

SEPARATION from ONENESS:
the ROOT CAUSE of PSYCHOLOGICAL SUFFERING

by

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AND SO IT IS!

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INTRODUCTION

As I embarked on this dissertation, the question persisted: what belief do people hold onto that separates them from their highest potential and happiness? As a minister and metaphysical counselor who cares deeply, I have seen people languish in the quicksand traps of the ego or “psychological mind.” I began to dig down and uncover the root belief we have adopted from the ego, which produces all subsequent misguided thoughts and beliefs, and causes the most suffering in our lives. I found the principal misleading tenet: I am a completely separate individual, in a world full of separate individuals, and "oneness" is a belief held by religious people. However, my research discovered that "oneness" is a conviction held by many people from several disciplines besides religion and philosophy including, just naming a few—astronomy, quantum physics, ecology, math, anthropology, sociology, genetics, and yoga.

My hypothesis that all suffering and all psychological disorders are in some way connected to a belief in the illusion of separation; and all minor and major disorders can be cured or alleviated by the realization of "oneness." My research sprang from the ground as I found some solid backing for this premise. According to Albert Einstein: “A person experiences life as something separated from the rest - a kind of optical delusion of consciousness. Our task must be to free ourselves from this self-imposed prison, and through compassion, to find the reality of Oneness” (inspirationalstories.com).

Moreover, Dr. Wayne Dyer affirms: “All of the problems we face are created by our belief that we are separate from God, or separate from each other” (Disc 4).

What is the meaning of “separation” in this context? There is a lack of integration within the individual (integrating parts of self- body, mind, personality, soul), a lack of oneness with others (in all relationships- from family to humanity at large), no connection with the earth and nature, and a great void between many humans and the god of their understanding. A person can also experience a perceived separation from their own Higher Self or highest state of existence, their path, their destiny, the inherent abundance of all good things meant for them, or from living an authentic life.

At the core of modern humanity's suffering is the feeling of separation. We feel separated from each other in the ways we relate. We feel separated from the other members of our family. We feel separated from each other in our religious beliefs. We feel separated financially, racially, nationally. We feel separated from ourselves and from nature and from the divine. (Aragh 133)

In this dissertation, I wish to advocate that one of the greatest goals and achievements of metaphysical counselors might be to end the feeling of separation and isolation in the human psyche and experience, by instilling an emphasis on "oneness" in their practices. “Oneness is the true goal of life, and thus, the fulfillment of true metaphysics.” (Masters 10) Another important reason I am writing this paper is to show how metaphysical interpretation and practice in counseling have so much more to give than traditional schools of psychology. We offer to heal the root cause of the suffering, to create a Field for self-actualization, and to make whole an individual’s entire mental structure rather than pursue a band-aid approach focused on easing pathological symptoms.

I wanted to explore the idea, from the standpoint of metaphysics, consciousness studies, sciences such as biology, ecology, and quantum mechanics, cultural anthropology, cosmology, and many other disciplines: *that separation is impossible!* Even if we wanted to be separate, we could not! The idea of separation benefits the position of the individual ego

and the collective ego. Ego-centered pursuits, created for purposes of competition and control within society and culture, benefit individualism and a quest for "me, me, me." Separation is a perception based on chosen thoughts and concepts. The fact that Einstein calls separation a "delusion" (instead of mere illusion) signifies the extreme psychological damage accrued by living in separation-consciousness instead of unity-consciousness. Delusion means that the experiences, feelings and thoughts do not truly exist outside the mind of the disturbed client. How can metaphysical counselors help others? The key to healing others resides in ourselves; by seeking a state of integrated oneness in our *own* lives, we may guide others by our example.

To investigate the notion of separation, I saw clearly in the beginning that I would need to address the question: "What is Oneness?" For they are two sides of the same coin, as you will see. There is an essential oneness of life, there is only one reality, and somehow, "Oneness" is all there is.

Every form is part of the one. There is no way to be separate from the one, because the one is all there is. There is only one energy, one light, one essential Being underlying all of creation. It is all that exists. And human consciousness is uniquely capable of knowing it, seeing it- and being it. And Its power and majesty are beyond comprehension. (One Soul 210)

A succinct metaphysical and non-religious definition of oneness is, "The One Great Truth about the nature of the mind: There is but One Mind in the universe, all minds are inseparable from the One Great Mind, and all so-called individual minds are individualized expressions of the One Great Mind" (Masters 7). I was pleasantly surprised to discover in my research that German physicist and a founding father of Quantum Theory, Max Planck, supported this idea of a conscious and intelligent mind in 1944: "All matter originates and exists only by virtue of a force... We must assume behind this force is the existence of a

conscious and intelligent Mind. This Mind is the matrix of all matter (www.brainyquote.com).

Connecting to and experiencing this One Mind (universal mind, cosmic mind, infinite mind, God-mind, pure mind, Spirit, God, Absolute Consciousness, the One Heart, the Limitless Self, All-That IS, or simply..."Oneness") is the goal of metaphysical practitioners and counselors and their clients, and the purpose of all souls on earth. It is the "blueprint" for humanity. "The essential impact upon human consciousness that creates the greatest advancement towards aware and healthy living is the experience of the innermost state of mind, Cosmic Consciousness, or 'Universal Oneness.' This is the most important of all of life's mental experiences" (Masters 10). In my personal life, I have found this to be totally true. My mind takes me in and out of communion with this Absolute Presence I call God, and when I feel separate I feel unhealthy, fractured or fractionate. By writing this paper, I wished to examine this on/off switch in my mind and find what causes it, thereby helping others to live in more constant unity with God and all of life.

In bridging the gap, traveling from separation-consciousness to unity-consciousness, I felt starting from the "TOP" down is fastest and most productive. By connecting to the One Mind or Heart of Creation first, the other categories of separation anxiety are automatically ironed out. The sense of isolation and problems at each other category of our relationships becomes much less severe. As Jesus reminded: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). Feeling separate from God seems to be the root cause of many challenges that invite clients to seek counseling or therapy, and to examine and re-organize their conscious and sub-conscious minds with new beliefs and thought patterns.

I felt compelled to investigate the thought patterns inherent in the experiences of separation and oneness, and explore somehow integrating these states and bringing lasting happiness to clients. My hope for the future is that myself and others will develop the application of techniques and practices from Transpersonal Psychology, Psychosynthesis, mindfulness and awareness meditation, prayer, and affirmative thinking, to help propel clients toward unity-consciousness. Metaphysical counseling culminates in lasting change based on an absolute frame of reference instead of a temporal one. The client's identity functions in terms of connecting with the eternal/infinite Changeless One, rather than the ever-changing time/space environmental factors of the relative world.

Within this paper, these topics support the demise of separation-consciousness, and the resultant blossoming of unity or spatial consciousness:

- What is “Oneness?”
- Causes for the belief in separation.
- Seeking. How separation has led to a life of seeking, for either material or spiritual treasures.
- Individualism, the biggest block to oneness.
- How to loosen our identity with the small "i." Instead of trying to fix or pacify the ego, we undercut our identity with it.
- A softer view of “person-hood.”
- Thoughts are not reality.
- Relationships: With self (body/mind/personality/soul), with others (family, community,

world), with nature, with God and the cosmos.

- How New Science is supporting oneness and inter-connectedness.
- Metaphysical counseling. Focus on Transpersonal and Psychosynthesis.
- Remedies. Becoming a witness. Awareness. Cultivating Presence.

The ultimate goal of union with Oneness is known as Nirvana, Samadhi, Christ Consciousness, Cosmic Consciousness, or Divine Consciousness. Ultimate Oneness is considered a return to primordial awareness, or the non-dual "you" before you acquired any concepts; it is considered the final awakening to Self. We begin moving toward living in a new paradigm of Oneness once we let go of our identity with the idea of being a separate person, accept our divinity, and identify with the idea of becoming a divine/human universal being.

If I can provide inspiring ideas and create ongoing discussions with metaphysical counselors and teachers, focusing healing efforts on ending the idea of separation from Self, others, and God, it will be my great joy to add more love, peace and harmony to this planet. I invite readers to deeply feel and experience the Oneness that already IS. We have only to find the changeless and eternal within us. Our future, and even our existence as an evolving species on this planet, depends on the recognition of oneness and its interconnection of all systems and aspects of life.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The subject of psychological suffering has been written about in many ways, explaining the identification and attachment to conscious or subconscious views that propagate it. I found several authors expressing the opinion that separation, or more distinctly the feeling of separation, was the root cause of suffering. I combined their different slants into a unique synthesis in producing this paper. Supporting authors are scientists, psychologists, western mystics, eastern non-dual teachers, and humanitarians, in a range from the very practical to the very esoteric. While some told you about spatial, universal or God consciousness, wholeness, completion, embodied awareness, presence, and full blown oneness with All-That-Is, others showed you by personal example and story-telling. While reading this second category of authors I kept falling into a state of peaceful bliss-experiencing a transmission from their writing. I found it difficult to not fall into a state of Samadhi as I read about their experiences of oneness!

Within these combined sources is a clear understanding of the nature of the ego, and ways to either confront or ignore it; the nature of thinking is seen to be self-manipulative. We come to honor the vastness of inter-connectedness, supporting systems, and abundant relationships from the cellular to the cosmic. The goal of all the authors, and how their wonderful offerings supported me, was a vision of humanity destined to live in/as Oneness ... here and now.

"Unfolding Self," by Molly Young Brown, offers the best introductory material on Psychosynthesis counseling that is available. It is for professionals who are not satisfied with short-term problem solving, or helping people adjust to life as it has been, but who want to

help their clients discover new depths of healing and awareness, and a return to complete wholeness. This psychology more than any other supports my view on healing through Self-realization, the building of a bridge of oneness between spirit and matter. When I continue counseling, this book will become a main reference book. Applying the principle of “synthesis” to his work, founder Dr. Assagioli drew upon the wisdom of many psychological and spiritual traditions, including psychoanalysis, Jungian psychology, and existential psychology, as well as Buddhism, Yoga, Jewish mysticism, and some elements of Christian esoteric study. He did not identify his work with any single belief system. “Psychosynthesis does not aim nor attempt to give a metaphysical nor a theological explanation of the great Mystery- it leads to the door, but stops there.” (Brown, location 216) A book for evolutionary psychologists, counselors, therapists, coaches, and spiritual guides who want to challenge their clients to move into their deepest essence, creative power and wisdom, it is jam-packed with exercises for spiritual awakening, presence, identification and dis-identification, and transformation into Self.

Deepak Chopra's "Reinventing the Body, Resurrecting the Soul" was invaluable for describing how to witness the interactions inside the mind's thinking processes, and discerning if you are looking at life with a "soft focus" or a "hard focus." Our Higher Self is aware of what erroneous views or agendas our ego personality is trying to promote. As we learn practices to become more aware of our thoughts, we can get too self-conscious and begin judging them or obsessing about them- even more detrimental than having them in the first place! Our Higher Self asks us to be gentle with ourselves, look at awareness with a “softer” approach.

