

From The End of Patriarchy, by Claudio Naranjo 1994

A “technology of love” – in particular – (if the expression may be permitted) would be of momentous importance in the fields of both education and psychotherapy; for we surely need a methodology more efficient than what has been available thus far, ranging from traditional religious injunctions to psychoanalysis. I am convinced that the little-known piece of modern pop psychology that I describe below responds to this claim.

The Quadrinity Process that Robert Hoffman introduced in the sixties may be called a pop psychology in the same sense that the Erhard Seminars Training (EST) or mind control groups can: it did not originate within the professional and academic realm, though distinguished professionals like Dr. Hogle at Stanford University, Dr. Knoble at UNICAMP University in Campinas, Brazil, and others have endorsed it enthusiastically. However humble its birth may have been and however naive (in the sense of unschooled) its conception, it may be said to embody some of the main insights of psychoanalysis and valuable practical contributions of humanistic psychology, as I expect to show below.

The Transpersonal Movement today may be said to reflect in psychology a vaster cultural phenomenon: the coming to meet of East and West. It has been largely the spiritual influence of the East on the West that has opened up therapists to the recognition of transpersonal factors. Thus, Jung was strongly appreciative of the Chinese books, *The Golden Flower*, the *I Ching*, and *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, and later a powerful wave of influence swept the West with Zen, beginning with D. T. Suzuki and followed by Suzuki Roshi’s coming to California, the books of Alan Watts in America and of Graf Durkheim in Europe. In contrast to the atmosphere of Eastern, most particularly Buddhist, spirituality in the transpersonal movement, Robert Hoffman’s Quadrinity Process stands out as one of two significant exceptions, sharing the background of Western spirituality with *The Course in Miracles*, another extra-academic contribution to the transpersonal field. In the foreword to Bob Hoffman’s *No One is to Blame/Getting a Loving Divorce from Mom & Dad*, I had said, “I am happy to believe that I have incurred some good karma by playing John the Baptist in this story” I referred to opening up the way for someone who had much to offer and to my having “baptized” his work with the then current name of “Fischer-Hoffman Process.” The John the Baptist image also seemed particularly relevant in view of the Judeo-Christian spirit of Bob Hoffman’s work.

Not only does the Quadrinity Process align itself with the central injunction of the Christian gospel to “Love your neighbor as yourself and God above all things,” but the way in which Hoffman goes about this therapeutic goal may be said to be an echo of the old Jewish injunction to love and honor one’s parents. I think that it makes much sense to consider the love for our parents as guarantee of and a barometer for mental health, because it lays the ground for loving oneself and others. Thus, we may think of the Mosaic commandment as a most important piece of social engineering. With the rise of psychotherapy, however, a possibility has opened up for moving closer to the old aspiration than was possible through ethical rules alone. The method that the Quadrinity Process offers for reestablishing loving relationships with our parents is to the mere admonition to love them just as practical assistance in the reawakening of love is to mere indoctrination concerning the goodness of loving.

Whereas it was enough on occasion of *No One is to Blame* to recommend the author and his book, in these pages I have perceived my task as that of an ambassador or translator from the intuitive world (from which the Quadrinity Process sprang) into the academic world of scientific psychology. It is not so much in a “John the Baptist” role that I find myself then, but (resorting to another quasi-archetypal prototype) in that of a Plato before Socrates.

Though proclaimed by the oracle of Delphi as the wisest man of his time, Socrates was not an intellectual. Neither did he write any books. All this was done by Plato, the theoretician and translator of Socrates to the world of philosophers. Socrates’ concern was that of urging and stimulating others to know themselves, and though he challenged faulty reasoning with reason, we always feel in the presence of a wisdom that transcends logical thinking, perhaps the inspiration of what he called his daimon. However momentous his influence may have been in the history of philosophy, he did not set out or formulate a theory of the cosmos, man, or the divine.

