized that the average neurological activation at this level is still in the limbic system (McIntosh, 2007).

It is estimated that approximately 20% of the world’s population has their dominant center of gravity at this level. Their estimated share of the world’s political power and wealth is 5% (McIntosh, 2007).

The fear of death, parenthood, illness or injury and the wish to belong to a culture that is secure lead to the emergence of the next level – traditional consciousness.

Blue – Traditional Consciousness

In response to the pathologies of warrior consciousness, human systems seek to create a sense of unity through bonding around a transcendent purpose. This level of consciousness perceives that an “evil” world is in need of “God’s law” to bring it back into harmony. Self-centered wishes are sacrificed to a transcendent vision of right and wrong that lends a sense of mythic order to the universe. Salvation is achieved through obedience to this mythic order. The group demands faith in the revealed truths of the particular spiritual vision espoused by the culture. Inside the safe confines of the faithful, humanity is rescued from its egocentricity and aggression. A sense of civic duty, respect for authority and morality rule.

This level is an extremely important step forward in stabilizing the project of human civilization. All successful societies have developed a strong traditional layer of consciousness. At this level humanity develops a universal code of law that is written down and based on moral principles that protect the good of the whole. A transcendent, spiritual or

mythic authority supports this sense of right and wrong.

On the down side, the pathological expression of this stage results in intolerance, dogmatism and fundamentalism. Outsiders and non-believers may be ostracized, killed or persecuted.

At this stage of development it is hypothesized that there is an increased activation of the neo-cortex with continuing influence of the limbic system. Evidence that the neo-cortex is not fully activated might be observed in the unexamined, emotionally based beliefs in a literal interpretation of scripture or mythology.

In the inter-objective dimension, human systems fully develop the art of writing, legal systems, centralized political authority, the wheel, and elaborate spiritual practices and rituals.

This value system is extremely powerful in the world today with an estimated 55% of the world’s population predominantly identified at this stage controlling 25% of the world’s wealth and political power (McIntosh, 2007).

As consciousness begins to recognize the conformity and chauvinism that arise from the conviction that one’s group knows the “Truth,” it begins to question the basic tenets of the traditional value system. As human systems move through this level to the next, they begin to develop a scientific method of inquiry into the nature of reality.

Orange - Modernist Consciousness

Modernist consciousness heralds the triumph of reason over mythology. We can see various beginning forms of modernist consciousness historically over the past 2,500 years in times such as the Golden Age of ancient Greece, as well as in parts of ancient Chinese, Islamic, and Indian history. However it is not until the European Renaissance, which culminates in the Enlightenment of the 17th and 18th centuries, that modernist consciousness emerges in a sustainable form.

Even though modernist consciousness has been around in a stable and sustainable form for centuries, there is still a vigorous culture war being waged today between the modernist and traditional wave of consciousness. Examples of this are easy to point to, such as the struggle between fundamentalist religion and scientific research or the political polarization in the US between the “red” states and the “blue” ones.

With the birth of modernism we see major advances in the areas of philosophy, logic, art, mathematics and politics. The neo-cortex, predominantly the left-brain, is now available to human consciousness and humanity dives into researching and understanding the world with a revolutionary sense of objectivity and empiricism. The dogmatic worldview of traditional, mythological consciousness is radically questioned and modern scientific research is born. Consciousness shifts back to an emphasis on the agenda of the individual and achieving the “good life” through science, technology and competition for the most ingenious solutions to practical problems. Individuals who are living inside the modernist world-view are extremely competitive, pragmatic, autonomous and independent. Achievement is based on merit and the sky is the limit.

In the inter-objective dimension, human systems develop the art of scientific inquiry, advanced mathematics, reason

and logic, and advanced industrial, transportation and communication technologies.

On the down side, this stage can be exploitive, unscrupulous, and greedy. The pathological expression of modernist consciousness is the driving force behind the corporate rape of our natural resources. An unhealthy expression of modernist consciousness can also lead to a form of reductionism that denies the realities of inner life. Everything must be quantifiable, observable and empirically based to pass the rigors of narrowly defined scientific criterion for truth and relevance. This minimizing of the subjective, inner life leads to the ills of alienation and isolation that we see so often in modern society. These pathologies of modernism ultimately lead consciousness to develop into the next stage, "post-modernism."

According to SDI, approximately 15% of the world's population has their primary identification in the modernist wave of consciousness. They control 60% of the world's wealth and political power (McIntosh, 2007).

Green - Post-modern Consciousness

Post-modern consciousness is exemplified by the culture of the 1960's. The perceived life conditions are of an exploitive, corrupt, corporate hierarchy that is systematically degrading our natural resources and fostering a shallow, self-centered materialism. Post-modernism celebrates the values of inclusion, consensus, multiculturalism and spiritual diversity. It also gives birth to the personal growth movement, sensitivity training, and environmentalism. Post-modernism's contribution to the spiral is a world-centric sense of morality, an increased responsibility for the planet and all of the people that live on it, as well as a renewed creativity and spiritual freedom. Post modernism also celebrates the feminine in many forms. This serves as an antidote to the male dominated values of modernism.

On the negative side, post-modernism fosters a kind of groovy narcissism and value relativism that flattens out any sense of verticality in the spiral. By welcoming everything, it fails to recognize real differences in levels of complexity. Paradoxically, even though proponents of post-modernism espouse a sense of universal acceptance, they usually have contempt for the contributions of both the modernist and traditional levels of consciousness. Post-modernism can throw the baby out with the bathwater in its search for the Garden of Eden.

In the inter-objective dimension, human beings develop constructivist criticism, non-violent resistance, post-modern art, music and poetry, and there is a wide dissemination of mystical and spiritual practices without the dogmatism of traditional religious structures. It is hypothesized that people in the post-modern wave of consciousness are mostly right brain dominated.

It is estimated that only 5% or less of the world's population are living in the post-modern layer of consciousness and that they control 10% of the world's wealth and political power (McIntosh, 2007).

The pathologies of post-modern consciousness lead to a momentous jump in consciousness. The next level to emerge is so qualitatively different from everything that went before it that SDI identifies it as a whole new tier. SDI hypothesizes

that the first tier is focused on *subsistence* and *survival* and that the second tier is focused on being. In this article, I will only examine the first level of second tier consciousness, Integral Consciousness.

Second Tier

Yellow – Integral Consciousness

As human systems come to recognize that post-modernism, for all of its wonderful idealism, fails to offer realistic solutions to the world's problems, a quantum leap in consciousness occurs. Prior to this level, each layer is held in a strong dynamic tension and opposition to the layer that precedes it. Integral Consciousness is the first layer to value the contributions of all of the levels of the spiral. Unlike post-modernism, Integral consciousness values the gifts of every previous level without flattening the spiral into a value relativism that denies the progress of human systems evolution. The reality of hierarchy and differences in levels of complexity and inclusiveness is honored without making lower levels of the spiral wrong. Integral consciousness gives birth to systems thinking and develops a complex understanding of the necessity of every level of the spiral. The world-centric morality of post-modernism is made practical and the culture war between the blue, orange and green value systems is overcome. Integral Consciousness retains all of the technical know-how of the orange wave with none of its egocentricity or greed. As systems thinking takes root, a deep appreciation for the dialectical process of human evolution emerges. Consciousness succeeds in holding both sides of paradoxical truths by seeing a larger perspective. Individuals may become "spiral wizards" contributing to the healthy growth of the spiral and shoring up the excesses and distortions of each layer wherever they encounter them.

At this layer of awareness consciousness shifts back to the individual but with a crucial difference. Individuals are now each responsible for their contribution to the good of the whole. The value of inner discipline and the capacity to contain and use one's individual power in the service of the whole emerges. The politics of blame are seen as useless and pragmatic solutions are highly valued. Functionality is prized above titles and this value system rewards whoever has the knowledge and capacity to solve a problem rather than whoever has the most impressive degree.

There is also a new insight into the importance of the internal universe and the consequences of inner choices on the outer world. For the first time, the streams of science and spirituality begin to collaborate with each other in a profound way and spiritual technologies are researched empirically and found to have a profound contribution to human health and happiness.