Another insightful book explaining how thoughts are not reality, and how to work

with the mind in an effective way, is Richard Carlson's "You Can Be Happy No Matter What." His idea is that just because you think about something, does not mean it must be taken seriously. "Understanding the nature of thought, that we are not our thoughts, allows us to live in a state of neutrality, happiness, and lighthearted contentment" (13). Realizing the impermanence and subjectivity of thought allows us to be less critical of others and ourselves. We understand that thinking is something that we do by virtue of being human, and that we need not confuse thinking with reality.

One of my favorite books with dozens of specific meditations focused exclusively on embodying oneness, is *The Proof: A 40-Day Program for Embodying Oneness*, by James Twyman. The Rhythm of Oneness, The Breath of Oneness, The Sound of Oneness, The Gaze of Oneness, The Heart of Oneness, The Body of Oneness, The Creativity of Oneness, The Spontaneity of Oneness, and so forth, are topics he discusses and then introduces the corresponding meditation. This was the best book of meditations I found for experiencing Oneness: "If you dedicate yourself to this process, you'll discover an entirely new existence where separation loses its allure and Oneness is the guiding principle. Simply put, you'll experience what the saints and sages from antiquity have described as enlightenment" (Twyman, location 270).

An entertaining and unique book, that makes an unusual statement and contribution to the idea of oneness, is by Phillip Nash. In *Oneness AM* he has taken sayings from Krishna, Moses, Buddha, Jesus, and Mohammad, from the five most sacred books of those religious traditions, and cross-referenced 250 passages under subjects such as Love, Wisdom, Soul, Spirit, Compassion, Connection, Evolution, Transcendence, and so forth. In place of words such as God, Lord, Brahman, Allah, Divine, Self, He, You, Itself, Holy Spirit, heaven, Father,

I, Nirvana, etc., he transposed the word “*Oneness*” in their place. For example, Jesus' "Don't you believe that I am in the father, and that the father is in me?" (The Holy Bible, John 14:10) reads “Don't you believe that I am in the oneness, and that the oneness is in me?” (Nash 45). Other sacred phrases become, “Oneness is the first and the last, the evident and the imminent: and oneness has full knowledge of all things. Mohammed, the Qu'ran 57:3” (Nash 103). “Loving is knowing Oneness! As a deep knower of the Oneness you actually become the Oneness. Krishna, the Bhagavad-Gita, 18:55” (Nash 3). It illustrates that the all-pervading, all-knowing Presence of Oneness is the golden thread of the mystics for 5,000 years, and instead of "I" AM as God's quintessential name, we have "Oneness" Am.

In true unity-consciousness, there is no “person” having the experience of oneness, for that would be a dualistic experience. Jeff Foster is probably the most popular non-dual western author today, and while reading his book "An Extraordinary Absence," I entered the pristine state of awareness that IS oneness. For my research, I wanted to reach the spatial consciousness that Jill Bolte Taylor explored during her stroke, when she "lost" her personal self. I experienced this while reading Foster's book. This non-dual field is the finale, the epitome of oneness. “It is not about understanding, it's about a falling. A falling into the awesome mystery that is life itself. A falling into the not – knowing. And in that falling, the seeker is no more” (Foster 24).

I bet you have never read a book that did not have the word "I" within its pages! J.M. Harrison, author of "We Are All One," comments: “There is no place for it (“I”), for spiritually speaking it does not exist” (Harrison 7). Reading a book with only "we" sent me into a state of wholeness or spatial consciousness. Spatial consciousness and spatial qualities are a key focus in this book. By focusing on qualities that have the essence of timelessness

and truth, pure and unchanging in their highest form- like love, wisdom, and eternity- we entrain our consciousness to their higher frequency. Other ideas that were new and useful to me: the realization of our "fractionate" state of awareness, the social trigger of the "weight of perception," and restoring our "meta-senses."

“Leap Before You Look” consists of 72 practices or shortcuts for getting out of your mind and into the moment. It takes you to a level deeper than the mind's realization of who you are- to a state of being peace, of being silence, of being infinity. There is a recognition of that which is watching the mind, the awareness Itself, beyond and untouched by the mind. Author Arjuna Ardagh's focus away from traditional self-help books is clear; there is no *seeking* happening, just practice of presence- an embodiment of the realizations. I particularly like his notion of "Translucent Spiritual Practice," practice with no goal, only respect for the sacredness of the “now” moment.

Understanding the importance of cultivating oneness in all our relationships, to bring about more connection and happiness by bridging the gap of separation, is one of my main purposes. An excellent text is "One Soul, One Love, One Heart." John Welshons reveals ways to connect in many relationships- from intimate, family, close friends, people at work, strangers on the street, and with people in distant lands we may never meet. We have a relationship with our planet and with the universe. We have a relationship with our Creator. We have a relationship with our body, our mind, our psychological self, our emotional self, and our spiritual Self with the capital "S." Life becomes truly fulfilling only when we perceive it as an integrated, undivided whole, where a unity of all these relationships are achieved. Our place in the world, the environment, even the cosmos, must become a living awareness. I especially like the author's view of our relationship with our own soul, and

realization that it is our single most important relationship.

On a scientific note, *Science of Oneness* author Malcolm Hollick explores many aspects of oneness, aiming to merge science and metaphysics. It provides practical examples, for instance in discussing the boundaries of systems: "...notice your fingers and the palm of your hand. Can you say where one starts and the other ends, or are they one thing?" (Hollick, location 893). He contends that boundaries between systems are largely arbitrary. He discusses the Holographic Theory, where the entire universe is seen as a single, undivided whole, and the inter-connectedness of entangled particles creates oneness. It is a good source for metaphysicians to connect with scientific theory, with plenty of research, but simple to understand.

The focus of Kate Heartsong in *Deeply We Are One* is toward humanitarian efforts, a new establishment for humanity based on our acknowledged inter-connectedness of all living things on the planet and beyond. She emphasizes self-love, and understanding our magnificence, because if we embrace this within ourselves we more easily embrace it in others. When you connect with your own divinity, you automatically connect with the oneness in others. Her approach did make me feel much loved! This was the most all-encompassing and feel good book, touching topics such as: Recognizing the Greatness of Who You Are, Have You Become One with Yourself?, Getting Back to Center and Being Connected with The One, Living Authentically, and Creating Peace Within.

Nirmala, author of *That Is That: Essays About True Nature*, is a teacher in the non-dual lineage of Ramana Maharshi, H.W.L. Poonja (Papaji), and currently- Mooji. I wanted to connect to the non-dual experience (which means "not two" or one) within the most ancient of understandings- from India. I have watched many YouTube videos of Mooji

speaking in satsang, which brings you into the direct experience of the non-dual state of being, the awareness itself that watches all the ups and down in your life. Nirmala also does satsangs, and in this book, he gracefully writes of the essence, the truth of that wordless space. The infinite, timeless nature of *being* is discussed, and pitfalls to remembering our nature. *Making Up Reality*, *Going Naked Without Belief*, *The Dance Between the Mind and Reality*, *Make Believe*, and *Thoughts Are Not Very Real*, are topics with keen insight.

There are some books that hurt your brain, like trying to grasp a paradox, or thinking about a Zen Koan. You see both sides of a concept- at the same time. *Oneness, Advaita: Spiritual Awakening Into Oneness* is such a book. Nevertheless, it did awaken me to the ultimate view of oneness. Oneness and duality are *not* at odds to each other; oneness is not better than duality. Duality IS Oneness, duality is Oneness expressing. Everywhere we look we see oneness, especially if we lose our energetic sense of being an individual. Then, the experience of Oneness "being"- is all there is. Houston Vetter's discussion of *are you allergic to being human?* reminded me to love everything and myself AS IS, while equally aiming for more understanding. "Are you trying hard to experience divinity, all the while the divine wants to be fully human" (548)?

This review of literature points to the main themes I will discuss in this paper. I read most of these books in their entirety, gleaning several different models of oneness, with an emphasis on the idea of separation. As students of truth, we know that "oneness" is a theme of every great philosopher, mystic, humanitarian, psychologist and scientist. What all of these authors agree upon, is that no matter what different stories our minds are telling us, based on individual lives conditioned by circumstances, we are much bigger in consciousness than we realize, or can even imagine. In fact, we are pure Consciousness, direct from the Source, on

an adventure of remembering just this.

DISCUSSION

What is Oneness?

To understand the separation-complex within the human psyche that is the root cause of suffering, which triggers stress, mental anxiety and other psychological disorders, we must first define- from what do we believe ourselves separate? From what are we keeping ourselves apart, either consciously or sub-consciously? In this paper, we are hoping to travel from separation-consciousness into unity-consciousness, and then, apply it in our daily lives.

The reason I mentioned that separation and oneness are two sides of the same coin, is because we can only know separation from something when a part of us has at some time felt oneness with it. In addition, we can only resonate in oneness when we compare it to times we recall feeling separate. Each state depends on the other for definition. Human nature tends to be somewhere in between, fluctuating with each thought, mood or action, at the whim of our changing selves and the daily winds of change.

We may feel close to our community but separate from the world, close to God but separate from our spouse, separate from people but one with nature, and so forth. Why separation on any level makes us have unpleasant feelings, and is so detrimental to mental health and living a fulfilling life, is because "oneness" is our natural state. This is the axiom I hope to prove to all hearts by the conclusion of this paper. Notice, I did not say, "minds," since our mental concepts and beliefs are actually responsible for our suffering.

"Oneness" can be experienced, or not, in personal and intimate ways, in non-personal cosmic ways, in social groups such as family, society, culture, and world, with nature, with God, and with your own soul. Mystics and metaphysicians, and even some scientists say all

forms and all consciousness and energy are of the same source, or Oneness. All relationships are different manifestations of the One Mind, Consciousness, or God ... experiencing Itself. Carl Sagan had a very clear and simple view: “We are a way for the cosmos to know itself.” Even if certain qualities of this Great Mystery can be touched, we can admit with humbleness and awe- what we don't know will always be expanding more rapidly than what we do know. As far as Oneness goes, everything is part of its makeup! Is there anything you can say is outside of Oneness? After you achieve awareness of it, whatever might be “outside” of Oneness, it merges into and becomes a part of the Oneness: “You are every thing, every being, every emotion, every event, every situation. You are unity. You are infinity. You are love/light; light/love. You are. This is the Law of One.”

There is oneness within yourself when your physical/mental/emotional “bodies” are aligned, oneness with others in a unity that embraces diversity, and oneness with the forces of the universe. In addition, it needs to be clarified that oneness is not "sameness," since some people mistake these two distinct concepts. Oneness is a full celebration of diversity within unity, not trying to make everyone similar.

One of my favorite quotes, by Andrew Cohen, brings the question “What is Oneness?” directly home to the level of you and me.

The greatest challenge for a mortal human being is to realize and take responsibility for the fact that who you are right now, in all your imperfection, is the One without a second, and that One is endeavoring to develop and become more conscious, as you. God has fallen out of the sky, but now he, she, or it is beginning to emerge as the creative impulse, which is your own Authentic Self, and is endeavoring to consciously evolve, in and through and as you. So you have to ask yourself: Do I have that much guts, that audacity of intention, that boldness of spirit—is there enough love in my heart to be willing to be the One? The answer to that question is really the answer to every important question. Who am I? Why am I here? Is there a purpose to all

this? What is the fundamental nature of life? All of these questions are answered in the deepest possible way when you point the finger at yourself and say, 'Yes.' (54)

In the field of conscious evolution, "oneness" is a new social, cultural, and universal paradigm, called "The Shift." We live by recognizing and expressing oneness in our daily interactions, and choose to create a new establishment or social foundation for humankind.