Psychotherapy in general may be said to be a highly Socratic art. It is, to begin with, an art more than a science, for however useful a theoretical understanding may be for therapeutic practice, psychotherapy is a practice that cannot be properly conducted without intuition. There are therapists who are intuitive and rational at the same time, and whose vocation is (as frequently happens in medicine) both theoretical and philanthropic. Other

therapists (and these might be properly called the “Socratic” types) are eminently persons of intuition, whose specific talent lies in their perception of people and whose creativity manifests itself in the interpersonal situation. Fritz Perls was one such Socratic psychotherapist. His genius lay in therapeutic praxis, not in theory: he was a man of the spoken word more than a writer. (His early books were largely the work of friends and collaborators, while his legacy from later life consisted mostly in the audiotapes and videotapes of his work.) His reliance on intuition was so great that I have proposed to regard him as an embodiment or exemplar of a modern Western “neo-shamanism.”

I have been suggesting for years that what is presently called “transpersonal psychology” may be understood as the reflection in psychology of a wider cultural phenomenon that can itself be interpreted as the rise of a new shamanism in the Western world. This new shamanism may be observed in the respiritualization of psychotherapy today, in a growing intuitionism, and a greater reliance of therapists on their individual experience and creativity, as was the case in traditional shamanism, in which each healer carries one’s own “bag of tricks,” emblematic of the uniqueness of one’s path. The new shamanism, like the early one, is a phenomenon of vocation, and it involves, too, the contagion of vocation, such as has recently exploded psychotherapy beyond the professional domain.

Hoffman may be described as a Socratic type and as a Western shaman, for a profound and inwardly guided personal transformation gave him the ability to help others psychologically. As is the case with shamans, his work has emerged from visionary experience and intuition, and he upholds a “magical attitude” in regard to the existence of spirits (human and more than human). Also, he is eminently a man of vocation and not a professional. The fact that he is not very well educated in the intellectual sense only brings him closer to the shaman archetype.

Today the attitude of academia, just like that of the theological and political establishments throughout history, is ambivalent in regard to this rising neo-shamanism. Just as mystics have been a target of criticism from the theologians, and healers have been persecuted by the medical profession, so academic psychology, proud of its intellectual heritage, may look disdainfully upon professionally untrained men of “only” vocation and experience. Thus, some readers of Hoffman’s scant writing may not approve of finding that, as psychoanalyst Mauricio Knoble observes in connection

with *No One is to Blame*, “The traditional historical background was missing, as well as the scientific background, the theoretical foundation, the experimental data, the statistical validation, and the bibliography.” Because such criticism on the part of the psychologically sophisticated reader might get in the way of appreciating and learning from the present book, I hope that I may show that, while the “traditional historical background” has not been known to Hoffman, his work is most congruent with it, as well as with the background of current psychological discourse.

Let me begin by pointing out that Hoffman’s “Process,” unlike other transpersonal therapies, stands out for its currently psychoanalytic spirit. Transpersonal psychology today is permeated by the anti-psychoanalytic attitude of the humanistic movement, which sprang up largely in reaction to the limitations of psychoanalysis. However, in throwing Freudian and post-Freudian insights overboard in their eagerness to attain “the higher reaches of human nature,” are not transpersonalists bypassing an unavoidable segment of the human growth process? Though espousing a holistic attitude in theory, I think that in practice the transpersonal movement conveys a spiritualistic bias that has gone hand in hand with a neglect of the psychodynamic range of experience and healing. In this regard, Hoffman’s work is a welcome synthesis. The affinity of the Quadrinity Process with psychoanalysis is striking, and, as may be inferred from what I have already said of Bob Hoffman, the coincidence between his ideas and that of psychoanalysis is not the outcome of an influence, but of a naive rediscovery: a fresh foundation of facts about the human mind that are there to be observed by anybody who approaches them with enough depth. Hoffman (to whom Dr. Knoble refers as a person with a “genuine naiveté [that is] alarmingly effective”) does not even share average information on Freudian psychology. While most educated people share a fair amount of the Freudian inheritance that has seeped beyond professional boundaries into every man’s language, Hoffman (once a tailor) seems to have a naiveté comparable to that of the painter Henri Rousseau, who was a customs official.