It is hypothesized that neurologically, for the first time the left and right neo-cortex become integrated in a stable and coherent way.

In the inter-objective dimension, the key technologies that are developed at this level are systems science, dialectical evaluation, the global systems economy, and spiritual practice.

On the down side, there can still be a sense of elitism and aloofness in respect to people who are identified at lower layers of the spiral. Because this is a self-oriented wave of consciousness, there can be a tendency for people identified at

this level to lose connection with a larger group of like-minded people in their brilliant practice of “spiral wizardry.”

It is estimated that only 1% of humanity is living in this layer and that they control only 1% of the world’s wealth and political power (Mcintosh, 2007). However, this may be rapidly changing.

Comparing and Contrasting Spiral Dynamics Integral with the Theory of Living Human Systems

Spiral Dynamics Integral and Agazarian’s Theory of Living Human Systems (TLHS) have much in common. They both appreciate that human systems develop from simple to complex. They both see the evolution of human systems as proceeding through a process of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. (An example of this in TLHS, is compliance, defiance, co-operation.) They also both hypothesize that by empirically studying the natural emergence of different structures in the development of human systems we may develop a more skillful capacity to release the inherent drive towards systems evolution. Both systems seek to create opportunities for growth by (in the language of TLHS) reducing the restraining forces to human systems evolution as opposed to increasing the driving forces or “pushing” the river of human systems evolution.

The particular way that each theory conceptualizes the phases of system development is quite different. TLHS hypothesizes that all human systems naturally move through three phases of development: authority, intimacy, and work, love and play. SDI proposes the spiral of development that I have just outlined. Is there a way to integrate these two understandings of the phases of system development? Here is one possibility.

At each phase of the spiral that SDI proposes, there is a struggle between the individual and the group that is resolved at progressively greater degrees of complexity. This tension between the individual and the group, is a struggle that SDI follows all the way up the spiral of consciousness. If we look at the spiral from the point of view of TLHS, we could reframe the conflicts between the individual and the group as conflicts around authority and intimacy. From this perspective, we could hypothesize that Agazarian’s phases of system development are re-occurring in progressively more nuanced iterations as the spiral evolves. Lets flesh out this idea.

According to TLHS, in the stage of authority, individuals must resolve their issues with giving and taking authority, learn how to contain their frustration and aggression, and resolve the compliant and defiant roles that keep them stuck in redundant loops of awareness. In other words, they have to learn how to take responsibility for themselves in the context of their relationships. In SDI, each “self-centered” level of the spiral might be understood as a confrontation with authority issues at higher degrees of complexity. In the red level, individuals have to learn how to contain their physical power and aggression. In the orange level, individuals have to learn how to contain their mental power and aggression. As individuals become capable of containing their propensity to act out their issues around power and aggression, they can then take responsibility for their contribution to the good of the whole. In SDI this is the requirement for membership in the Integral level. Conversely, if we look at TLHS and its systems-centered practice through

the lens of SDI, we might hypothesize that a systems-centered training is practice for the Integral wave of systems development proposed by SDI. In the next installment of this article, I will examine this hypothesis more directly.

Similarly, from the perspective of TLHS, we could say that at each group-centered level of the spiral, human systems are confronting their conflicts around intimacy at higher levels of complexity. Each group-centered wave begins in the phase of enchantment and eventually transforms into disenchantment. As individuals exit each group-centered wave, they become disenchanted with the costs of subscribing to the particular, limited assumptions and values of that level. At the purple level, the protection and security of the sacred canopy of the tribe is felt to be oppressive. In the blue wave, the “revealed”, transcendent truths that have brought order to a chaotic world are brought under the scrutiny of an emerging scientific consciousness. At each layer, awareness begins to question the assumptions that are the requirements for membership in that level. The cost of security in the group eventually becomes too high. As individuals become disenchanted and transcend these assumptions they become pathfinders for the next wave of the spiral. If we look at systems-centered practice through the lens of SDI, we might hypothesize that it is training for holding the paradoxes of being both together and alone in a group at each level of the spiral and containing differences that at first seem too different.

From the perspective of SDI, it seems to me that Agazarian’s theory is clearly a second tier theory of human systems development. As such, my opinion is that it has a powerful contribution to make to the evolution of the spiral. In particular, I think that it offers a technology, through functional sub-grouping, to resolve the tension between the individual and the group at each level of the spiral. The systems-centered method of functional sub-grouping could provide an accelerant that would be helpful in containing and resolving the paradoxical truths that are held by the different levels of the spiral. The paradoxical nature of truth, i.e., everything is both true and not true simultaneously depending on the context, must be contained if we are to continue to evolve as individuals and as groups. One might frame both SDI and TLHS as theories that teach us how to hold paradoxical truths. The more differences that we contain, the greater our development, transformation and contribution to the spiral.

It is only when the spiral reaches the second tier that the paradoxical truths around authority and intimacy, autonomy and communion, are resolved enough that they are no longer polarizing human consciousness. The integration of these fundamental polarities in human development allows a tremendous amount of energy to be freed up. This energy and creativity can now be used in the service of solving human problems which will inexorably lead to the emergence of the next wave of consciousness. Throughout the spiral that SDI proposes, the dynamics of the phases of system development that TLHS proposes seem apparent. My hypothesis is that as each iteration of these dynamics is completed, there is a deepening of the human potential to live in Agazarian’s third phase of system development: *work, love and play*. In the next article in this series I will explore this hypothesis further. I will also explore second tier value systems in more depth and the

reasons why I believe that TLHS is a second tier theory.

I would welcome a dialogue about this, particularly from any members of our community who have studied Spiral Dynamics Integral and/or Ken Wilber's work.

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LEARNINGS FROM PRESENTING: THE VALUE OF FEEDBACK

-Ray Haddock (rayhad@doctors.org.uk)

I want to share an experience from the SCT 2010 Conference in Philadelphia illustrating the value of presenting one's ideas to peers. The experience demonstrates that the way in which we learn to give specific feedback in systems-centered contexts was driving in changing how I apply SCT in my clinical group practice.

This short piece is also giving feedback to those who gave me a particular piece of feedback. I have discovered over the years in relation to learning from SCT events that I never really know what I have learned until I go back to my clinical or training practice.

Some Background

The presentation was on using the concept of role as a way to understand and treat personality disorder. I had been thinking about this for a long time and had given a presentation on some of my initial ideas 3 years ago to an audience of trainers and trainees in psychiatry. It was met with politeness and a little engagement but not much more. I have continued to think about and work with the idea since then, paying attention in my day to day clinical and consultation work to what made sense and what seemed to make a difference. Without fully realizing it, I refined my original thinking by incorporating the development of role work in the SCT system. I used the concept of role and linking this to the diagnostic criteria for personality

disorder, what we know about human development and what we are learning about the brain and evolution. This enabled me to translate the notion of personality disorder, as something that seemed difficult to diagnose and understand let alone treat, into something that made sense to me. By using a Theory of Living Human Systems and its application in SCT, I could then make useful interventions.

The day to day challenge that faces me as a clinician is how to attune to patients with chronic and recurring difficulties and symptoms that are pervasive and often generate the predominant dynamic in the therapy relationship. For example, one patient who dissociated into a terrified state, triggered terror in me with an impulse to do anything to get her to stop. Another who had a very pervasive "outrage role" would trigger fear or my own outrage and a very powerful "Yes-But" communication which fueled the outrage. I learned to avoid this by attuning to him so that I did not bring in difference, as any difference immediately triggered the role.

This means that even though the SCT skills can be applied in the early stages of therapy they may also be being applied to the symptoms within the old role itself. Thus with the patient with the outrage role, I could attune to his outrage and his sense of hurt and this would contain the energy. It was not possible to undo the outrage or to alter his sense of entitlement to his (out) rage at anyone or thing he perceived as not understanding his difficulties and adapting to them. [This is consistent with the findings in the case study using SCT to treat General Anxiety Disorder (Ladden et al, 2007)].