It is time to change, and this involves understanding the concept of oneness so we can establish lasting compassion, mercy and peace on this planet. For thousands of years there have been wars, yet this has not brought world peace. Only dissolution of the idea and feeling of separateness can end the drama and suffering of humanity.

Oneness is a buzzword in most spiritual groups today, as well as the slogan of worldwide humanitarian and ecological movements. Humanity's Team, along with The Association for Global New Thought, held the 4th annual Global Oneness Day on October 24th 2013. Thousands around the world joined this internet-based online summit with interviews and discussions by many renowned speakers. Oneness activists like Barbara Marx-Hubbard and Jean Houston bring focus to a conscious progression into "Universal Humans," who co-create a new paradigm based on values of love, joy, peace, and the realization of oneness. When individuals and groups begin to awaken to the understanding that all beings in the world are connected, higher ideals for humanity are born—creating a "Shift."

Oneness as Creator

You can easily understand the concept that all of us are connected with each other, when you comprehend that you are a creation of The One, therefore you are part of The One. You and The Creator are one and the same. When you recognize this, you can then better realize that everything and everyone is part

of The Creator, and therefore all of us are connected. Remember that The One is all there is and from The One comes everything. There can be no separation when there is only The One. When you understand that we are all one, with each person being a unique individualized part of The Creator, with a specific purpose to fulfill, you can better realize the concept oneness. (Heartsong location120)

Oneness as Source

It is at the level of the Source of existence that “oneness” is most obvious. Less personal than a Creator, Source is the existence of raw potential- an infinite well of energy. We all share the same one universal Source of life, the Source of all being. “If we sense the source of everything, we find that there is a deeper, infinite potential that everything comes out of and everything is made of. Then, if we continue to sense the underlying source of the various forms, we can more clearly sense their oneness even while we enjoy and appreciate their endless differences” (Nirmala 80).

Consciousness or Spirit are other names for Source, the primordial life-force that is eternal and which we are a part. “We have always existed and will always exist, for we are not just bodies, not just minds, our primordial state is that of consciousness or spirit.”

(Harrison 23) Albert Einstein remarked:

‘Force’ is another name for Creator or Source, the hidden force that defines reality. There remains something subtle, intangible and inexplicable. Veneration for this force beyond anything that we can comprehend is my religion.... We see a universe marvelously arranges and obeying certain laws, but only dimly understand these laws. Our limited minds cannot grasp the mysterious force that moves the constellations. (www.inspirationalstories)

Oneness as Holographic Principle

Another way to recognize the greatness of who we are and that we are an expression of The One, is to consider the concept of the hologram. When cut into pieces, the hologram is still whole in the sense that all the pieces have the same picture; the same essence of all is still there. The pieces are simply

smaller than the original. It is the same for humans. We are the individual pieces of the whole, The One. (Heartsong, location 880)

Stanislav Grof, a founder of Transpersonal Psychology, also suggested that our consciousness is a field encapsulating and reflecting the whole universe, just as a fragment of a holograph contains the whole picture.

In a mysterious and as yet unexplained way, each of us contains the information about the entire universe and all of existence, has potential experiential access to all of its parts, and in a sense is the whole cosmic network, as much as he or she is just an infinitesimal part of it, a separate and insignificant biological entity. The ... individual human psyche (is) essentially commensurate with the entire cosmos and the totality of existence. (Brown, location 4356)

How can one thing also be many things? This is one of the deepest mysteries, although it is depicted eloquently in the Holographic Theory. "If you, as Oneness, became an individual, you would still have the potential to experience yourself as everything, since ultimately that is what you are. From one perspective you could experience all of reality, and from another perspective you could experience an individual reality" (Nimala, location 921).

The truth isn't limited to our ability to understand and conceptualize it, so two seemingly opposite things can both be true. Perhaps an individual expression of infinite Being experiences a limited range of awareness, and at the same time, a greater dimension of the same Being is experiencing all of it. Both are true, and both perspectives are always here and available in every moment along with an infinite variety of perspectives in between these two extremes. There isn't a right perspective or a wrong perspective for awareness to take. It seems to want to try them all. (Nimala, location 930)

Even indigenous tribes understood this profound holographic nature. "... that which comes within the souls of men when they realize their relationship, their oneness, with the universe and all its powers, and when they realize that at the center of the universe dwells oneness, and that this center is really everywhere, it is within each of us. [Black Elk Oglala

Sioux 1863 – 1950]” (Nash ii).

Oneness as Energy, a Unified Field of Aliveness

Science is not in conflict with religion anymore.

... scientific knowledge supports our mystical understanding. Quantum physics recognizes that there is only one energy in the universe. ...everything in the universe is made of the same one energy, and that energy is light. What that means is that you and I are literally one. We're made of the same substance. And there is no other substance. My body and your body, my mind in your mind, all emerge from the one. All of the unique and distinct forms we see – floor, chair, table, car, tree, bird, fish, ocean, sun – are made up of exactly the same energy. And all forms we perceive are just patterns of slowed-down light, vibrating at different speeds in different frequencies. With electron microscopes, we can see that forms which appear solid and inert are neither solid nor inert. They are made up of molecules of the same one light dancing in, out, and around each other – constantly moving, constantly changing. We are connected and we are one. Every form – throughout the universe – is vibrant, vital, and alive. Through science we know these truths. (Welshons, 18)

From smashing atoms, to looking into the farthest reaches of space, scientists are ever pursuing a way to define the Unified Field, the sticky glue that holds the universe together. Their search continues for that spark of life, the essence of being, for the ultimate cosmic creative power, for a theory that explains everything (TOE). One of the world's most renowned theoretical physicists, Roger Penrose, admits science can still not define this field: “I'm still hoping to find something—some structure that preserves coherence” (www.discovermagazine.com).

I chuckle at the scientific world trying to define the unity holding it all together—unified field theory or theory of everything. I believe, that if we can get far enough away from our own view to see *all* pictures of reality, and allow for those not yet determined or in focus, the *totality* of these views/theories are the “theory of everything.”

Oneness is the greatest mystery. You may have figured me out by now. I am trying to have you *feel and internalize* the vast grand nature of Being, of the individual being and of The One Being. To feel the awesome beauty of the Eternal Nature within you, to feel the rich, palpable grace of Presence everywhere surrounding you... oneness without ceasing. You can talk all day about oneness, but it can only be truly experienced—a walk in the woods, watching a sunset, holding a loved one in your arms, dancing in the midst of a crowded dance floor, or in quiet meditation. Oneness is a mystery, yet when our monkey minds are silent, it can be *felt* deep within.

Oneness can be experienced as heaven on earth. It is when our divine nature aligns with our human nature, integrates, and we are made whole. Love, peace and joy are side effects of living in oneness, our natural state. The only reason we do not feel them all the time is that our minds get in the way. So why would people choose to live *without* oneness? They simply do not know that a deep belief in separation keeps them from experiencing this connection, which is *always* present, regardless of their awareness of its Presence. With some simple realizations and re-adjustment of perception, such as developing moment-to-moment mindfulness, and possibly, by seeking a metaphysical counselor for discussions, almost anyone can reach their full potential to be happy and live in a state of oneness.

What is Separation?

“The true root cause of all discord, all war, and all disharmony on our planet is due to separation we humans have from our source, our authentic selves, and to The Creator”
(Heartsong, location1958).

"The illusion of separateness is actually the root cause of all human problems. It is the source of our most painful and frustrating experiences. Is the source of our sadness and our

fear. It is the source of most of our arguments, resentments, and misunderstandings. It is the source of conditional love” (Welshons xvii).

By beginning to address the causes of separation, and opening to unconditional love, we become inclusive rather than exclusive in our relationships. We learn how to bridge the gap and heal our relationships with others, the world, nature, God, and our Self.

It is vital to bring ourselves back to deeply living in connection with our source, The One, to deeply embrace the knowing, and the living, that we are all that is. We are at a brink of annihilation of the human race. We can and must recognize and live our connection to The One. We must cast aside any notion that we are separate from The One, and cast aside any notion we are separate from others, as well as recognize we are connected to everything; plants, animals, minerals, Mother Earth, the planets, stars, galaxies and beyond. (Heartsong, location1964)

Most of our lives, our attention is on a separate, individual self. The sense of being predominantly or almost exclusively an individual and not part of a community or world, is the biggest block to oneness. “Why would we choose to disassociate ourselves from the greatest positive potential of our species? The only logical response is that there is an obstruction. We are obstructed by the 'self,' an obstruction created by a personal choice of the mind” (Harrison18).

Although honing individual skills is part of our life's purpose, the sense of being strictly an individual is the ego's territory. Individualism manifests most often as selfishness, greed, and "It's either you or me," and has been cultivated at severe costs. Taking advantage of other countries, of limited resources, or of other people's trust or weakness in a power play is the domination of ego-consciousness on the planet. People are tired of this old paradigm and want change. However, we have to BE the change, and that is the focus of my dissertation... changing to unity-consciousness.

Born into Separation

Trying to short circuit separation-consciousness is not easy, because a feeling or illusion of separation registers in our souls the minute we are born from the pristine field of consciousness. The moment we were born, we began a spiral *away* from a feeling of unity and toward a mistaken identity as a separate, isolated and needy individual. When we are born, the separation-syndrome also occurs at a physical body/mind/personality level, as well as the soul level. In infants it is induced as we struggle for our caregiver's attention to get our needs met. An "i" realizes it does not have something it wants, someone "other" has it, producing some fear and loneliness.

The process of remembering the pristine, natural state we experienced before we were born or when we were in the womb, or even as a small child, is part of the process of returning to Oneness. Living that innate, natural connection is called the "primordial awareness" state in Tibetan Buddhism. As we are born into this world, a deep part of us remembers the original state of Pure Presence and awareness. Before concepts or notions of "other," "distance," "past" or "future" was a time when we trusted. It was a time when we felt safe and secure, with an intuitive feeling of connection with Source to meet our needs.

We were taught from a very early age to deny the Soul's vision of the world and focus instead on the symbols of separation. When we were born and for the first period of our lives, we had no concept of separation. Everything we perceived was an extension of who we are. It's time to reverse this momentum and remember our original innocence—the sight and vision we beheld when we were born, which is still within us. (Twyman, location 255)

We've all been newborn babies. We've all tasted that innocence, that lack of solidity, that openness, that sense of not being anything in particular. And essentially that innocence, that freshness, that openness hasn't been lost. It's just become obscured by the seeking game, apparently. By the game of being a separate person, a person separate from the world. And it's out of that

illusion, that assumption, that all suffering begins. (Foster 50)

Some have called this whole illusion of separation the "soul's journey." We come here as souls to learn lessons by everything that happens to us, until... we are done, and ascend to a higher level of consciousness. Yet, at our core there is this feeling: once I was home, and now, I am not. We have felt separate, most of us, for very, very many years, and probably, lifetimes. This manifests as anything from a general, fearful uneasiness and uncertainty, to specific debilitating mental disorders. This disassociation with the wholeness or total unity of life is so rampant, it is often thought of as the "norm".