Just as the Judeo-Christian and psychoanalytic orientations are rare in today’s transpersonal movement, I regard as rarer still the coming together of these two views: for, on the whole, the psychoanalytic movement has taken sides with antireligious orientation, while spiritually oriented people have responded to psychoanalytic invalidations with analogous criticism, deeming psychoanalysis as a method limited by erroneous assumptions.

It is true that there have been some exceptions to this antireligious bias of psychoanalytic therapists. David Bakan points out that Freud may have derived inspiration from Jewish mysticism, and Bruno Bettelheim claims that English translation has presented Freud in a less spiritual light than he sounds in the original, where, for instance, he frequently uses the word *seele*, soul. Karen Homey is sympathetic to the spiritual perspective, and in the last decades people like Bion, Kohut, and Lacan have in different ways opened up psychoanalysis to the recognition of a nonmechanistic factor in the psyche. Fromm, who in *Man for Himself* contends that the restoration of love to oneself, others, and God is both the basis of happiness and the goal of psychoanalysis, could well be regarded as an intellectual forerunner of the Quadrinity Process.

However, the convergence between Christian and psychoanalytic outlooks in the Quadrinity Process is most significant in regard to two attitudes that mostly continue to be considered incompatible concerning aberrated emotionality. Whereas the traditional perspective has been one of cultivating positive emotions (through devotionism and virtuous behavior), the psychotherapeutic situation has, since the dawn of psychoanalysis, been characterized more by the expressions of negative feelings. Broadly speaking, while psychotherapy has been familiar with the value of the cathartic method, it has tended to disparage all attempts at an intentional cultivation of love; the roots of love and hate, in its opinion, can only be reached through delving into the unconscious. Conversely, spiritually oriented people usually are disdainful of expression of hostility, deeming it something that could only lead to the persistence of pain and the exaggeration of aggressive habits.

I think that it is more fruitful to consider both valid strategies – the traditional and the modern – not incompatible, but, rather, complementary: two therapeutic approaches that can be integrated. Catharsis does not in any way hinder the attempt to modify one's own behavior for the better; on the contrary, intentional virtue could very well lead to the repression of "nonvirtuous" emotionality if not complemented by the ventilation of present (nonideal) emotional life. As Alice Miller has reflected (*For Your Own Good: Hidden Cruelty in Child Rearing and the Roots of Violence*, by Alice Miller, Farrar, Strauss, Giroux, New York, 1983.):

Religions say that we must forgive the injustice we suffered; only then will we be free to love and be purged of hatred. This is correct as far as it goes, but how do we find the path of the true forgiveness? Can we speak of

forgiveness if we hardly know what was actually done to us and why? And that is the situation we all found ourselves in as children. We could not grasp why we were being humiliated, brushed aside, intimidated, laughed at, treated like an object, played with like a doll, or brutally beaten or both. What is more, we were not even allowed to be aware that all this was happening to us, for any mistreatment was held up to us as being necessary for our own good. Even the most clever child cannot see through such a lie if it comes from his beloved parents, who after all show him other loving sides as well. He has to believe that the way he is being treated is truly right and good for him and he will not hold it against his parents.

Just as too much spirituality without psychotherapeutic awareness can lead to the false goodness of a “deceptive spirituality” syndrome, too much grave-digging without a spiritual awareness may lead to a therapeutic impasse. Dwelling upon the pain of the past in the hope that more painful memories and more intense expressions of affect will bring about a liberation from the past may lead to disappointment, for such a liberation can only be brought about by the individual’s willingness to apply what he or she has understood, by taking a stand in the face of the pain of childhood, obsolete behavior patterns, and the demands of the present. An orientation towards the cultivation of love and compassion, I think, is the specific factor that can end the situation in which the individual is a helpless consequence of the past.