A Theory of Living Human System understanding with its SCT methods changed my ambivalence towards a diagnosis of personality disorder because, by using concepts from the theory and methods, there is a way to approach treatment and management that normalizes the whole process and allows for hypotheses about interventions that either increase or decrease boundary permeability.

It was in this spirit, plus my enthusiasm borne out of experience for using SCT clinically, that I put in my proposal for a conference presentation.

There were two angles; one was understanding personality using the concept of role. The second was using this concept in treatment and management, including working with the whole system as the therapeutic context. (see Diagram 1)

I deliberately presented my ideas as exploratory hypotheses and used diagrams of roles to illustrate my thoughts. The experience of working with the participants as colleagues was itself a delightful and rich experience.

Now the Feedback and its Impact

The feedback was simple and given independently by a number of participants

"I really liked the diagrams. They made the concept really clear."

Of course there is always pleasure in receiving such feedback. However the full impact did not emerge until my first task back at work: leading one of my long term clinical groups.

The group crossed the boundary with turbulence from the break and it was clear, as the first member began to talk, that

she was in an old role, recognized it, but was stuck in it. As the group explored this, the energy gradually dropped and I realized they were struggling to grasp the implication of being stuck in old roles and what happens to the functioning, lively parts of the self. It was at this point, I remembered the feedback about diagrams. I therefore suggested to the group that I draw a diagram to see if this helped, this aroused their curiosity immediately and the energy began to rise.

I jumped up, got the pens, and drew some circles on the flip chart similar to those presented at the Conference (see Diagram 1).

The members immediately grasped what was happening to them when they got stuck in old roles, and their energy and curiosity increased enormously to learn more. Then, building on the energy in the group, rather than taking them only verbally through the steps of identifying an old role (Agazarian, 2007), I drew up a simple table (see Table 1). One member then agreed to go through the table identifying the different elements of an old role. From this we built a deep and poignant exploration of the origin of the role (see Table 1). Other members worked along and before we finished we were able to bring in some aspects of their roles as well.

There was a lot of satisfaction in the group with the work. I acknowledged I had also moved out of an old role in which I did not draw diagrams in a therapy group! This same process was repeated in another therapy group and was used explicitly in a short term SCT psycho-educational group in a session on “More work on roles.” The feedback from patient members has been universally enthusiastic and a number have already explicitly started to take on the task of working to take the alternative path to the old role. For example, one member described a predominant old role and said she could see this now and she will work to get out of the role and stay out “whatever it takes!”

With another group I adapted from this a simple template for identifying roles and role locks as a step in beginning the separation from the old role (see table 2).

This group has also noted a change in me as their leader! (My hypothesis is that the change has enabled a shift in a group-leader role lock.) This has freed the group to pick each other up on their old role behaviors and construct implicit force fields on changing the roles. In the months since this “intervention” we have in fact only occasionally used the same templates; however members in both long term groups are much more often working co-operatively with each other. They give and take feedback with little turbulence and a willingness to consider the feedback and/or explore their reactions to it. They also bring in recognition of old role patterns from their lives to work on in the group.

My Surprises, Learnings, Satisfactions, Dissatisfactions and Discoveries?

Surprises - I surprised myself with what I did.

Satisfactions - I was satisfied at how powerful the simple feedback was.

Learnings - many that I hope are evident in the above narrative a big one is to “try it when it fits”.

Dissatisfactions - I would have liked more time discussing with those in the workshop (A next step is to look at repeating this workshop and changing the design).

Not letting the participants, particularly those who gave

feedback, experience the impact of their feedback - This paper is my next step.

Not giving as much “good” feedback as I could - this is ongoing work.

Gratitudes - to all those who have trained me, trainers, peers, workshop participants, trainees, friends and most of all my patients.

Table 1: Template for Recognizing Old Role Patterns

(Both tables adapted from Agazarian, 2007)

Recognizing Old Role Patterns Patient A

| | |
|--|---|
| Thoughts [when in the old role] | I can't think obsessing fantasies Confusion |
| Behaviour [when in the old role] | Keep contact Be nice |
| Feelings [when in the old role] | Change rapidly |
| How I See Myself [when in the old role] | De-selfed Small |
| Beliefs/Values [when in the old role] | Cultural e.g. (Microsoft Network) i.e. I have to behave nicely on MSN Him not me is important |

Table 2: One up/One down role lock - an actual example completed in the group

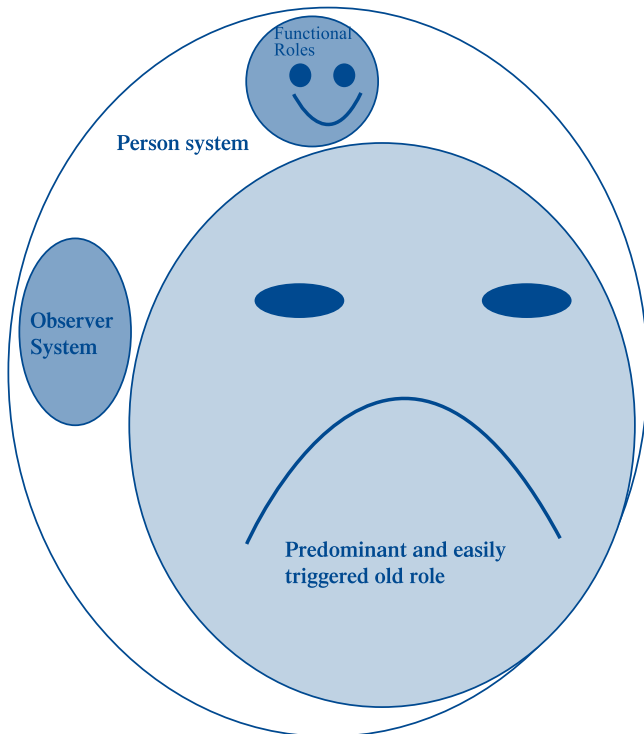
| | |
|--|---|
| Trigger | Criticism - Tone of voice - Out of blue |
| One up/ One Down? | One Down/ belittled |
| Compliant/Defiant? | Defiant (compliant) |
| Thinking [when in the old role] | Confusion . predictions looking at other persons view of me - mind reads |
| Feeling [when in the old role] | Fear/disappointment Anger |
| Behaviours [when in the old role] | Explaining/rationalizing Crying |
| How do you see other person [when in the old role] | Angry, unreasonable Narrow minded Cruel, Harsh Cut-off, Not available Frightening |

[Tables 1 & 2: words in square brackets added for clarity]

Diagram conceptualizing personality disorder in terms of the SCT understanding of “old roles”

The diagram shows a simple representation of how a personality disorder can be conceptualized as an easily triggered and predominant old role being the main role of interaction with the world and thus powerfully inducing role/role lock responses in others.

The large circle represents the whole person system containing the potential for functional roles, old roles and the observing (self, other and context) system. The old role is hypothesized as pervasive and/or easily triggered either by many different or very common triggers. This means it is present much of the time.



Working with this as the hypothesis, suggests interventions that we might use to open system boundaries and the potential for change. One important intervention is to be aware of the role inducement and contain one's own responses, switch on curiosity and consider the goal of the inducement in the system. What this is also bringing in to the system is the observing system which is essential if there is to be an opening of the old role boundaries. As well as this, “joining,” the old role wherever possible and normalizing, depathologizing and humanizing, thus attuning to the person rather than the old role. Developing the observing system in the patient/client is the third intervention. One of the simple ways to begin this is by working to make the discrimination between thinking and feeling and the discrimination of emotional responses to the here and now reality from those generated by thoughts. This usually has to be done in small steps, repeatedly. Any fork-in-the-road that can be identified and brought into the present is also a powerful intervention. For example if someone has the impulse to leave

the session, completely support their free choice to do so and present the fork to explore the impulse, the trigger, what they want to get away from or what they want to move towards.

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THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING*

-Bettie S. Banks (betsbanks@mindspring.com)

*A 17th century proverb, "the proof of the pudding is in the eating," frequently shortened to the above title and meaning that the judgment of quality is in the testing of it.