Breaking the Illusion

Upon examining the suffering of a world based on separation, in the struggle of "dog eat dog," and "win at any cost" in a world of generally unhappy individuals, we can ask these questions: Do we wish to continue this? Is it fulfilling our deepest needs? What other way is there?

As we begin to re-evaluate and soften our attachment to separation, so that we can realize the inherent oneness that is our foundation, our life, the Source of our being, a deep peace and trust will return, our original nature will be re-born. No matter what events are happening in our life or the world around us, we will have connected with pure, unity-consciousness, the changeless still-point within all the changing drama.

It is important to remember during the rest of this dissertation, that we are speaking of the "illusion" of separation. For I believe there is no such thing as separation. The good news is, no matter how alone or lost or separate we feel, we can awaken from this dream or illusion of separation, into a more perfect and fulfilling life as universal beings living harmoniously

in unity-consciousness. The key is remembering, knowing the Self is always present within. “Self is present whether or not we are feeling particularly “centered” or “whole.” We often associate the feeling of “being centered” with Self, but sometimes we awaken to Self in the midst of despair and disintegration.” (Brown, location 500)

Jeff Foster, author of several books on awakening into non-duality, who simply calls unity-consciousness "THIS," affirms: “The beauty of THIS, is that it was seen right in the midst of that despair. I thought I had to overcome despair before I could awaken. What was seen is that THIS was already here, right at the heart of what I'd taken to be my life, right at the heart of the despair” (Foster 56).

The point: there is no reason to wait until we feel more prepared and less vulnerable to awaken, to merge into this seemingly illusive Oneness. Since separation is an illusion, a reasonable line of questioning in self-inquiry can confront it. It is helpful to find a place of inner stillness in this process of awakening, to rest between “rounds” of engaging our ego. This is not going to be an easy task, so first we find a way to let go for a while, to release and ignore the chattering thoughts and constant internal dialogue. A metaphysical counselor who understands we are not putting band-aids on old wounds, but we intend to fully awaken and heal into Oneness, will be invaluable They will use the suffering and separation as tools, to show you where you are, and are not stuck. "There are no mistakes in oneness. The game has to play itself out. The separation, the suffering has to play itself out, in order to be seen. It's like suffering and separation are there to wake us up” (Foster, 48).

Seeking

Our central focus in this paper is on separation-consciousness and the maladies it

produces in the human psyche, but a deeper aspect of this discovery needs revealing. At birth, our physical separation from Source created a longing in our souls to return to bliss, or fill ourselves up with something missing. This was subconscious, we do not know what we were missing, only that there is a feeling of emptiness. Then, we continue to adopt the illusion of separation held in the world-view, where people are dissatisfied, and seeking material or spiritual treasure as the source of happiness.

As adults, we seem to move so far away from that childlike innocence and simplicity. We become so heavy, so lost in our seeking, in our search to be someone in the world, in our drive to succeed, in our desire to make everything perfect, and it's all so exhausting. Underneath all of the seeking, we're still just newborn babies, we're still seeing the world for the first time. We just got a little lost in the game of becoming, that's all. (Foster, 29)

We are all seekers looking for something. We spend our lives seeking, searching, wanting. In the material world, there is a search for money, happiness, status, better relationships. More things. More security. More goals and ambitions to succeed. It is a search to be *someone* in the world.

In addition, if the material world does not satisfy us we turn to spiritual teachings. And the goal is not a bigger bank account or faster car or more fulfilling marriage, now the goal is awakening, enlightenment, altered states of consciousness. We want permanent bliss, instead of new relationships. Material seeking, spiritual seeking, it is all seeking. It is a movement into a nonexistent future. "Despite the connections we have, we suffer separation and loneliness when we focus on what we don't have"(Welshons 20).

Seeking and searching are rooted in a rejection of the present moment. A separation from and movement away from "what is" toward a non-existent future full of imaginary happiness. The feeling exists: I am separate from what will make me whole and complete. I

need to fill this emptiness with something more. This longing for what we do not have but must get, goes right to the heart of what it means to be a separate person, with the mantras of "more, more" and "me, me."

The cause of suffering, the reason for unhappiness – is seeking by a "me" that thinks it is a separate identity. "It's the sense of being an entity separate from life itself, separate from this. Separate from others, separate from the world. Separate from the Source. At the root of all the seeking of a lifetime is a sense of not being whole. Of being incomplete. Fragmented. Lost. Alienated. Homesick" (Foster 19).

The suffering of the separate self, the sense of lack, is not merely an intellectually acquired belief, a byproduct of living in the world. It goes back to birth, and the soul's deeply infused sense of not being at "Home." This intuitive longing infuses everything about our experience as a human.

As separate individuals, we live haunted by the vague memory of an intimacy that we cannot name. ... We all long to return home, back to the Source, back to the Ocean. Back to what we were before all of this happened. And so the moment you have separation, you also have a longing. It's the longing to end the separation. ... And the search of a lifetime was always the search for home. (Foster 20)

Once we awaken from the domination of our psychological mind, controlled by the ego with its lies, we remember that this has been a journey of the soul, purposely forgetting its connection to its home as eternal Spirit. And we realize with deep, heartfelt clarity, the same Spirit of Life has never been absent from any atom of existence, and no part of the human has ever been separate from its own Source.

The "i" and the "I" or Ego vs. Soul

We formerly introduced the concepts of "Self" and "self." From a spiritual

viewpoint, we have two primary identities – two "selves." Within our being, we have what could be termed a Capital "I" and a small "i". The small "i" is the ego, and often called the "self." It is full of pride and selfishness, concerned with personal glory and aggrandizement, is manipulative, fearful, doubtful and critical. It maintains a sense of judgment and a sense of separation from others. It fights for control and ground, since it has a lot at stake. It includes our physical, mental, (intellectual/psychological) and emotional characteristics we have accumulated since the moment of our conception, and through innumerable incarnations. It has been supported and reinforced socially and culturally as traits accumulated in the collective sub-conscious of our species, through billions of years of evolution. At best, ego implies a strong self-concept, and identification with certain personality characteristics.

In many spiritual traditions, the small self is regarded as unreal or illusory because it is constantly changing and its perspective keeps shifting. By affirming and connecting with the part of us that is constantly changing, our lives are therefore unreliable, unstable, and unreal. "From the moment we are born there is a part of us that doesn't change. It is awareness – not a particular thought, belief, emotion, opinion, ideal, or sensation, just pure awareness. This Self is our soul, our Atman, which never changes. It never sleeps. It never dies. It just 'is'" (Welshons 32). We always have the choice to ignore or resist this Self-realization out of ignorance or confusion. But by ignoring your authentic Self, the one you came here to actualize, it leads to problems that need therapy or counseling.

By contrast, "I" is pure awareness, stillness, our highest Self that feels oneness with all of creation. It witnesses life from the eye of the hurricane within the absolute Self, unaffected by sabotaging thoughts and emotions from the ego. The entire goal of metaphysical counseling such as Psychosynthesis or Transpersonal Counseling, is to align

with our higher nature or Self, and in that state of awareness we can watch our ego self and disassociate from it when we wish. Peace and clarity abound without the chattering psychological mind. Realizing we are already connected to this Self, we ARE this Self, and all else is illusion promoted by an ego intent on control through deception and manipulation, is paramount to distilling the power of the ego's voice within.

The only difference between you and an enlightened being is that an enlightened being no longer lives in their mind. Their awareness is not cluttered with thoughts and insecurities. They're no longer attached to ideas and identities that block their ability to see what is really in front of them. They can think if they need to. But they use their own mind as a tool. They are not enslaved like the rest of us are. They can put their mind on and take it off as necessary (Welshons 218)

Ego-identity is the image we show to the world, and the filter through which we experience the world. It regulates our concept of who we are, as a separate person with an identity and agenda.

What we think we look like, what we think we know, what we believe, how we feel, and how we react to people and events. It is the complex of our likes and dislikes, what we believe to be "true," what we believe to be "false," what we believe to be "right," and what we believe to be "wrong." ... Our ego mind is the seat of disconnection and separation. The more highly we esteem our small self the more disconnected we become – the more self-centered, self absorbed, self important, and narcissistic. We also tend to become neurotic and frightened because our self-esteem is built on such shaky ground. (Welshons 33)

Most of us have heard the acronym for the ego: Edging God Out. And if we think of God as that perfect state of Oneness, then the ego is edging Oneness out, for it creates the need to remain separate. It's ironic that the constriction and fear of the ego—in trying to protect itself—actually maintains that isolation. If we could just relax into our Soul and hold still for a moment, then the unfolding into Oneness becomes easy and natural. It's not something we need to do; it's something we need to be. The ego constricts, whereas the Soul expands. And that expansion is the most natural thing we could ever accomplish. (Twyman, location 516)

Identification and Die-Identification

We tend to elevate the importance of our small self while ignoring our True Self. We do not feel oneness within our being until the importance of these two selves is reversed. So how do we re-align with our true identity, and get free of the clutches of the ego and its tricks? It goes back to a Native American metaphor: which wolf will you feed the most? We must ask ourselves: What am I identifying with in each moment? Am I identifying with the truth that I am made in the image and likeness of Love, of God, of Oneness? Or am I identifying with the fear and separation of the ego? First we learn to identify these two different voices within, and then we learn to practice disassociation with that which we don't want to control us.

How can you catch the ego?

I feel it when I'm in a constricted place, disconnected from the truth that "I am love" and "I am whole and complete." The ego is a place where I encounter the fear that I'm not good enough, I'm not supported in life, I don't belong, and that I don't know how to connect with others. All of those wounded places—those fearful ways of thinking—that constrict my breath and heart and shift my rhythm into something unnatural . . . those are the moments when I'm in ego. Ego tells me that who I AM isn't enough and never will be...not smart enough, beautiful enough, talented enough . . . whatever it might be. The ego speaks through the voice of lack, limitation, and "not enoughness. However, the Soul (when we're truly grounded and connected) whispers the most beautiful consolations and affirmations of our wholeness, completeness, and of our belonging. The Soul tells us that who we are in this moment is absolutely who we were born to be. (Twyman, location 511)

Guidance from a metaphysical counselor can help a person dis-identify from parts of the personality that cause a feeling of suffering and separation, limited patterns of feeling, thought, and behavior. They learn to move their awareness freely among all aspects of their person and act from conscious choice, rather than live in reactivity to their own subconscious

playground. A metaphysical counselor can help you explore how to be aware of being aware.

Dis-identification is an easy process, once you recognize the ego's voice as the Critic, the Accuser and the Controller.