The similarity between the Quadrinity Process and the psychoanalytic approach lies, most broadly speaking, in that both methods are predicated on the Socratic view that self-insight heals; they both recognize the importance of understanding our character and its origination during the early phases of life. Both set out to put an end to what Psychoanalysis calls the repetition compulsion, the endless persistence of behaviors originated in childhood as a response to adaptation needs in one’s family environment.

There are sharp differences between the two approaches, however, as to how they pursue this goal of liberation from emotional conditioning. Psychoanalysis discourages the patient’s spontaneous tendency to analyze oneself in the course of treatment, appealing, rather, to the authority of the professional expert and regarding the individual’s capacity for self-delusion as greater than the capacity for personal insight. The Process, on the other hand, capitalizes on the individual’s drive for self-understanding. In assigning a considerable amount of biographic and self-exploratory writing,

it not only recruits the individual's help but stimulates a greater continuity of attention, between sessions, to the psychological work at hand; for by spending part of each day writing, the individual remains in contact with the psychological situations that are being processed. A more important difference is that psychoanalytic technique relies on the therapeutic power of destructuring (mostly verbal) behaviors, and seeks to break up the individual's repetitive and compulsive patterns through free association, in which communication constraints that characterize usual nontherapeutic situations are broken. Hoffman's therapeutic method, on the other hand, consists of a mosaic of structured psychotherapeutic exercises and does not include free association. Directiveness is important in the structure. Hoffman's method is a guided process, in which an individual carries out specific instructions in regard to self-examination, written and spoken internal dialogues, visualizations, and so on. Most striking perhaps, the two approaches differ in regard to the simplicity/complexity dimension. "I found aspects which seemed to be those of a simplified psychoanalysis," says psychoanalyst Knoble, well aware that the simplified embodiment of psychoanalytic ideas did not come about as a result of any intention to simplify psychoanalysis. Also, in agreeing that the Process involves a simpler expression of analytic ideas than psychoanalysis, I don't want to imply a value judgment, for I would not criticize it for excessive simplicity more than I would criticize psychoanalysis for an excessive complexity. (A joke conveys the popular acknowledgment of this point: two psychoanalysts walking from opposite directions say "hello" as they pass one another on the street, and then stop, after three or four paces, to reflect, "What did he [she] mean by that?")

Psychoanalysis cultivates an awareness of the multiple determination of every mental and behavioral event. In the Quadrinity Process, a few simple and fundamental concepts are systematically applied in such a way that, in the span of only weeks, "psychotherapy virgins" emerge with clear and life-changing insights into their emotional conditioning, its childhood roots, and the desirability of taking distance from its compulsive way. ("One thing is to own a trait, another to be owned by it," says a caption on the wall of the Hoffman Institute.) One of these simple and fundamental concepts applied in the Process is what Freud called the repetition compulsion and in Hoffman's language is simply referred to as the "old programs" – a cybernetic analogy in line with the language of Perls and John Lilly. The main feature of these programs – for Hoffman as for Freud – is the dysfunctional adoption of

dysfunctional parental behaviors and attitudes by the growing child through identification.

“In Freud’s work,” say Laplanche and Pontalis in their book, *The Language of Psychoanalysis*, (J. Laplanche & J. B. Pontalis, Donald Nicholson-Smith, translator, W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., New York, 1973) “the concept of identification comes little by little to have the central importance which makes it not simply one psychical mechanism among others but the operation itself whereby the human subject is constituted” (emphasis mine). Whereas in psychoanalytic thinking a distinction is drawn between identification proper and introjection (in which the oral basis for identification is acknowledged by the individual), in Hoffman’s view all neurotic identification is “oral” in nature and essentially introjective. The equivalent term for orality in Hoffman’s vocabulary is “negative love,” an expression suggesting not only destructive love but also inverse love, and implying false love as well. It makes reference to a seeking of love which stands in the way of love, wears the mask of love and is in fact opposite in nature to a loving motivation.