It is no small matter to be the object of derision, to be denigrated by the scientific community, to have one's professional schools close or no longer teach that which once was treasured. It requires huge determination to face the ill wind and shoulder on with faith in what one sees with one's eyes and heart. With the February-March 2010 publication of Jonathan Shedler's seminal article, *The Efficacy of Psychodynamic Psychotherapy in American Psychologist*, the pendulum has begun its slow swing back from the edges of the extreme. The effectiveness of psychodynamic psychotherapy is being demonstrated in more and more sophisticated research, allowing the practitioner once again to hold his head high in his community.

According to Dr. Shedler (Shedler, 2010) there are seven characteristics of the process and technique of psychodynamic psychotherapy that are reliable indicators of effectiveness. They are: (1) Focus on affect and expression of emotion; (2) Exploration of attempts to avoid distressing thoughts and feelings; (3) Identification of recurring themes and patterns; (4) Discussion of past experience (developmental focus); (5) Focus on interpersonal relations; (6) Focus on the therapy relationship; and (7) Exploration of fantasy life.

Because Yvonne Agazarian's background is in analysis, the forerunner of psychodynamic psychotherapy, there is a good deal of crossover between the theoretical schools as well as important differences. In this paper, we are assuming familiarity with these similarities and differences and will examine the process and techniques of systems-centered psychotherapy against the backdrop of the stated aspects of effective psychotherapy. Each characteristic will be explored individually. In addition, we will explore the goals and treatment outcome of systems-centered psychotherapy, an essential exercise in the world of documented efficacy that is the standard today.

Focus on Affect and Expression of Emotion

One characteristic of effective psychotherapy is the focus on affect and the expression of emotion. The patient is encouraged to explore, express and discuss his feelings as they arise, even when they seem unacceptable or contradictory. Effort is put into helping the patient recognize and not censor his feelings. The goal is emotional insight rather than intellectual insight. Intellectual insight can be experienced as rewarding to the person but it is rarely conducive to change in either symptoms or behavior.

A patient in systems-centered psychotherapy has a slightly different task, actually a preliminary task to the expression of emotion. This task is to learn to discriminate between the feelings that arise from a thought (constructed reality) and feelings that arise from actual perception of reality. People are adept at constructing reality, viewing the world from their

perspective based on past experience. While this perspective may have been formed by reality at one time, frequently it is not true for the present reality. For example, a person might think another person holds certain thoughts about him based on an argument in the past, yet when he checks this out, finds that his assumptions are not true at all. Another example of constructed reality is the projection of outcomes, usually negative, into the future. The person has no actual way of predicting what the outcome of this particular event might be regardless of his past experience. In truth, the outcome could go in an entirely different direction than what is imagined.

Once the patient has mastered the task of discriminating between feelings that have been aroused by constructed realities and those that arise from actual perception, then he is in a position to explore the feelings that are surfacing in the current reality. The stage is set for exploration at the edge of the unknown. The patient is asked to pay attention to stirrings located in his body and to explore his experience rather than attempt to explain it. Explanations are another form of constructed reality. They are stories we conceive in order to make sense of our world and that keeps us from discovering that which we do not know. In other words, the stories we recite to explain ourselves state only the constructed reality and do not reveal anything that is new or unknown. We rob ourselves of our surprises and discoveries. This insistence on the differentiation between what a patient might think he feels and what he actually perceives in his current reality as feeling is crucial. Results of research on the brain that have emerged in the past fifteen years have demonstrated that the brain can make no distinction between a thought of a feeling and a genuine emotion. When the discrimination is made between what we have constructed by our thoughts and what we actually perceive in reality, there is clarity.

On this aspect of effectiveness, systems-centered psychotherapy stands up well.

Exploration of Attempts to Avoid Distressing Thoughts and Feelings

Avoidance of pain is a normal phenomenon and in therapy it may be attempted through physical means such as tardiness or missing appointments or through verbal means such as changing the subject or a listing of external events in the life of the patient. To meet this criterion of effectiveness, the psychotherapist brings these maneuvers up with the patient in order to highlight both the fact of his avoidance and to examine the material that is being avoided. By doing this, the patient is assisted in getting to that which is psychologically meaningful and consequently closer to the roots of his distress.

In systems-centered psychotherapy the modification of the defensive system is primary. All attempts to avoid or resist painful feelings are considered grist for the mill. Defenses are often recognized by actions or verbal behaviors and are modified accordingly. For example, if a patient makes a comment that draws attention outside of the room, this will immediately be noted and the patient asked what the comment helped him to avoid. He can often get a clue from his remembrance of the last thing that was said before his mind went out the window. Defenses are seen as being related to the level of development in the patient and consequently are addressed in a sequential

manner. This allows the therapeutic intervention to be made at a time when the patient can best accept it; timing is deemed essential in order for the modification of the defense to be successful. Addressing distressing thoughts and feelings is considered essential work, and the patient is taught skills to help him modify his response to these disturbances. In other words, the goal is not just to relieve the symptom but to teach techniques that will be available for utilization in every-day life. Patients learn that they do not have to live their lives traumatized by anxiety or deadened by depression. They have in their tool boxes what they need to help themselves and, with practice, can become quite adept at changing their thinking, feelings and behavior.

In systems-centered psychotherapy, defensive patterns typically used to avoid distress are brought to immediate attention and addressed by teaching exercises to help the patient take control of her life. The approach meets this criterion for effective psychotherapy.

Identification of Recurring Themes and Patterns

The psychodynamic psychotherapist helps the patient look for and understand patterns in behavior and in the way he thinks or views himself that contribute to his discomfort. For example, people often choose the same type of person over and over in relationships. A woman, wishing to marry, consistently may seek out a man who is unavailable, or a man, seeking warmth and nurture from a woman, may choose a person who is distant and unapproachable. Identifying and examining these recurring themes is an essential part of the therapist's task.

The systems-centered psychotherapist invokes the concept of roles and role locks to help understand patterns as helpful constructs. A role is a habitual way of viewing the world and the self, as well as a typical way of behaving in the world. A patient is asked to notice his behavior or attitude and give it a name, usually a simple name based on childhood experience. This can be accomplished with awareness of a familiar physical posture or turn of the head or even speech patterns. Movements of the feet or legs or fingers are also common indicators of the assumption of a role. For example, a patient may name an identified posture "Little sad me," a childhood name for a current state. The patient is then asked to explore this role to see if it is familiar and what she can learn from it. It is from the exploration of these roles that patterns of thought and behavior are gleaned.

Role locks are the dynamics that not only draw one person to the other, but lock them in endless repetitions of whatever the pattern between them has become. A role lock is triggered when one part of a dyad does or says something that elicits a complementary or contrasting response from the other part of the dyad. For example, one person may say that the cheaper battery recommended by the other is not approved by the computer maker. If there is a role lock of blame/anger in the system, the person will be heard as blaming, and the other will be furious and vow never to recommend anything again. If there is no role lock, the other person may simply take the statement as a piece of information and inquire if the cheaper battery will still work or if it needs to be returned, in which case he can express regret. Roles and role locks are useful ways

of conceptualizing patterns and recurrent themes.

Systems-centered psychotherapy is certainly sufficient in this aspect of effective psychotherapy.

Discussion of Past Experience (Developmental Focus)

Since we are a sum total of our past and present experience, the patient in psychodynamic psychotherapy is asked to reveal his past experiences and to explore significant relationships in the past in order to determine just how these experiences and relationships have impacted the person and dictated his current relationships and behavior. The goal of this exploration is to free the patient from such influence as much as possible, and the hope is that the patient has more knowledge and skill now in order to cope with what was once overwhelming.

The systems-centered patient delves into the past as a part of the exploration of the role she currently finds herself enacting or the role lock in which she is engaged. The patient seeks to remember all of the circumstances at the initiation of the role, not only the context and the players, but also the actual problem that the patient was attempting to resolve with this particular behavior. More often than not, in childhood, roles are invented as a means of coping with a family dynamic, and the role is likely to be effective in the family at that time and in those circumstances. As the patient sees how this has worked to her advantage and possibly to the advantage of the entire family, she can then determine if this solution is helpful in the current context and with the current people. If not, she is now free to create the desired changes.