We are dominated by everything with which our self becomes identified. We can dominate and control everything from which we **dis**-identify ourselves. ... Dis-identification occurs when we can step away and look back at a part of ourselves, at a behavior pattern, at a constellation of feelings and thoughts, or even at our personality as a whole. Dis-identification has to do with the stepping away from; identification has to do with where we step to. (Brown, location 860)

When we are identified with one or another sub-personality, with our mind or emotional nature, or with our body, we are victims of a single worldview and self-image, and subject to shifts and changes stimulated by outside events and internal confusion. When we are able to dis-identify from these parts of ourselves, we are able to choose our perspective and behavior from a broader range of possibilities. We see that we can use our personalities as vehicles for Self-expression instead of being caught up in melodrama. (Brown, location 848)

“Each time I dis-identify from any part of myself consciously, I discover my power of choice” (Brown, location 861).

In therapy, if our effort is simply to reorganize our personality and our mind, we will not find happiness. We find true happiness by undercutting our identification with thoughts, desires, and emotions. We do this not by denying thoughts and emotions, but by realizing that they are not who we truly are. Traditional psychotherapy often revolves around attempting to accommodate the neurotic demands of the ego. True freedom is found by extricating yourself from identification with your ego.

Our relationship to the habits of personality will remain inharmonious, until we awaken to the silence, stillness, awareness, Presence underlying our lives. By releasing the

clutches of the personality, liberation and grace will enter. We recognize the grace underlying all things, and are not mesmerized by the surface activity of things. When anger arises, we witness the anger. When fear is there, we acknowledge there is fear. Nevertheless, we know this constantly changing part of our nature, the feelings, thoughts and events, are experiences we are having rather than who we are. When the identity functions in terms of oneness with the Eternal/Infinite rather than with the ever-changing time/space environmental factors, life will cease to be a struggle.

“Self-improvement is only about changing content, and our internal reactions to that content; awakening is about liberation from the dimension of changing content. Only when you awaken to being that deeper presence does an alternative become available” (Ardagh, xxvi).

A Softer View of Personhood

Deepak Chopra has a different view of this struggle with the nature of the individual, and it is worth considering. He talks about having "soft" awareness; "soft" focus, instead of a "hard" focus in our thinking. It is a state of mind that is open, relaxed, and receptive, and gives you the best opportunity to flow with life instead of putting up barriers and resistance. The value of being less rigid may be a part of healthy awareness, co-existing with our constant vigilance of the mind.

Deepak draws this metaphor of loosening the mind's awareness into “soft focus,” from certain eye exercises that teach people how to relax their vision.

Hard focus is specific and particular. You take aim, so to speak, and keep an object in your sites. Soft focus widens the field of vision. This approach can be applied to the mind. A tightly focused mind becomes narrow and linear if it can't expand. We're all guilty of following narrow mental grooves, like a train

confined to one narrow set of tracks. We experience our minds one thought at a time. What this habit leads us to miss is true understanding, because your mind is much more than one event after another. It is even more futile to try to control your mind one thought at a time. No matter how many years you spent judging your thoughts – rejecting the ones you dislike, and censoring those of which you disapprove – your mind will keep bringing them around. (Chopra 69)

Soft focus sees the mind as a whole. You view thinking as if on a wide-screen, excepting that any possible thought can come along. Instead of being a problem – the endless flow of thought becomes the fertile ground of change. “The flood cannot be tamed. Nor should we want it to be, because the glory of the mind is that it draws from 1000 Springs” (Chopra 69).

His idea discusses several aspects of each type of focus. As we learn to be more aware of our thoughts, judging them or over-thinking about them is even more detrimental than having them in the first place! Our peace of mind resides in knowing when our energy-body needs to lose awareness for awhile... to go softer.

Hard Focus

- Your mind is overworked. It's exhausting keeping up with it.
- You feel a strong aversion to guilty and shameful thoughts.
- You push bad memories down out of sight.
- You wish you had more control over your thoughts.
- You berate yourself when you make a mistake. You call yourself an idiot or stupid.
- You struggle between good and bad impulses.
- Images you don't want to see pop up anyway, as if on their own.
- A strong voice tells you if you are being good or bad.
- You find yourself being vigilant in case something unexpected should happen.
- You know God sees you, but you try not to think about that. (Chopra, 70)

As you can see, hard focus stands for more than a habit of mind. It is the quality of attention you are paying to yourself and the world. The act of seeing is never neutral. If your attention is wary, hyper-vigilant to every kind of risk, worried about what can go wrong, your quality of attention is unhealthy. A different quality of attention is developed by soft focus.

Soft Focus

- Your mind is calm and not overworked. You enjoy being in its presence.
- You don't feel haunted by guilty and shameful thoughts.
- Your memories fill out your experience: you accept them for what they are.
- You don't try to control your thoughts. The more freely they come, the better.
- When you make a mistake, you accept it and quickly move on.
- Not every idea can be perfect or brilliant, and mistakes are often the best teachers.
- There's a contrast between good and bad impulses, but you take both in stride.
- Sometimes you take a secret delight in so-called bad thoughts, knowing that they're just another part of your experience.
- Unpleasant mental images don't make you afraid or discussed.
- You can adapt to the mind's darker side.
- You aren't plagued by a judgmental voice telling you that your bad are unworthy.
- You aren't braced for the next disaster around the corner.
- If God is looking down on you, he approves of what he sees. (Chopra 71)

There are several aspects of hard focus that most of us may think are positive. Yet, you can feel how the soft focus list offers ease, inclusiveness, not listening to the mind's particular agenda or conflict as often, and taking it less seriously if you do. It takes a conscious shift to move from hard to soft focus, and yet it is a powerful way to dissolve the energy that glues rigid perspectives in place. Becoming a witness to our lives from the highest perspective involves loosening up control and judgment to the softest focus.

Thoughts Are Not Reality

As an individual embarks on a journey of self-awareness to redefine the boundaries between his self and Self, and uncover the feelings of separation wired into his brain concerning others, a key point needs remembering. This will make all the difference to keep you from having a miserable time of awakening. It is sometimes difficult to control thoughts, because their very nature is illusory. Then why do our thoughts seem so real? Because we are the ones who create them: “Because thought is something that shapes our reality from the inside out. Because it's so close to us, it's easy to forget that we are the ones doing it” (Carlson 12).

Most of us do not understand that we are the thinkers of our own thoughts – we do it ourselves. In addition, we each confuse our thinking with reality. Our thinking is *not* reality, but only an attempt to interpret a given situation. We have learned to interpret our thoughts as if they were reality, but thought is merely an ability that we have – *we* are the ones who produced those thoughts. It is easy to believe that because we think something, the object or content of our thinking represents reality. We can see other people's thoughts as being just thoughts, but we usually fail to see our own in the same way. Most of us believe that if we have a thought it's worthy of serious attention and concern, but if someone else thinks something, we might see it as just a thought, not worthy of attention.

The way we think about something and, more importantly, the way we relate to our thinking, will determine its effect on us. ... A person who understands the thought process, epitomizes mental health and happiness, doesn't take his own thoughts or those of anyone else too seriously, a person who rarely allows his thinking to bring him down and ruin his day, any thought can run through his head and he still understands that it's only a thought. (Carlson 10)

When we realize that thinking is an ability rather than a reality, we can dismiss any

negative thoughts that pass through. To think about something does not mean we must take the thoughts to heart and react in a negative way. Pick and choose which thoughts you wish to react to. Proper understanding of thought allows us to stop everyday thought attacks before they beat us up. We no longer feel compelled to seriously follow every train of thought that comes into our heads. We don't have to believe them, associate with and run with them, or dis-associate from them. We can let them be like the static in the background of a neighbor's television set.

To recognize these types of thoughts as static on a television set – as interference. There is no value in studying and analyzing static on a TV screen, and there is equally little value studying the static in our own thoughts. Without a proper understanding of thought, the smallest amount of static in our minds can spiral and grow until it ruins an entire day or even a lifetime. When she see her negative thoughts as static, interference, you can dismiss them – they are no longer serving your needs. (Carlson 10)

Understanding the nature of thought, that we are not our thoughts, allows us to live in a state of neutrality, happiness, and lighthearted contentment. When our attention is taken off what we are thinking about, particularly when it is negative, we are left with a nice, easy feeling. None of this is to suggest that we do not need to think – we definitely do. Just the thoughts the cause distress and unhappiness are not worth dwelling on. Realizing the impermanence and subjectivity of thought allows us to be less critical and analytical of others and ourselves. We understand that thinking is something that we do by virtue of being human, and that we need not confuse thinking with reality. Thinking by taking in information is necessary for many reasons to interpret the world. Nevertheless, just because you think about something, does not mean it must be taken seriously. You do not need to contemplate, analyze, believe, or give attention to many, many thoughts that pass through you.

Relationships

The entire purpose of learning to associate with our Higher Self and dis-identify from our ego, is to realize that this "place" of awareness is who we are, and is where we are always connected to everyone and everything. Life becomes truly fulfilling only when we perceive it as an integrated, undivided whole. When we have a deep knowingness that there is no separation, we live more responsibly, compassionately, and intimately with all creatures and Creation. All of our relationships improve. And we have a lot of them!

We are connected in many relationships from intimate, family, close friends, people at work, strangers on the street, people in distant lands we may never meet. It is also important to recognize that our relationships are not just interpersonal. We have a relationship with our body. We have a relationship with our mind. We have a relationship with our psychological self, our emotional self, and our spiritual self with the capital S. We have a relationship with our home, a relationship with our neighborhood, our town, our country, and other nations. We have a relationship with our planet and with the universe. And we have a relationship with our Creator. (Welshons 6)

Self-Integration

The first bridge of separation we must dismantle is within our own being; to love and know oneself, and integrate all parts of oneself. In order to have an appreciation of the connection and oneness of all in the world, we must begin with our self. "In a very real sense, the only relationship we have is with ourselves. Our entire experience of life is an internal experience. Our perceptions, our intellectual judgments, our physical sensations, and the emotions that follow in their wake are all inside us" (Welshons 30).

To find true happiness, you must first get to know yourself. When you live in connection with your truth, with the person who you really are, you create more joy and peace in your life, and feel more connected to life. "For without an accurate, intricate, pure

understanding and a knowing of ourselves, it is less likely we can see our place in the whole, and we are thus less able to relate to The Creator and to all that is.” (Heartsong, location 971)

Self-love and self-worth are keys to self-integration. If there is any judgment or disharmony in our being, any lack of love and acceptance – then love cannot flow freely through our hearts, and we suffer from constriction. We need to “belong” to ourselves before we can belong to others; we must be at home in ourselves and not waiting around to gain acceptance from others. We accept and love ourselves exactly as we are, while at the same time we examine what beliefs we wish to hold onto, and what is not serving us that we want to release.

When you embrace the loving person that you are, and realize the grand magnificence of that which you really are, this facilitates being more positively aware of yourself and living in connection with your divine nature. There is nothing wrong with thinking highly of yourself. Quite the contrary, it is necessary to embrace the gloriousness of who you are. Why do we know this is true? Because you are created from the source of all life, The One. (Heartsong, location 274)

Once we wake up from our forgetfulness, into the awareness of our true nature, we do not want to label or judge the way that we have lived in the past—our ego existence—as wrong or bad. That actually makes it difficult to release or transform it. "There’s already enough pain surrounding how we’ve lived within the illusion of separation—we certainly don’t need to add insult to injury. Compassion is absolutely necessary as we allow those beliefs that have manifested as separation in our lives to actually begin to heal and dissolve” (Twyman, location 412).