Whereas love is a disposition to give, born of abundance (to use Maslow’s term), “negative love” is a wanting to receive, and is rooted in deficiency, though ordinarily experienced and presented to the world (while attached strings are hidden) as abundance and giving.

In his making “negative love” the central concept of an understanding of emotional sickness, Hoffman unwittingly echoes the view of Buddhism, which also interprets all suffering as having its roots in desire or craving (*tanha*). Expressions such as Maslow’s “deficiency motivation” and Buddhism’s “desire” or “attachment,” however, fail to point out the connection of this deficiency to an early love frustration. And while psychoanalysis represents one step further in the direction of that acknowledgment, with its conception of orality, its excessive biologism (as contemporary psychoanalysts mostly agree) can be questioned.

And here we come to the most important theoretical discrepancy between Hoffman’s view and the psychoanalytic: the fundamental frustration experienced by the child is seen by Hoffman as a love frustration rather than a libidinal frustration – oral or genital. While the sexualization of the love wish is common, Hoffman believes this to be a secondary phenomenon. (Even Kohut’s reference to a child’s “healthy narcissistic need” to be heard

and seen [“mirrored”] by his mother seems to complicate unnecessarily the issue by failing to acknowledge the primacy of the love need that is expressed through such need for attention.)

Hoffman’s idea that the child adopts parental traits in order to be loved somewhat echoes Freud’s hypothesis in *Mourning and Melancholia* that we become like the lost person whom we love as a way of maintaining contact. Hoffman’s interpretation not only acknowledges the love need as the basic source of identification, but implies an assumption in the child’s mind that, by being like one’s parents, one would obtain the love that one is not experiencing by merely being oneself. This psychological mechanism, sustained by “negative love,” could well be called one of “seductive identification,” and Hoffman claims that it may be found to be operating in most character traits.

Yet it is not only through identification that “the human subject is constituted,” but through a superimposition of identification and counter-identification as well. Not only do we seductively adopt our parent’s traits, but we rebelliously reject them, often at the same time, with the resulting conflicts.

The Process does not make use of dream analysis nor a contemplation of life between puberty and the present; yet it entails a sharper focus on personality development in childhood than is encountered in earlier therapies. Hoffman proposes that if deficiency motivated relationships to others are sustained by the persistence of a negative love relationship to our parents, it follows that this relationship with our parents must be healed. Only through self-love can the individual be in the position to love others, and only through restoring the original love bond toward one’s parents can the individual in turn love himself or herself; for resentment against one’s parents will unavoidably fall back upon the parental introjects permeating the person’s psyche.

Healing the relationship between the individual and his or her parents does not come about through analytic activity alone, but requires (as in any successful insight theory) bringing into awareness the pain and anger associated with early life. The most healing kind of insight found along the path of self-understanding is, of course, beyond mere intellectual comprehension. It is inseparable from experiencing, which amounts to increased consciousness. And just as pain breeds unconsciousness,

unconsciousness is perpetuated through the wish to avoid, deny, and repress pain.

With the advent of the humanistic movement, we have seen a shift in interest from the analytic to the expressive aspect of therapy; and the expression of pain, in particular, has been given a central role as a means of bringing into awareness the unacknowledged suffering of past and present. In Gestalt therapy, in particular, a quantum leap was taken from “talking about” experience to surrendering to it in an expressive disposition. Finally, the therapeutic potential of such catharsis was systematized and made the core of Jan’s Primal Scream method. Hoffman also proposes a guided and systematic method for re-experiencing the pain of childhood. His particular contribution in this regard is systematization – brought into play through a blending of the analytical and cathartic ingredients. The history of pain in regard to mother, father, and parental surrogates is pursued in the Process through auto-biographic writing and in the form of intrapersonal encounters between “father,” “mother” and “child” components of the psyche. An aspect of the Process amounts to what could be called, because of the personification of a spiritual self along with the intellectual, the emotional, and the body-related sub-personalities, a “transpersonal psychodrama.”