Thus, it can be seen that systems-centered therapy fulfills the requirement of past exploration.

Focus on Interpersonal Relations

Attachment issues and object relations are stressed in psychodynamic psychotherapy. The patient is asked to review his early relationships and explore his attachment to primary figures as a way of understanding how and if needs were met and with what sort of attunement. Patterns developed in these early years often forecast problems in interpersonal relationships in the present.

The patient in systems-centered psychotherapy explores early attachments again in the context of examining roles. The attunement of the therapist is considered critical in this often difficult exploration. The role locks that arise are often road maps to early experiences of mis-attunement or problematic attachment. The more the patient can come to grips with her early experience and contrast and compare it with the current reality, the more readily is she able to bring her full self into the present. Old roles bind the person and prevent her from responding freely to the experience of the moment. As old roles are resolved the person finds that she can see with new eyes and, free of her bonds, can explore her moment to moment experience with the therapist. At this point the patient has shifted from the authority phase into the intimacy phase and can experience a whole new way of being. It is often exciting to feel so alive and free.

The systems-centered approach meets this criterion for effective psychotherapy.

Focus on the Therapy Relationship

The patient in psychodynamic psychotherapy is asked to speak truthfully about her reactions and responses to her therapist, as in this relationship, possibly more than any other; all of the patient's patterns of relating and attitudes are likely to emerge. Transference and counter-transference issues are examined closely and extensively. In this context there is the opportunity, not only to see and discover issues in relationships, but to work them through to resolution in the present. Thus, the patient will have the experience of having issues resolved in ways that are different from his experience in the past, an opportunity that is healing in the current relationship as well as for the relationships from the past. Just the experience of alternative ways of managing is helpful.

The patient in systems-centered psychotherapy is not only asked to speak out about his reactions and responses to the therapist, but also to hold the therapist responsible for things he feels angry about. For example, a patient may feel angry about the slowness of the elevator to the office. He is asked to direct his anger toward the therapist. He may demur, complaining that the request is nonsense, to which the therapist reminds him that this is his office and that he is ultimately responsible for choosing an office with a slow elevator. The therapist continues to take responsibility for the complaint until the patient can express the anger directly and learn to manage his emotions without either going underground or erupting. The idea in systems-centered psychotherapy is to bring issues into the present and between the two persons involved. Another example speaks more to the issue of expressing uncomfortable feelings about the therapist directly to him in the moment. The patient is encouraged to speak his feelings about his therapist or about something his therapist has said or done that perhaps didn't sit well. The therapist accepts neutrally whatever is said, giving the patient the experience of dealing with an issue directly. The present reality is the focus.

This aspect of effective psychotherapy requires that the focus be in the here-and-now, a particular emphasis in the systems-centered approach also.

Exploration of Fantasy Life

The patient in psychodynamic psychotherapy is encouraged to say whatever is on his mind without attempts to censor or control. This free association or use of stream of consciousness is a rich source of information. The idea is that there is richness in the fantasy life of the patient that can be mined to aid in understanding the person's views of his world and of himself in his world. Dreams, daydreams, wishes and fears are all fodder for discovery of how the person creates meaning in his life or how he avoids certain aspects of living and loving. The goal is to find a greater capacity for living life to the fullest degree possible for the individual.

Free association and stream of consciousness are not the focus of the systems-centered psychotherapist although nothing that is brought up for exploration is dismissed out of hand. For example, fears generally come up when a patient is struggling with anxiety. Teaching relevant skills to handle anxiety is the primary goal so that the patient becomes equipped to recognize the difference between past and present reality and to modify his emotional response to the fear accordingly. Another example is in the handling of fantasy. Fantasy responses usually come up in explorations of issues, and again there is an effort to ground the fantasy in present reality and current context. An example might be the ruminations of a patient over some expected outcome of an action. He might decide that he cannot take that particular action because of his expectations. In that case, the therapist will ask him to state the facts of the matter as he knows them and is taught how his fantasies are actually negative predictions and are hindering his discrimination of what is real.

Goals of Effective Psychotherapy

The over-riding goal of effective psychotherapy is far more ambitious than simply behavior modification or symptom alleviation. The goal is to help the patient change his view of his world and of himself in that world. It is about the manner in which he interprets the world and makes meaning for himself, how he goes about the business of his life, and how he exercises his full potential for work and love. To have genuinely successful treatment, the patient must not only get rid of that which hindered him, but also add those things which enhance his capacity for whatever he seeks to achieve.

The systems-centered approach has been shown to do this. Not only is there increasing solid research to substantiate this claim, but there is evidence in what we see with our eyes and hearts. People change. They change in ways we never thought possible. People learn to manage bouts of depression and to rid themselves of anxiety that has been a hallmark of their lives. Rather than fly into rants of outrage, people have learned to go inside until they find the genuine source of their anger. They recognize that outrage is indulgent and a defense against anger, which gets them nowhere. People have learned to handle their grief and to listen to others' without interfering with overly sympathetic remarks or distancing from the pain. Psychotherapy is decidedly effective, and systems-centered psychotherapy is one of the proven approaches. At last the pendulum has begun its sweep away from denigration and despair, and our work is regaining its position of respect in the healing arts.

References

Shedler, J (2010) The efficacy of psychodynamic psychotherapy. *American Psychologist*. (65), 2, 98-109.

SYSTEMS-CENTERED® TRAINING PROGRAM

SCT TRAINING OVERVIEW

There is a wide variety of training opportunities at the four levels of training described below, as well as specialty training with SAVI (a communications model) and with SCT applied to couples and organizations.

Systems-centered training combines group work practicum (where you learn by working as a member of a group), and theoretical and technical training. You can learn about SCT by attending training events at the level that matches your interest and resources, i.e., time, energy and money. These training tracks range from exploring SCT to making a commitment to formal training. The approach to training is functional with less emphasis on “checking off” certain experiences and more on mastering the theory, methods, and techniques at each level of training.

Levels of SCT Training: *Exploration, Foundation Training, Intermediate Training, and Advanced Training.*

Exploring SCT: For Curious People

In exploring SCT you can attend foundation or specialized training events once or as many times as you find useful. Some find the training group valuable for their own development; others want to learn the theoretical approach well enough to compare it to their own; others use elements of theory and technique in their current practical applications. At this level of participation, you are your own guide, sipping or drinking deeply as your interests and resources permit.

Foundation Training: For Learning SCT

Some people discover enough value in SCT theory and practice to consider making SCT a primary orientation to their work. The Foundation training emphasizes learning to use SCT methods with one’s self and gaining the personal development and training that comes from working in an ongoing training group with sufficient intensity to explore and contain one’s own issues with authority. At a minimum, a training group and some

work with theory are foundations to further work in SCT. If you find yourself exploring this shift into more structured training, you should make contact with an SCT Mentor to find out more about the training process.

Intermediate Training

Intermediate training is for those interested in using SCT as their major theoretical orientation and work toward the goal of becoming a licensed systems-centered practitioner. Members apply for Intermediate training experience after having learned to use SCT as a training group member, to understand basic SCT theory, and to understand and contain the dynamics of their own authority issue. The Intermediate level of training introduces more focus on theory, on the technical skills of SCT, on managing role boundaries, and on containing the dynamics of a system. Intermediate training includes the Intermediate Skills Training, the Intermediate Mentor Training, and the Authority Issue Group. The Skills Training focuses on the technical skills of defense modification in Modules I and II. The Intermediate Mentor Training focuses on the management of oneself in relation to changing roles and contexts. The Authority Issue Group is a training group working the issues of Module III in depth. At the Intermediate level, participants also work in a Theory group and in an ongoing Consultation group in addition to their ongoing training group.