"I believe we have to wholeheartedly accept ourselves; we have to belong to ourselves— embrace all parts of ourselves, including our shadow as well as our light. We need to know that both aspects make up who we are. It’s not about pushing away the dark

areas but integrating them so that we can be whole” (Twyman, location 854). We gratefully accept and love our body, mind, emotions, and personality with deep soul love- while we transform them. The paradox of accepting everything AS IS while we simultaneously transform ourselves, is perfectly Self-regulating.

Separation from Others

We cannot be happy when we close our hearts to other human beings, because there is no way to negate our connection to them. No matter how difficult or unworthy they seem, we are still connected to them. Finding happiness in life requires that we find a way to be at peace with this reality. We have to let go of the habits of thought and behavior that undercut our awareness of oneness, and we have to actually live in that awareness.

One key to getting along with relatives and friends is to learn to communicate with our hearts rather than with our minds – to let go of our attachment to our beliefs in order to meet together in the realm of love. Changing our perspective from the head to the heart is the journey into Oneness. To love and accept each other, we have to cease cherishing our opinions. If we get attached to being right, we lose the ability to see beyond our roles and belief systems, which form our individual separate reality. There are as many realities as there are human beings. To learn real communication with our close associations, we have to develop the ability to see the world through their eyes. This does not require that we completely surrender our own perceptions, but that we cultivate the ability to hold two worldviews (or more) at once. We cannot always meet in the realm of the mind. Yet, we can always meet in the realm of the heart.

The problems that arise in close relationships and make us feel alone and separate, even among family members, result from our unwillingness to let go of our desire for others

to be different than they are. Relationships can only stay rooted in love when we accept the other beings as perfect – just as they are – and we love them without asking them to change. That is unconditional love. That is the way God loves.

If we are kind and loving to our family but simultaneously cruel or indifferent towards our extended family, our fellow human beings – those who are sick, hungry, lonely, depressed, and neglected – we are missing an important set of threads in the overall fabric of life. Actually, every human being is a part of our family, and their happiness is our happiness... their suffering is our suffering.

We sometimes refer to the people we don't know as strangers, which inhibits our ability to feel our oneness with them. ... Categorizing others as strangers leaves us to view most people on the earth as separate. We don't relate to them. We don't experience empathy for them. We lose awareness of our connection. This sense of separateness often extends to other species and to the planet as a whole. Our culture trains us to see ourselves as disconnected not only from most other human beings but also from millions of other creatures who inhabit our earth.... But in our highest consciousness -satchitananda-we recognize that we are connected, that there is only apparent separation among all beings. No one is truly a stranger. All forms have consciousness and all forms are part of the one. (Welshons 165)

Our hearts know how we can live in Oneness, and how it should be expressed in the world. Our minds are designed to constantly evaluate, judge, separate, and construct. But the heart holds a different intelligence—the wisdom of Oneness. And this is our most powerful tool today. ... Oneness is a living reality, gathering force and momentum, and flowing into the ordinary world. And I think of how it can transform our world—our political and social systems, and of course, our families. I think that living in a state of Oneness is another way of saying that we're living in balance. It's important to understand that this is a dynamic balance. and from within the separation and through our loving intention, we allow Oneness to be born. (Twyman, location 642)

"We are all one" in various ways, as co-existing parts of the vast fabric of Reality. However, the place where we are deeply interconnected, is our big Self – our "Atman." That

bigger picture is a recognition that we are part of a much larger whole from which there is no way to ever really be separate. Mahatma Gandhi, one of the greatest visionaries in human history, clearly understood the bigger picture.

“He understood the interconnection of all beings, the significance of every word we utter, and the importance of every action we take. To transform ourselves and our world requires total integrity. It isn't enough to say beautiful things or to believe in lofty ideals. Gandhi believed we must become the embodiment of those ideals” (Welshons 7).

“Interdependence is and ought to be as much the ideal of man as self-sufficiency. Man is a social being. Without interrelation with society he cannot realize his oneness with the universe or suppress his egotism. His social interdependence enables him to test his faith and to prove himself on the touchstone of reality” (Mahatma Gandhi).

“Connection, Harmony, Peace, Oneness. There is a bond that exists between us, an unseen link that unites and satisfies us in ways nothing else can. In the end, what we're seeking isn't the riches of the world, but the richness of our Souls; and this can only come from realizing that we are connected and whole. Simply put: we are One” (Twyman, location 200).

Bhakti Yoga is a path through which we learn to see God in everyone and everything, as souls on a journey, and we are devoted to cultivating this Divine Play within our lives. "We incorporate all of our relationships into the process of unveiling our soul. Everyone we meet is God in human form, our Guru in disguise, delivering a blessing. – whether it is someone we love, who allows us to touch that sacred place of oneness, or is someone we don't like, who could show us how our mind blocks our experience of oneness” (Welshons 208)

Separation from Nature

One gap of separation causing a lot of suffering for both parties, is in the symbiotic relationship between Mother Earth and Her people. You can well imagine that Mother Earth will function fine without people, for this was the case for many millenniums before people came to the earth. However, people cannot live without Mother Earth. This relationship needs healing now!

Indigenous people around the world have lived with an understanding of the inter-connection of all life, with appreciation and reverence toward Mother Earth. They wonder how people can lose their connection to nature. We are all part of nature, nature is part of us. If we do not realize that, we are not fully awake. If we do realize that, we cannot harm nature. We need nature. Human beings seem to think it is not a problem to pollute water. If you think it is okay to pollute water, just try going without water for a few days.

There is a symbiosis between these people and the earth, so much so that there is difficulty among them to distinguish between themselves and the earth. They have an appreciation of the natural forces of life and nature. As has been for many years and is currently the case, western culture does not possess the understanding or awareness that we are intricately connected to nature and to all of life. There continues to be a disassociation of the human spirit from the land. Reverence for life has greatly diminished and people often feel very separate from others, from the natural elements of the earth and even from one's self. (Heartsong, location 215)

Why do we need to nourish our connection, to be one with nature? Our relationship with our body is intimately connected to our relationship with our planet. The body is not in relationship to the earth, it is part of the earth. And she is our greatest teacher and friend, if we establish a relationship with Her.

Nature is a doorway to spirit, but without the impositions of religion. Nature brings you back into spirit, but it has no dogma, nothing to believe in. It

teaches without words, speaking to the body instead of the mind. Nature gracefully includes seeming opposites like creation and evolution without even pausing to consider any contradiction. Nature demands of us no rituals, and dams no disbelievers. It silently teaches us by example, never through sermons. Water shows us how to floor around things without any rigid hard edges. Stones teaches how to weather all kinds of challenges, and to lose her edges over time. (Ardagh 133)

We acknowledge our society's insensitivity and disconnection from its environment. Earth is sacred, and our actions have consequences. We begin to recognize our connection to and reliance on nature, and that there is no way to live in separation from Her without suffering in our lives, in many ways.

Separation from God

You can feel separate from your own being by not accepting yourself, feel separate from others by not opening your heart to them, or feel cut off from the world and the planet by your beliefs and perceptions. However, the most suffering comes, whether we realize it or not, by feeling separate from God. "But I believe in God!" you say. Yet, is the God of your perception a living, actualized relationship?

If you are considering God as principles, a holographic mathematical equation, or some person in the sky who judges you and hands out punishment, your mind has blurred your intimate relationship with God. I did not say connection to God, for it is impossible to disconnect.

The truth of the ages is that you are indeed connected with The Creator, and therefore are connected with others. Since The Creator is all there is, and has and continues to create everything in the universe, you can see there are connections and interconnections within and of all things: people, places, animals, plants, minerals, the Mother Earth, solar systems, and so on. (Heartsong, location 641)

The essence of The One is your essence, for you have come from this Source of your life and the Source of all life.

To move into the reality of a living God rather than just hanging out with a theology of God, we must move into our hearts, and relinquish the concepts we have and our judgments against other people's concepts of God. "I think that God desires our joy, not our 'rightness.' God prefers that we be happy and seek joyful experiences, rather than always having to be right about our concepts of God. So I think the more we stay open, the more accepting we can be of others and how they hold that Source we sometimes call God. "

(Twyman, location 808)

God is not an idea. He is Life Itself, All-That-Is, Consciousness, far beyond our ability to comprehend. You may never *know* God, but realizing He already knows you intimately, sharing every thought, aware of every intention, every feeling, and never judges your behavior, is a very sweet relationship. "The greatest romance you can have is the romance with God. He is the Lover and our souls the beloved, and when the soul meets the greatest lover of the universe, then the eternal romance begins" (Paramahansa Yogananda).

Our spiritual path is the path of dancing with our Beloved – in moments of ecstatic joy and in moments of our own judgment and agitation.

Being separate from God is like being a ship on a wild and rocky sea. You have no mooring, no dock in the storm of life. No deep peace, real security, no ease in your daily life. When all other relationships go sour, this one sustains you- like a light within a darkened room.

Just how intimate are you with God, True Source, Creator, if you bridge your

self-imposed distance? "You are always with The Creator, for you are The Creator expressing your unique way, through your talents, gifts and personality" (Heartsong, location 1893).

Separation from Soul

When humans are not aware of the journey of their soul, and are not in harmony with their soul's guidance, it is equal in suffering to separation from God. We recognize that our relationship with God – and, in fact, every relationship we have – is just the mirror image of our relationship with our own soul. Other words for the soul are higher self, inner guidance, gut feeling and intuition. The soul is the essence of who we are, our true identity. Nevertheless, the soul is the least familiar, least explored aspect of our being. It is beyond thought. Since we are accustomed to experiencing our life through thought and intellect, this sets us up for separation, so we are in a sense- separate from our soul.

James Twyman, in *Proof of Oneness*, says you can retrain yourself to see the world like the saints and mystics, teaching yourself to see everything in a new but also very ancient way.

To retrain your mind to perceive everything through the lens of the Soul rather than the ego. To rebuild your relationship with your soul. Your ego is the part of you that sees everything as separate—alone and in competition with you. Your Soul knows that nothing is truly separate; and that on the deepest, most essential level, we are One. Unfortunately, however, you've been trained to give the ego's vision much more power than the Soul's, and so the evidence that surrounds you is overlooked and ignored. (Twyman, location 249)

“When we live with Soul, we're living with vibrancy; and we begin to vibrate at higher levels. This is the goal: to live from the center of our being, the Soul that connects us with God and everything else we perceive” (Twyman, location 893).

The soul is that portion of your being that connects you to The One, and provides the nourishment and guidance on the path you are intended to live. When you recognize and listen to your inner guidance, you are better able to carry forth your life's purpose and to live more peacefully and joyfully.

Your soul level is that aspect of you that orchestrates your being so it will always lead you to do what you are meant to do, which is to be who you are, bringing forth your talents and unique gifts to the world. It is best when you are aware and are listening to your inner guidance (soul), for when you do, you live your life as it is intended, which is simply being who you are. (Heartsong, location 739)

A metaphysical counselor will have many techniques and practices for training the ear of your heart to hear this inner Guide of intuition, your own deepest Self.