While the encounter between the intellectual and the emotional sides of the psyche, which Hoffman calls the “Adult Intellect” and “Negative Emotional Child,” is somewhat equivalent to the Gestalt technique of under-dog/top-dog encounter, the body constitutes an original contribution. In Gestalt therapy, the awareness of the emotional core of physical experience is cultivated; in the Process, the body becomes a character in the internal psychodrama and is invited to express its experience of the individual’s behavior and love in a way that elicits unique information.

Hoffman introduces a distinctive methodology to deal with the question: How can forgiveness be obtained?

Genuine forgiveness does not deny anger but faces it head-on. If I can feel outrage of the injustice I have suffered, can recognize my persecution as such, and can acknowledge and hate my persecutor for what he or she has done, only then will the way of forgiveness be open to me. Only if the history of abuse in earliest childhood can be uncovered will the repressed anger, rage and hatred cease to be perpetuated. Instead they will be transformed into sorrow and pain at the fact that things had to be that way.

Forgiveness not only does not deny anger, it requires undoing the denial of anger that is part of the ordinary fallen and restricted condition of the psyche. And a valuable tool for the lifting of repression in regard to anger is, as in the case of pain, catharsis: for a close connection exists between the repression of feelings and the inhibition of their expression. In Gestalt therapy and encounter, compared to psychoanalytic therapy, a quantum leap has taken place in dealing with the expression of anger. The Process has brought systematization into the catharsis of aggression towards the parents as well: in powerful, experiential visualizations the Quadrinity psychodrama takes place among the adult intellect, the negative emotional child, the spiritual self and the body (in the presence of a spirit-mediating guide and in a spirit-imbibed, spirit-radiating inner sanctum), and provides the expression of anger together with the expression of pain. In addition, a technique called the “bitch session” is employed: a systematic expression of anger and condemnation towards the programmed emotional and intellectual aspects of the parents and parental surrogates in the early life history, focusing on the parents’ personalities and particular events in the triadic mother-father-son/daughter relationship.

Is it true, however, that the “grace of forgiveness appears spontaneously when repressed [because forbidden] hatred no longer poisons the soul”? When hatred no longer poisons the soul, no doubt forgiveness can arise; yet I think that it is hatred that constitutes the poison, not repressed hatred. In other words, insight into one’s hatred and giving oneself the freedom to express anger still may fall short of the transcendence of hatred. It is my impression that for some, the catharsis of pain and anger (provided by expressive therapies) is enough: the stimulus for further insight that pain and anger contribute is all that an individual seems to have needed to bring about a change of state. In other instances, however, one may see people “priming” over extended periods and not truly moving forward, either in terms of insight or change. It would seem that, in these cases, a person’s thirsting for a deepening of experience coupled to resistance leads to the replacement of insight by this pursuit of experience-intensification. As a relevant joke runs, “A Gestalt psychotherapist is a psychopath teaching obsessive compulsives how to become hysterics.”

Alice Miller seems to imply that the grace of forgiveness does not always arrive in the course of psychoanalytic therapy: “The free expression of resentment against one’s parents represents a great opportunity. It provides

access to one's true self, reactivates numbed feelings, opens the way of mourning and – with luck – reconciliation” (emphasis mine).