Advanced Training

Advanced training activities emphasize integrating comprehensive and apprehensive knowledge in role, and related to goal and context in application settings. One major advanced training track is working as a member of a peer licensing group to build a working group, develop criteria for assessment, and implement a peer assessment process. Joining the Board of Directors is another context for advanced training. An advanced training track is also offered at the annual conference for post-Authority group members and a special advanced training group is offered each summer. Advanced members also work with mentors to develop training opportunities.

PROGRAM NOTES

SPECIAL FOCUS: CORE TRAININGS

We want to let you know about some exciting training opportunities in the SCT training system this coming year for those of you at the Intermediate level. To get an overview of Intermediate training see the SCT Training Program description on the Training page at www.systemscentered.com.

Core training events are central to mastering SCT theory, methods and techniques. They are also required for eventual licensing as an SCT Practitioner.

Intermediate Skills Training will be offered twice: At the SCT Annual Conference in Atlanta (March 26-April 1) and

in York, UK (September 19-23). The Intermediate Skills Training at the Conference will include the Institute weekend as well as the 5 mornings of the Conference.

Mentor Training will be offered twice: In York, UK (September 18-23) and in Philadelphia (November 12-17).

This exciting and challenging training integrates the learning from Intermediate Skills Training and takes it up another level with theoretical discussion, skill building, videotaped practicum sessions and force field review. Members are challenged to understand what it means to develop a “systems-centered learning organization,” orient to different contexts within the “organization,” relate to the goal of the

context, and take up one's functional role. Members learn to give and get feedback, to develop a functional assessment of themselves and others, and plan their next steps for training. This includes assessing readiness to join the next Authority Issue Group. Functional assessment is a key process in mentoring, and is particularly relevant for members who work in organizational and educational settings. This is a key training that explicitly focuses on taking up and shifting role, goal and context (that is, taking up full Member role) in creating the environment for learning, and thus is a pathway to bringing your SCT skills into real life and work contexts.

NOTE: If you are hoping to join the next Authority Issue Group these are the *last opportunities to take this required training!* This advanced intermediate training is NOT offered in the annual Conference. To find out how to qualify, contact your trainer. If you know you want to apply for this training and think you are qualified, contact Fran Carter, event director (carter2229@aol.com or 215.988.9523).

SCT CONFERENCE 2011 - A broader range of events for the Intermediate level

First part of the morning (8:45 to 10:15) - Two Intermediate Level Experiential Trainings

Intermediate Training Group - Open to those with sufficient experience in SCT foundation level training groups to meet Intermediate level entry criteria.

New: Advanced Intermediate Training Group - Must have attended Mentor Training or the Intermediate 3-Year Training Group.

Second part of the morning (10:30 to 12:00) - Four Intermediate Level Courses

The Container Role in Leadership Training (Mon. & Tue.)

Intermediate Leadership Training: Building an SCT Group (Wed., Thur. & Fri.)

New: Intermediate Consultation: Putting SCT Consultation into Practice - Getting grounded in the SCT consultation model "My problem is I..."

Intermediate and Advanced Consultation Series - Working with taped material; assumes skill in the SCT consultation model.

Covering the entire morning

Intermediate 3-Year Training Group - Must have had Intermediate Skills Training. This group gives an ongoing developmental experience. Commitment is to attend 2011, 2012, 2013.

Intermediate Skills Training - New schedule: 2 days of weekend Institute and 5 mornings of Conference week. Many members have found it valuable to attend Intermediate Skills Training more than once. The new expanded schedule for this training will include the skills of building an SCT group as well as the defense modification protocols.

These new Conference offerings are designed to accommodate leading edge work for experienced members (Advanced Intermediate Training Group), and to provide training and experience with the SCT consultation model (Intermediate Consultation).

Remember: Intermediate SCT training is about putting SCT into practice. Consultation and ongoing theory work are requirements at this level. If you do not have individual or group consultation regularly with an SCT Practitioner it is important to set this up. Speak to your training group leader or an SCT Practitioner to do so.

Announcing the first SCT OD Conference in Europe!

Stockholm

August 29-31, 2012

Workshops in Theory, Application &
Experiential Training

Details available soon

**SCT Conference 2011
March 26- April 1
Atlanta, GA**

**For the latest information
on SCTRI trainings
please check the website at
www.systemscentered.com**

SCT[®]RI REPORTS AND UPDATES

SCTRI IN A NUTSHELL: THE ORGANIZATION

SCTRI is a volunteer organization. All roles (except Administrators) are filled with volunteer members who have time, energy and resources for the tasks. Working in an SCTRI Action Group is a learning environment for applying SCT in the service of task goals.

Board of Directors: Sets policy, oversees organizational direction, structure and function. This group meets twice yearly; selects, supports and guides the Director; and is made up of members at the advanced training level and beyond.

Director: Carries the organizational vision and values, oversees implementation, represents the organization to the larger world.

Associate Director: Keeps an eye on the overall activities and events within the organization and provides linkages among the Action Groups.

Research Director: Develops the research function with goals of fully integrating research into SCTRI and crossing the boundary to the larger world.

Steering Group: Implements policies and links Action Groups. Selected by and acts with the authority of the Board of Directors between its semi-annual meetings; meets weekly.

System Mentors: Keep an eye on the overall functioning of SCTRI and system-centered training with the goal of maintaining the spirit and values of SCT. Mentors consult to members and Action Groups as needed, and hold the final authority for accepting recommendations for licensing individual members as SCT practitioners.

Action Groups: Small groups of members carrying out specific aspects of the work of SCTRI.

Currently:

Annual Conference

Continuing Education

Curriculum Development

Finance

Fundraising

Newsletter

Research

Trainers

Web

Administrators: Carry out organizational tasks under the supervision of the Director, Associate Director and the Steering Group.

FROM THE ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Hello Membership,

Well, we did it! The first **SCTRI E-News** was successfully launched on September 14th, a day early actually! Our goal is to have it to you on the 15th of each month. I hope you enjoyed it. The E-News Team, Kathy Lum, myself, and Jan Vadell in the role of consultant, very much appreciated the prompt and enthusiastic responses that we received from members and Action Groups, which allowed us to both sustain our energy for the project, and also meet our deadline without any problems. The theme in the larger system seems to be creating structure for timeliness around deadlines, and we are pleased to have built upon that theme.

E-News is designed to give brief, concise information in one convenient location, thereby cutting down on the number of listserv announcements that have to go out. It is meant to offer clear information at a glance from several areas of our organization.

First, you will find the section on Upcoming Trainings following the greeting. Our first issue contained a lengthy list of training events - into next year and beyond - but generally we will highlight the upcoming six months only. In addition to the training events, trainers may also submit information on any new SCT-related training endeavor for posting in this section. We would also love to hear about how a training went, and any new or interesting twists!

Next, an update from the Conference System will also appear in each issue, providing a glimpse into the latest developments unfolding toward the upcoming Annual Conference - whatever the Co-Directors feel is of greatest interest as we move closer and closer to Conference time!

Another "regular" in the E-News is the section called Web Wise, which will feature a different aspect of the SCT website in each issue. As our website undergoes expansion, re-organization, and re-designing to increase user friendliness, Web Wise will be the place to look for tips on what is accessible and how. Think of it as a monthly mini lesson.

The Bulletin Board, also in each issue, posts news and updates from our different Action Groups. Any Action Group which would like to get information to the members about recent accomplishments, changes, or special projects can submit a brief entry to Kathy (admin@systemscented.com) or me (hollyjo@valley.net) by the 8th of the month. We may contact you with minor edits and/or questions.

Then we have Members' Corner, a place where members can informally communicate thoughts, thumbnail sketches, great outcomes of 10 minute consults from consultees, poems and much more. Each month we will gladly receive such submissions from small informal groups, individuals, or teams working together on a project, or just thinking about one. If you think there may be a subgroup out there - send us something!

And finally, each E-News will contain basic information

such as member benefits, and contact information, as well as links to web pages, e-mails for various contact people, and sometimes links to YouTube videos of SCT presentations!

Every third issue - four times per year - the audience for the E-News will reach beyond our membership to a wider audience of contacts. These issues will be adapted to serve the purpose of increasing name recognition for SCT, possibly bringing in new members, and offering an educational focus to familiarize readers with our organization's work.