To experience our own soul – and its oneness with all souls – is the highest of all achievements, the pinnacle of human experience. It is the goal of all creation. When we live in harmony with every living thing, we achieved a sense of completion, connection, and purpose that – in the depths of our souls – we have longed for since time began. (Welshons 168)

Unity Consciousness

Many mystical traditions believe there is a Cosmic Consciousness, which is the ground and source of everything: space and time, matter and energy, mind and consciousness. The ultimate result of healing all of these relationships we have examined is the gift of cosmic, universal or unity-consciousness. We are not truly whole or living our fullest potential and fully enjoying life until we merge in complete unity, often called the "non-dual state." Since most of us are working on a more mundane level of therapy and healing, building skills to end suffering from the false belief in separation at many levels, this ultimate state of being completely dissolved in the whole while still operating in life- is difficult to grasp. It cannot be grasped by the mind.

Yet down through the ages, the world's great religious leaders, and untold millions

of ordinary people, have all experienced a deep Reality underlying the superficial reality of our senses. Inexpressible in words, they have given this Reality many names: God, Allah, the Tao, Atman, Brahman, Universal Spirit, Pure Light of the Void, Pure Consciousness, and the Ground of Being. They have experienced awareness of this Reality by cultivation of the "meta-senses." Meta-senses are those higher senses that we may accumulate with our gradual absorption into greater consciousness. Through the development of these meta-senses we may learn to transcend this current reality or paradigm and to manifest spatial, divine transforming qualities.

This spatial consciousness has been most popularized in recent years by Jill Bolte Taylor, in her book *Stroke of Insight*. She is the brain scientist who underwent a massive stroke, which cast her brain and awareness into a non-dual state of Oneness. Scientific investigations of yogis and mystics show unity-consciousness to be a state in which the brain is quiet, still, peaceful, without active conceptual thought, and yet awake, alert and clear. Taylor agrees.

At first I was shocked to find myself inside of a silent mind. But then I was immediately captivated by the magnificence of energy around me. And because I could no longer identify the boundaries of my body, I felt enormous and expansive. I felt at one with all the energy that was, and it was beautiful there. ...I affectionately referred to this space as La La Land. But it was beautiful there. Imagine what it would be like to be totally disconnected from your brain chatter that connects you to the external world. So here I am in this space and any stress related to me, to my job, it was gone. And I felt lighter in my body. And imagine all of the relationships in the external world and the many stressors related to any of those, they were gone. I felt a sense of peacefulness. And imagine what it would feel like to lose 37 years of emotional baggage! I felt euphoria. If I have found Nirvana and I'm still alive, then everyone who is alive can find Nirvana. I picture a world filled with beautiful, peaceful, compassionate, loving people who knew that they could come to this space at any time.

http://blog.ted.com/2008/03/12/jill_bolte_tayl/#more

Our evolutionary destiny is to become one with all existence, and the conductive plasma of this union is spatial consciousness. We become open to the experience of complete unity, only when we recognize at the deepest intuitive level- that we do not exist as separate selves. Only One Being, One Presence, and One Power is acting, doing, being, and I call this... "Oneness." However, I do appreciate Jeff Foster's word choice for oneness, calling it simply... "THIS."

Honestly, no words can convey the experience of finally merging with the Divine part of your Self and Life Itself. Even if for a few moments, or occasionally, or finally and ultimately...the old "you" disappears and only the One is embodied. Even beyond the concept of Oneness you may be developing... is "THIS." The deepest feeling of serenity, wholeness, a sense of the holy, a feeling of awe, love, compassion, joy, timelessness, and complete understanding exist in the state of bliss called unity-consciousness.

Rampant Psychological Disorders

Mankind has existed inside a civilization based on power, domination and greed, and it has taken its toll on human physical and mental health. Our egos have kept us in a state of separation, opposition, and competition, and manipulated our minds with thoughts of judgment, criticism, and resentment of ourselves and others. This way of life has gone on for so long, endorsed by governments and social systems, it has been accepted as the status quo by the majority of people. Yet, the majority of people suffer some form of anxiety, stress, addictions, insomnia, depression, medical condition, problems in personal relationships, loneliness, hopelessness, and the list goes on. There are no accurate numbers. Many seek counselors or therapists, many turn to drugs and alcohol, and many do nothing because they assume this personality dis-ease is normal. Only the serious cases end up in mental health

clinics, yet even those numbers are astounding.

- In the world, 800,000 people die from suicide globally each year (1 death every 40 seconds).
- More than 450 million people suffer from mental disorders. Many more have mental problems. Mental health is an integral part of health; indeed, there is no health without mental health. Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders.
<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs220/en/>
- In America, an estimated 26.2 percent of Americans ages 18 and older — about one in four adults — suffer from a diagnosed mental disorder in a given year. When applied to the 2004 U.S. Census residential population estimate for ages 18 and older, this figure translates to 57.7 million people.
- Approximately 40 million American adults ages 18 and older, or about 18.1 percent of people in this age group in a given year, have an anxiety disorder
- Approximately 20.9 million American adults, or about 9.5 percent of the U.S. population age 18 and older in a given year, have a mood disorder.

[\(\[www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications\]\(http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications\)\)](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications)

Clearly, something is causing all this mental suffering. I have explained how separation-consciousness has induced disconnection from all our relationships, and how living as separate individuals to the extreme of blocking out our natural, integrative state of unity-consciousness has caused trauma in the human psyche. These statistics support my thesis. For when people feel supported, accepted, loved, and when they have compassion and acceptance for others, including themselves, they have no mental blocks or obstacles to

experience peace and joy as their predominant mental state.

I have tried to show that Oneness already IS the underlying truth of reality, and we are out of balance because we are not receptive to this truth. We postpone our awakening because we do not like change, and think we may have to give up something. Nevertheless, Oneness is not something that we have to struggle with or strive for; it requires a softening, a slowing, a relaxing, and an opening into Reality.

You are already One with everything you perceive—with the people you see as you walk down the street; with every situation you encounter; and with the Source of all Creation, sometimes known as God. If you're able to lay aside your critical mind—even for a short while—you may discover something that you always suspected but were afraid to truly entertain: Oneness. It's right there within you, and now it's time to open the door so that it can finally be released into the world. (Twyman, location 298)

Toward a New Psychology of Oneness

Understanding that oneness is a new world paradigm, and in fact, the only way the planet and humanity will survive, brings us to the question: How will unity-consciousness come about? When enough people undergo continuous self-awareness, begin living from their hearts instead of their minds, practice silence and stillness, and awaken to the stark realization of our intimacy with All-That-Is. And when people who seek help can receive holistic treatment, restoring them to their full divine potential, instead of current programs that treat only symptoms. A client must dis-identify from the beliefs and illusions of the ego, not try to fix it. In addition, identify instead with the Higher Self.

My research hopes to compel the fields of psychology and counseling to expand theory and practice toward a holistic, metaphysical approach, which would produce a great impact on society. Transpersonal Psychology and Psychosynthesis are similar in that they

connect you to your higher guide or Self, and empower you to be in control of your mind, rather than having your mind control you. They contribute greatly to evolutionary and spiritual psychology, by offering perspectives on our essential nature and on the process of individual growth and evolution.

Psycho-synthesis shifts focus away from pathology and toward discovering the tremendous potential that lies, more or less dormant, within each individual. Our greatest joy comes from tapping and using this potential. So the purpose of guiding in individual psychosynthesis work may be: to help individuals to discover, and experience, and put into expression their unique and universal potential—Self-realization. (Brown, location 322)

The problem with other schools of psychology is that their approach seeks to establish a remedy and connectedness within the present time/space reference of the individual. Any healing dissolves and disappears as time/space changes occur in the exterior environment of the individual, in the natural progression of events and circumstances. The alternative to temporary oneness or temporary identity can be found in the ultimate mental experience of one's true identity, or cosmic consciousness. Lasting change is based on an absolute frame of reference, not a temporal one. Establishing this connection is the result of working with a metaphysical counselor, who understands not only the traps of ego but the help available from linking to non-personal sources.

The best therapist is one who doesn't believe that the mind is real. That is, the therapist understands that the ego mind, and the separateness it engenders, are the primary obstacles to happiness. A therapist who facilitates that awakening, rather than encouraging you to become more deeply enmeshed in your ego's delusions, will be of much greater benefit to you. (Welshons, 144)

I have tried to offer understanding to the lack of trustworthiness of our personal small self, and the unlimited support of truth available by connecting to the field of oneness centered on our big Self. Our localized minds get in the way of our knowing ourselves, our Self-realization. They set up booby traps and landmines, for they could be out of a job if we

trusted our higher minds instead of our egos! Yet, only by knowing ourselves can we change our beliefs that create our suffering. Where do we go from here?

Becoming a Witness to Your Life

There are various practices and techniques to support the developing of awareness or consciousness of self. Some involve becoming a witness to your life and thoughts—a pure, objective, loving witness—to what is happening within and without. Awareness and will are at your core; it's like the center of your being is the eye of the hurricane, a part of you that is still and unchanging, not caught up in the dynamics of your life. It directs your intention or will, and your attention or focus. It is not susceptible to the moods of the day or thoughts of the hour. We are not after awareness just for its own sake. As we become more aware we learn to observe without judgment, we experience “I-Am-ness.” We are able to make conscious choices from this more encompassing perspective. This is operating from a new command center, your own "I AM." With practice, this observation becomes natural, and you will feel when you are in its frequency of peace and unconditional love and when you have unconsciously moved away from that connection, and feeling anxiety, doubt, confusion, depression, or worse.

Even classical psychotherapy agrees that when someone wants to change something in their lives, that what has to be changed are one's beliefs. Therefore, in that centered awareness, that oneness, we recognize our core beliefs and our more recent beliefs, evaluate them, and choose what to keep and what to throw away. It is actually a simpler process than you may think. And creative. Even, fun! “A belief is simply where we have stopped thinking and forgot we stopped thinking. ... your identity controls all your beliefs, just as beliefs control the thoughts feelings, behaviors and actions you take” (Vetter, location 834). We will

find our "I" identity is what we wish to align with, for we ultimately find true happiness only in that Supreme nature it is part of, with no separation whatsoever.

Although there are mindfulness teachers and authors like Thich Nhat Hanh, Jon Kabat-Zinn, John Daido Looi, Eckhart Tolle, Mooji, and Jeff Foster, and Zen or Vipassana meditation retreats, one can begin immediately without formal training by simply asking for divine guidance to work with us so we may know our Selves. God never says "no!" "Don't seek to understand what you cannot understand. Seek yourself; for in finding your true self, you'll find the answer to any question, the key to any mystery, the reason for being. So seek the mind of God, for that is where all reside" (Heartsong, location 110).

Three Discussion Questions

Three main questions have surfaced while I have composed this dissertation, and by discussing them perhaps more light will be added to my contribution. The first question:

Am I allergic to being human? It has been said, that all the while we are trying hard to experience divinity, the divine is equally trying to be fully human in/as us.