I think that the great uniqueness of Hoffman's therapy is the systematic, directed, and assisted process that it offers for the transition from condemnation and resentment, through understanding, to forgiveness; so that forgiveness – the door to compassion, love, peace, and the deepest joy – may not remain a matter of luck anymore. And the strategy contained in the Quadrinity Process could be thought to be (by anyone ignorant of Hoffman's ignorance) a systematic application of Alice Miller's observations concerning those for whom forgiveness has dawned “as a form of grace” that “appears spontaneously” when “repressed hatred no longer poisons the soul.” For after hatred has been transformed into sorrow, it will give way to understanding: “the understanding of an adult who now has gained insight into his or her parent's childhood and finally “mature sympathy” (emphasis mine).

The forgiveness-and-compassion process which follows each “bitch session” comprises a series of stages beginning for each parental figure in the individual's life with the reconstitution of the parental figure's life. Attention is particularly given to forming an image of our parents as they were in the process of growing up with their own parents. If it is understanding that can lead us to forgiveness, says Hoffman, it is a parent's early life in particular that we need to understand.

Intellectual and intuitive reconstitution is followed by a process of systematic empathy with our parents as they were when they were children, by means of identification through fantasized or dramatic enactment – common to Gestalt and psychodrama. This, in turn, is followed by a stage of the Process that could be called ceremony or ritual, as well as a guided contemplation. The type of intervention displayed here might be called behavior therapy at the attitudinal level through fantasy. What is involved is not the intention of changing behavior towards another at a later time, but doing so immediately, though in a guided and internalized psychodramatic situation. The therapeutic situation is now not that of looking into our experience or expressing it, but that of taking a stand, of bringing about an intentional modification of our disposition. I don't think the Process would be as effective as it is if it stopped at being an insight therapy enriched by expressive therapy methodology. An all-important component is persuasion toward a commitment to heed insight, to apply to life what has been

understood, to responsibly take ourselves in hand. Work with fantasy may be regarded as a preparation for the post-therapy task of acting according to our understanding, and thus dropping those attitudes and behaviors that have been fully understood as obsolete and dysfunctional links in a chain that perpetuates suffering.

The activation of forgiveness and compassion toward the parents whenever they are alive provides sufficient motivation to support the most important task the Process assigns to the individual after therapy is completed: the taking of steps toward establishing a loving relationship with one's parents. Thus in the structure of the work, the forgiveness process constitutes a bridge between the individual's pre-therapeutic state of mind and the post-therapy practice it proposes: loving kindness in daily life. It is a bridge, too, between the analytic-expressive "personal" and the Judeo-Christian "transpersonal" sides of the Process.

The foregoing description of the Process makes it clear that we are dealing with an integrative approach. While psychoanalysis has remained faithful to the single technique of free association interpretation, the Process, while embodying essential insights of psychoanalysis, does not use the free association technique at all, but rather a composite of guided self-insight into early life history and personality, catharsis of pain and anger, and an attempt to inhibit the "ego" (in the sense of the spiritual tradition – the conditioned personality with which we have learned to identify). In addition, the Process comprises an important component of psychospiritual work through visualization and creative imagination.

A variety of techniques are employed in the Process belonging in the domain of work with visualization fantasy and imagery. However, the word "fantasy" currently used in connection with some of these may not be the most appropriate, for it fails to reflect the distinction between ordinary fantasy and the "high fantasy" of visionary experience. Hoffman refuses to call his guided trips fantasies, for, when these are deeply experienced, imagination only serves as a means of evoking another order of experience. The invocation of a spiritual guide, for instance – instructions for which are given early in the Process – would be interpreted by a Jungian as an invitation to engage in dialogue with the "wise old man" or the "wise old woman" archetype within. Yet Hoffman, like shamans and other religious teachers, encourages his clients in an attitude of regarding the inner guide as an entity existing outside themselves (as distinct from the "spiritual self").

I think that many people today (generally speaking, the transpersonalists) believe that beyond the realm of fantasy there lies indeed a realm of experience which, when made conscious, is recognized by the ordinary mind as something that stands beyond it – an archetypal, visionary, psychic domain inhabited by the higher mind in the way that the ordinary mind inhabits the world of objects and logical classes. It would seem it is in this deepened state that the mind most displays the function referred to in its name, derived from the Sanskrit *manas* – related to both “man” and “moon.” It may be that in the early linking of these two concepts, the human mind was regarded as a receptive moon facing the light of the spiritual sun.