A word of clarification: This venue is meant to give a quick bird's eye view of events and growing edges of our organization. It is not intended to take the place of our bi-annual Newsletter which gives us a context for in-depth descriptions of SCT applications, research developments, and full accounts from our various Action Groups, theoretical explorations, and other writings. Each has its own functional goals, with little redundancy.

Giving credit where it is due, thank you Kathy for all the technical support, editorial energy, creativity and good humor, AND for the original idea of an electronic newsletter. Some of you may remember the very first one that Kathy put together in August of 2009. It was revisiting this innovative communication to the membership that rekindled the spark for our current SCTRI E-News. Enjoy!

Holly Johnson (hollyjo@valley.net)

STEERING GROUP

Your Steering Group meets weekly to conduct the work of the organization between the semi-annual Board meetings. We are finding that the organization is becoming one in which the Steering Group truly conducts an orchestration of the emerging energy from a number of well-functioning subsystems. For example, we have worked these last six months with the new energy that has come from our Conference Co- Director and Treasurer subsystems.

Our Conference Co-Director subsystem has evolved a new structure, one in which there is overlap in the Conference leadership, with a more experienced Co-Director working alongside a new Co-Director. We welcome back Mark Johnson and Dave Schwing who will serve as the experienced subsystem of the 2011 Conference leadership team and welcome Sven-Erik Viskari who joins as the newest Co-Director of that team. Sven-Erik will be joined by Ray Haddock and they will function as the 2012 Conference Co-Director system. The Steering Group is delighted to have found this team of leaders and to have filled these important roles through 2012.

Also emerging from the Conference system is a clearer coordination between the Trainers Group and the Conference Program Development group, which allowed us to complete the Conference programming by August 1! We thank both, Mark Johnson and Dave Schwing, as well as Claudia Byram, Susan Cassano and Jan Vadell for their hard work in meeting this deadline and in producing a very interesting and varied 2011 Conference Program. You won't want to miss it!

Our Treasurer subsystem, headed by Nina Klebanoff, has been meeting with the Steering Group monthly which has helped us stay clearer about our financial picture. Our organization is funded primarily by the Conference (70%), membership fees (25%) and donations (5%), as well as the

volunteer energy from our members, leaders and trainers. When membership declines or a Conference has a lower turnout due to volcanic ash or other unforeseen forces, we go into deficit and we, in turn, rely more heavily on our volunteer energy. One system affects the other. For this reason, we have decided to increase our base membership fee for 2011, from \$175 to \$200. We will, of course, continue with our policy of "more if you can, less if you can't" and have decided to make no change in the student or new member rates, or the Conference fee schedule.

As a Steering Group, we continue to see development in our ability to make complex decisions in a timely way and, not surprisingly, are very satisfied with our work together. Thanks to all of our membership, for your support and energy.

- *Susan Gantt (sgantt@systemscentered.com);*

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CONFERENCE 2011

The planning for the 2011 Conference in Atlanta, titled "Exploring the Change Process" is well underway. It began with the Conference system working to form a Program Development Group that took up the task of developing a timeline of having Conference proposals submitted by July 1, in an effort to have the program completed and ready to be "posted on the website" by September 15th. Those who submitted Conference proposals all met the timeline, and we in the Program Development Group along with an energized Trainer's Group worked throughout the summer, and in turn met our deadline. "Great Work, Group!" This system correction will allow people to have access to the program online to begin early registration with the whole program in place, and allow for the printed program to be available in early November for the fall training groups, and early Conference promotion system wide.

Some of the highlights of the Conference 2011 are:

Pre-Conference Institutes (March 26-27): In addition to our vibrant weekend Institutes of Foundation, Container Training, Core SAVI, Bodydynamics, Licensing Group VI, and Advanced Training for Trainers, we have two new (2-day) Institutes this year:

1. "Contemplative Group Dynamics: Awakening Mind and Functional Subgrouping"
2. "'Red Flag' Communication: Exploring, Intervening and Changing at Each System Level"

5-Day Conference (March 28-April 1): The Conference program is in place with our trainings in the morning and workshops in the afternoon. Two new Intermediate trainings have been added to the morning sessions this year:

1. "Advanced Intermediate Training Group"
2. "My Problem is I..." – Intermediate Consultation.

The well-attended Drop-ins include the latest in theory presentations and practice protocols.

We have accepted many new proposals for afternoon workshops this year that build on the Conference theme "Exploring the Change Process," with a highlighted Friday afternoon session with Yvonne Agazarian on *Pat de Maré and the SCT Crisis of Hatred*. Pat de Maré pioneered the idea that

civilization emerges through converting hatred into fellowship. Bennis and Shepard defined the common group eruptions of hatred as the barometric event generating the transition from preoccupations with authority into the challenges of intimacy. SCT cites the crisis of hatred as fundamental to the continuing development and transformation of all isomorphic systems; whether the system be the person, member, subgroup or the group-as-a-whole.

We are hopeful that this year's Conference will continue to grow both in numbers and quality. In building this Conference the Conference Co-directors and administrators along with the CCG (Conference Coordinating Group) are working with the following themes and goals as we work to increase attendance in March by:

- Continuing with the concept of "Conference Promotion" by encouraging every SCT member to see themselves as a part of the system-as-a-whole, and take up their role in helping people become curious enough to register for the conference; reminding everyone to refer people to the website for conference information and using the printed brochure (when available) to hand out to interested professionals and friends.
- Reaching out to and relying on all members, particularly local members and volunteers, to do community outreach.
- Working to continue to make the boundary permeable to new people coming to SCT—by orienting newcomers that at SCT Conferences we do "training in the morning and workshops in the afternoon." If this is a person's first Conference, or if they are not formally in an SCT training group, directing them to the Foundation training as the place where participants learn to build their group.

We continue to build and enhance the fundraising and hospitality aspects of the conference, and the Continuing Education group is working to offer CE's for members in as many fields as possible to encourage people to attend. The Conference Concierge is working with local members to identify information and activities that help to make the conference experience enjoyable. See the website for details as they become available!

*Submitted by: Mark Johnson (drmarkj@valley.net);
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CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The Curriculum Development Group has been working at opening its boundaries with new links to both the Program Development Group and the Trainers Group. As such, we've shared information and collaborated in the formation of the Conference Program and in clarifying curriculum criteria for the various training tracks. We continue to work closely with the Web Group to provide easy, accurate access to curriculum information. For a preview of training opportunities coming up this year for Intermediate level members, see the Training Program Notes in this issue.

*Submitted by: Claudia Byram (claudia.byram@verizon.net);
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EUROPEAN OD CONFERENCE

This is to let you know that we are up and running on our first SCT European OD Conference in Stockholm in August 2012.

So far:

- We have fixed the dates 29-31 August 2012. Mark your calendars!
- We have sponsorship from the SCTRI Board and support from Susan Gantt in her role as Director of SCTRI.
- We have filled the following roles:
 - Conference Co-Directors (Erika Ekedal and Katarina Billman)
 - Program Directors (Fran Carter, Maria Åkerlund and Rowena Davis)
- We have bookings for two alternative venues in Stockholm – Grillska Huset and Munchen-Bryggeriet, the latter able to take a larger number of people - but are still keeping our eyes open for other suitable sites.

Our next steps are to meet in late October to develop the vision for the conference and to fill other roles. We have good work energy and are using SCT methods to build our conference organizing system.

Currently, we are looking for volunteers to join the:

- Venue Group (in Swedish: lokal-grupp). Jan Vadell is contributing her years of experience developing relationships with venues and problem-solving on-site. We are looking for two people based in Sweden to work with Jan, be able visit the site and be aware of cultural differences.
- PR/Marketing Group
- Local Planning/Social Events Group

Please email Erika Ekedal (erika.ekedal@gmail.com) if you have energy and resources to join these task groups. You will contribute to building our conference, gain experience in using the SCT methods for working in task groups and hopefully have fun.