When you are allergic to being human you "Should" all over yourself. This concept that you need to improve, you must get better, this is wrong and this is right, this is good and this is bad from a spiritual point of view all come from the Dualistic idea of separation. If you want to experience Divinity be totally human as that is what Divinity wants to do. You no longer have to be allergic to being human because you already are Divinity in the flesh, you are Oneness in Duality. (Vetter, location 601)

The goal of Psychosynthesis is described as bridging spirit and matter, to become fully embodied. To be a "fully functioning person," an individual integrated in mind and body living to the fullest realization of his or her personal potential is the goal of existentialist psychologists like Carl Rogers and James Bugental. The Transpersonal

psychologists like Abraham Maslow and Carl Jung—and many Eastern teachers—write or speak of transcendence, of identification with Universal Being, and the pursuit of pure Truth. “Essentially, these two points of view agree. Realization of one’s potential can be considered to include the transpersonal realm, while the integration and actualization of the personality are essential steps toward expression of transpersonal potential.” (Brown, location 386)

Perhaps I have been forgetting a basic premise in non-dual thought, that we are actually infinite as well as finite, eternal as well as temporary, unlimited as well as limited, perfect as well as imperfect, and complete as well as incomplete. The only reason people suffer from not feeling Oneness and living accordingly is because they relate to and experience mostly the smaller aspects of their limited selves, and many have an acceptance of their identity as ONLY Human. Our actual identity is we are both human and divine; we are a Divine Human (fully God and fully human.)

Instead of judging some conditions of consciousness as bad or not good, basically living in separation as not good, based on ensuing suffering, I am feeling guided to be more embracing of everything. We can calibrate our levels of consciousness instead of judge them (Abraham Maslow and David Hawkins had such charts). Moreover, perhaps even eventually look at our ego as a friend, who was a part of the team showing us the road to enlightenment.

The next question I have come to explore: Could I be overemphasizing the importance of oneness? I might be leaving readers with a desire or craving to have supernatural experiences of Cosmic Oneness, and feeling incomplete without them. Developing unity-consciousness can happen in a short time, although Eckhart Tolle sat on a park bench for two years, it usually takes several years. We have been living with our ego for a lifetime or more! So to be against or opposed to a part of or nature that is not experiencing

Oneness may leave us open for resistance and prolonged unhappiness. As I mentioned, self-love is extremely important.

Experiences of Oneness are wonderful and of great service to this shift, but such experiences are not that important in and of themselves. Like every other experience, the experience of Oneness comes and goes. And any effort to get or keep such an experience will cause you to suffer as much as striving to get or keep any other experience. While it's profoundly delightful to experience Oneness, a deep knowing of the truth is what matters. When there is a deep knowing that Presence, or Being, is all there is and that is who you are, it no longer matters if you're experiencing it in this moment or not. You just trust this deeper reality. Experiences of our true nature are necessary to develop this trust in Oneness, but those experiences don't have to be ongoing for this knowing and trust to become ongoing. The real point of spiritual experiences is for the experience of Oneness to become irrelevant because the deeper sense of knowing is so constant. (Nirmala, location 955)

Once we are acquainted with our true nature, all thoughts, feelings, events, and circumstance are on the surface of our lives. We may not be Mother Teresa in the slums of India, but once we trust the Source of our experiences and know we are always at every moment connected to our own Self, there is not such a charge to what we are experiencing. "We can just go ahead and enjoy and explore our experience and our true nature for its own sake, not to gain anything and especially not to gain our self, because we are already here. There is nowhere to go and nothing to get. What a rich possibility it is to know that and then simply enjoy its ever new expression" (Nirmala, location 1098).

The final question for discussion: Is self-inquiry the only way to go? Although I believe self-awareness or witnessing is crucial to evaluate our beliefs, to find where we are stuck in ego's perspective of untruthful concepts, there is another way to liberation from the small self that I wish to mention. The aspect of devotion.

Ramana Maharshi and Sri H.W.L. Poonja (Papaji), Masters of Advaita philosophy that advocates Oneness, taught the practice of "self-inquiry" or Vichara. Yet, they also

supported a seemingly contradictory approach: Bhakti or devotion.

Inquiry into the real nature of things and true devotion are seemingly opposite in their starting point but they both bring you out of yourself and into oneness. When you ask who am I? you move deeper, through the layers of an imagined "me," until only space remains. The "me" has been seen through as an illusion, and what remains is reality. When you love deeply and beyond reason or logic, you also start to dissolve as a "me," and only the other remains. When the "me" has been lost completely, and only the beloved is there, this is devotion. Pure awakening and pure devotion come to the same thing: there is no me; there is no other; there is only the divine, only Oneness. (Ardagh 144)

Many devout worshipers around the planet practice devotion to be free from the illusion of separation. Many saints and ecstatic poets have entered the door of union with the Divine through their hearts and not their minds. It does not matter what face you give the divine – Jesus, Krishna, Buddha, or for Rumi it was Shams, it is only the purity of losing oneself in total devotion that matters. Devotion is love that takes on a dimension of the Spirit, and it will free you of your small self, your psychological mind. "Love starts with "I" and the other, the me and the not-me. As the love increases more and more, the I becomes less and the other becomes more luminous. When the I dissolves completely, then there is also no other. That is Oneness" (Ardagh 144).

I hope this discussion has given rise to even more questions, knowing the combination of all possibilities expands our horizon of understanding for this all-encompassing topic. Roberto Assagioli, the founder of Psychosynthesis, which I feel is the best prototype of metaphysical counseling, said,

Let us realize the contribution we can make to the creation of a new civilization characterized by an harmonious integration and cooperation pervaded by the spirit of synthesis. ... From a still wider and more comprehensive point of view, universal life itself appears to us as a struggle between multiplicity and unity— a labor and an aspiration toward union. We seem to sense that— whether we conceive it as a divine Being or as cosmic energy—the Spirit working upon and within all creation is shaping it into order, harmony, and

beauty, uniting all beings (some willing but the majority as yet blind and rebellious) with each other through links of love, achieving—slowly and silently, but powerfully and irresistibly—the Supreme Synthesis. (Brown, location 200)

CONCLUSION

What I have introduced, is a map of directions to a new paradigm for humanity, based on oneness. With wisdom from the most ancient civilizations, joined with the newest emerging sciences that explain our true nature and destiny, I promote a synthesis which "...passively seeks to overthrow what is termed human "civilization" and replace it with a cosmic community that recognizes Love, Consciousness, and Unity as not some freakish, mystical new age hippy hoodoo, but the fundamental essence of reality.”

(consciousresonance.net)

Today, our evolutionary journey has less to do with apes and more to do with consciousness: from separation-consciousness to unity-consciousness. From Homo-erectus to “Homo-Universalis.” I hope I have provided enough research into the nature of separation and unity consciousness, to provide a bridge between these two toward the development of humankind to its highest potential. I wish to compel readers to become conscious co-creators of the emerging Field of Being, the perfection of love and harmony. In truth, we have never been apart from this Field, but have simply not recognized It as us. The signs were always there, and for eons only mystics have lived in that timeless, pristine Field of awareness, in a unified wholeness with spatial characteristics of peace, joy, and love. Now brilliant scientists are defining reality in supportive ideas, helping us fully grasp that we are, literally, infinite. "Within you and everything you are made of, there are infinite, fractal, holographic, hyperdimensional divisions of space, with every singularity a source of infinite energy. We exist within this enormous ocean of energy because we are not in it, we are it – it is the fundamental Source for all that exists” (consciousresonance.net).

The wool that has been pulled over our eyes, the masks we have hidden behind keeping us from raising through the clouds of ignorance into acknowledging and supporting a heaven on earth- was our egos powerful agenda and hold over us. A worldview based on egoic tendencies has escalated over the centuries, promoting hate, greed, self-aggrandizement, territorial-ism, constant seeking, constant desire, manipulation of others, criticism, terrorism, etc. We realize now, our ego is an independent contrivance or phenomena that cannot live without us. Moreover, it cannot live with us if we cultivate its opposite characteristics and ignore it long enough. Our egos are the unhealed parts of us, and we redeem them by love.

The supporting research by psychologists in this paper has given us some ammunition to recognize the part of us clinging to separation or small self-identity. If we dis-identify with its hurtfulness which creates misery in our lives and all our relationships, this will ultimately effect our behavior and the circumstances on the planet, allowing the natural potential to arise for manifesting heaven on earth. We connect with our highest Selves, our true nature, in an authentic manner. We view and experience Reality in its totality, as One inseparable entity, where “other” is indistinguishable from the Self.

If we are a way for consciousness to know Itself, as Carl Sagan surmised, then what is here? Who am I? We were told that who we are is the body, mind, and personality. How do you remember something you have forgotten? How can we recover a sense of the love and joy that is our innermost nature? Did we come here to forget who we are for a moment, so that in remembering Oneness we may appreciate it more deeply?

My hope is that this view of oneness-consciousness instills a deeper appreciation and a new reverence for life. We begin to sense an awareness of Oneness in all things,

people, and circumstances. We remember our essential belonging—to ourSelf, to God, to our loved ones, and to the global community. Becoming conscious of the oneness of existence, and retaining that awareness, can only lead to an outpouring of positive transformation in the world. We understand that we are all one, and our focus is to hold the awareness of one, so that we can transform ourselves, fulfilling our evolutionary purpose.

We often resist seeing and feeling our inter-connectedness because we fear that feeling connected might complicate our life. We might have to do something different. We might have to change something. We might have to give up something. Although change is inevitable in the world of form, many human beings caught in the rigidity of their own mind would rather die than change. (Welshons 168)

"The fact is that we've been hiding from Oneness from the very beginning, afraid of what we may have to give up if we finally decide to dive into this boundless ocean. In the end, nothing needs to be sacrificed except the willingness to live small" (Twyman, location 316). Oneness means to see through the obsession with the separate self and to open into the all-inclusive ocean of consciousness.

What I would like to see developed from this research, as an extension, is more awareness by counselors, ministers and life coaches of the methods of Psychosynthesis, with an emphasis on healing the damage done by the small self and allowing the Self to be uncovered, and resonate at the frequency of Oneness. I would also suggest beginning metaphysics courses in universities, and mindfulness meditation classes at YMCAs. The goal is the realization of who they are, and cultivating silence and space. There is a recognition of that which is watching the mind – silence itself – and that it is beyond and untouched by the mind- completely now, completely here. That the medium, the stillness and awareness in which everything else arises...is who they are, and who their family, neighbors, and all beings

on the planet are.

The goal is awakening to freedom from a limited life as a small, emotionally isolated individual. For people from all walks of life to discover that what they have been seeking outside themselves is actually who they are, and who they were all along. Plain people back to the simple mystery of who they are, in this moment, deeper than the activity of the mind. It's not that what was missing is given to them, but that what was already there is recognized.

I will conclude this summary, by offering a parable. "People ask 'If everything is One, why does there appear to be separation?' It's only a separate person who would ask that. The wave looks around at the ocean and asks 'Why are there so many waves, if it's all ocean?' But of course, there never was a separate wave. And so the questions dissolve and the answer becomes absolutely apparent" (Foster 147).

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