Best wishes and with much excitement,

*Maria Åkerlund, Katarina Billman,
Fran Carter, Rowena Davis, Erika Ekedal,
Susan Gantt, Kathy Lum, Jan Vadell
The European OD Conference Planning Group*

FUNDRAISING

A bit about our history: At our first Conference in 2000, we raised money to buy Yvonne a David Eames Chair to celebrate her, as well as the founding of SCTRI. We had a huge response and consequently some money left over. The idea was born to raise money at the Conference for an Yvonne Agazarian Scholar Fund. Our first silent auction was in Philadelphia at our 2001 Conference. It was a huge success and great fun and has continued ever since.

Where we are now: We have raised over \$35,000 and sponsored 17 scholars to attend the Conferences. We are now looking to expand our membership as we explore opportunities to strengthen the financial foundation of SCTRI and the Research Scholar Fund. We meet once a month on the bridge

conference call line. If you are interested in finding a way to contribute in building SCTRI and/or in learning about being part of a task group, join us!

We run our meetings according to SCT protocol. We usually find no matter how low our energy might be when we arrive on the call we are more energized and excited about what we are contributing to the membership and the organization when we leave the meeting! Let us hear from you as we plan for the 2011 Conference and beyond!

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RESEARCH

Jale Punter reports that the European SCT Research Project group is preparing to put in a bid for financial support from the UK National Health Service Research funding body. The focus of the project is the clinical use of the 12 week Psycho-educational and Process group; the preliminary study will be an exploratory one, to find out if the intervention is effective in terms of symptom reduction and quality of life.

Rich O'Neill reports that after 7 years of research, the two papers which he submitted for publication were rejected. While such news can be frustrating, it illustrates the reality for many of us researchers, that first submissions are rarely accepted. Rich is currently overcoming his disappointment with determination and a course correction, and he will resubmit them in due course! He is also working on the statistics and write-up of a new functional subgrouping scale paper, and one *SCT/SAVI Group Productivity Study*, comparing SCT-led task groups to non-SCT led task groups.

Verena Murphy is writing up the results of a study she conducted in the summer. She undertook a content analysis of 20 of 47 undergraduate students' journals in a class called "*Individual and Group Behavior in Organizations.*" Among other things, she mapped "person vs. member" awareness over four phases of the group's development, the frequency of references to "subgroups," and references that demonstrated awareness of "context," including "not taking things just personally."

Results of our work will be reported at the next SCTRI Conference in Atlanta.

*Submitted by: Verena Murphy (vmch99@hotmail.com);
Rich O'Neill (oneillr@upstate.edu);
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SVENSKA SCT-FÖRENINGEN

The headline from the Swedish SCT Association is that we have had our first yearly meeting as an organization in June, and we now have a formal Board of Directors! This is a very satisfying move as we have been working on this "want" since 2003, and now the emergent energy is just "right." At our annual meeting we also had the pleasure of having had Susan Gantt in attendance. Susan has supported our work and development during all these years. Svenska SCT-Föreningen now has an organizational license from SCTRI.

We are continuing to invite the membership to join different task groups, such as Marketing. We are also actively taking a more substantial role in the planning and organizing of the yearly SCT training workshop in Stockholm, from January 17-20, 2011.

*Submitted by: Sven-Erik Viskari
(sven-erik.viskari@telia.com)*

TRAINERS

Shortly after the Conference in April the Trainers Group met to discuss training issues for next year's Conference. This entailed staff training, which is facilitated by our liaison (Claudia Byram) between the Trainers Group and the Conference system. This year we functioned well within the new timeline for filling trainer roles - we got it done by July 1st! Our appreciation for this system correction goes to Claudia Byram, who has been in this role for many years. This year she mentored Susan Cassano, who will take up the role beginning next year. We give a warm "thank you" to Claudia for developing this integral role and seeing it all the way to a significant success this year. Also, we extend a special welcome to Susan in her new role, as well as a "thank you" for her part in making such a smooth transition!

Submitted by: Rich Armington (armington@gmail.com)

WEB GROUP

The Web Group is working on making the website more user-friendly and visually attractive, based on your feedback. In addition to adding the YouTube videos and "Guide to Posting Minutes," we are currently working to improve the Conference pages and registration form. And you can now read the current Newsletter and search an index to find articles from previous issues from the home page! Look for more tips on using the website in the monthly E-News. In case you missed the September of "Web Wise":

To watch videos of workshops by Yvonne Agazarian and Susan Gantt:

- Go to the SCTRI home page at www.systemscentered.com and click on the links on the right-hand side under "Announcements."

To view the "Guide to Post Action Group Minutes":

- Go to the SCTRI home page at www.systemscentered.com
- Log on as a Member. Use your full name as it appears in the membership directory and your password. Forgotten your password? Click "Forgot Password" and you'll get it via email. Check "Remember Login" so next time you'll be automatically logged in.
- Click on the "Members" tab along the top bar.
- You'll now see a "One Click" section on the right-hand side of your screen (also a new feature).
- Click on "Minutes" and hey presto - the guide to posting minutes is in the center of your screen!

Let us know how you get on via admin@systemscentered.com

Happy exploring.

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MEMBERS FORUM

This is a community forum for posting announcements on related trainings, personal life events, awards, letters to the Editor, and responses to articles that have appeared in our Newsletter

Welcome New SCTRI Members!

Eric Denner, Austin, TX, US
Cecilia Duberg, Örebro, Sweden
James Feil, Barcelona, Spain
Jean M. Germain, Austin, TX, US
Maryanne Jones Godbout, Bethlehem, PA, US
Stephen A. Goldberg, Philadelphia, PA, US
Mark Hawkswell, Buckinghamshire, UK
Michael Jansson, Örebro, Sweden
Kirsten Lysgaard, Ulfborg, Denmark
Tanja Mars, Baarn, Netherlands
Ben Medley, Jersey City, NJ, US
Lotte Paans, Wageningen, Netherlands
Gabriel Richert, Örebro, Sweden
Mary Beth Sigado, Media, PA, US
Anna Walker, London, UK
Ilene Wasserman, Narberth, PA, US

In memory of Joan McAnulty, 1953-2010.

She was a long time SCTRI member, colleague and friend to many of us, and sister to Dorothy Gibbons. We will dearly miss her.

Gantt, S.P. (in press). Systems-centered approach to groups. In J. Kleinberg (Ed.), *The Wiley-Blackwell handbook of group psychotherapy*. Oxford, UK: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Susan Gantt co-edited a special issue of the *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy* titled "Neurobiology and Building Interpersonal Systems: Groups, Couples, and Beyond" which includes these articles:

Gantt, S.P. & Agazarian, Y.M. (2010). Developing the group mind through functional subgrouping: Linking systems-centered training (SCT) and interpersonal neurobiology. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, (60)4, 514-545.

Gantt, S.P. & Cox, P. (Eds.) (2010). Introduction to the special issue: Neurobiology and building interpersonal systems: Groups, couples, and beyond [Special issue]. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, (60)4, 455-461.

The Other

By Chetan Borkhetaria

You told me to be like you.
You showed me how to be.
And you made me feel guilty when I wasn't like you.

You told me not to be different.
You showed me it was bad to be different.
And you were disappointed in me when I was different.

You told me not to be like them.
You showed me what I would lose if I became like them.
And you punished me when I was like them.

I heard you. And I learned.
I grew. And now I'm bigger than you.
And now, you... you don't know what to do with me.

But I do. I know. I know all too well.

I know you reject 'the other,' who is not like you.
I know you don't understand 'the other', who is different.
I know you have fear for those who you call 'the other.'

You told me you would accept me if I was like you.
You told me I would be understood if I wasn't different.
You told me we would fear 'the other' together.

But I am not like you.
I am me, and I don't need your acceptance.
I am different, and I don't need your understanding.
I don't fear the other, and I will show you why.
Because I **am** 'the other.'

THANK YOU!!!

*Thank you to **Sharon Brooks** for indexing all the Theory articles that have appeared in the **Systems-Centered News** over the years. This index is available from the homepage on our website at www.systemcentered.com (you do not need to log-in). Just click **Newsletter Index**. What an accomplishment!*

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