Whether or not it is theoretically true that visionary and possession experience – including high inspiration – may involve something outside the individual psyche, I think it is practically true: it is an intellectual position that brings about the manifestation of the supraintellectual, protoarchetypal spiritual world of “creative imagination.”

Thus no religion says, “Imagine God and talk to your imagination.” On the contrary, by pointing to something beyond the individual self – a transcendent Thou, a Holy Other – many schools of traditional spirituality have demonstrated that it is possible to bring about the experience thus invoked. More generally, it may be said that the capacity to absorb oneself in symbols – thus entering contemplative state – goes hand in hand with an attitude of not regarding symbols as mere symbols, but rather, as that which they symbolize.

In virtue of the potential of symbols to stand in the place of the experiences that they symbolize (the basis of what Mme. Sechehaye called “symbolic realization”), certain imagery sequences can serve as vehicles for experiential shifts. Such “fantasies” might be regarded as rituals or ceremonies, and in the Process this is the character of the all-important moment in the closing session when the client is directed to visualize umbilical cords connecting to the negative behavior trait-clusters previously examined in himself or herself and in his or her parents. The fantasy of pulling out these cords evokes the decision and will to separate from all the negativity that the previous analysis of the father and mother introjects has revealed. Like the forgiveness process, this constitutes a guided meditation, taking the individual through the attitudinal shift evoked by the symbolic action of pulling the umbilical cords and, using the symbol as a vehicle for

reaching the deeper experience, imbuing the individual with the will to “ride” the vehicle.

A similar instance of the symbolic alchemy is that of “recycling, a visualization process that combines transpersonal and analytic components and which forms part of the individual’s post-therapy assignment.

I used to feel that the individual who leaves the therapeutic process is unduly reinforced in the belief that he or she is completely healed. It seemed truer to regard the Process as a seed of something that may be fully attained in the course of a longer time, through a prolonged friction between the individual’s conditioned personality and the newly adopted post-therapeutic intention. Indeed, today I regard the Quadrinity Process as an initiation into a different attitude, leading the individual onto a path of daily inner work, provided with motivation, the necessary outlook and psychotherapeutic tools to work upon oneself. Yet today my earlier criticism of the Process’s claim to cure is tempered by the recognition that, in supporting an individual’s sense of having been healed, at the appropriate time, the therapist introduces a most useful therapeutic technique: an invitation to relinquish the attitude of self-preoccupation that has characterized the therapeutic endeavor, thus adopting a position of abundance. The Process also constitutes an invitation to relinquish psychotherapeutic dependency and, above all, as Bob Hoffman puts it, to give up seeking to be, in order to simply be. In time, to be sure, whatever was swept under the rug will surface in the individual’s awareness. Then the person will naturally grow more realistic about the full length of the “way of love” beyond the crossing of its first valley. But will that not take care of itself?

If one had wanted to create a synthesis integrating psychodynamic, transpersonal, humanistic, and behavioristic ingredients in individual psychotherapies, one could hardly have originated a better product than the short method outlined in this book. The Quadrinity Process fits into the historical pattern of the entire endeavor of psychotherapy as if it were a work of synthesis; however, it constitutes a gift of intuition, born away from the great world, so to speak, without reference to its apparent antecedents.

Just as in the sixties Gestalt therapy began to rival psychoanalysis in the United States, the Quadrinity Process has recently begun to rival Gestalt in some South American and European cities. Yet I believe that much of its potential benefit is still to be realized. I think, for instance, of its value for anybody wishing to become a psychotherapist. Yet I think most particularly

of its potential in a future holistic education: that is, education that would reintegrate the affective and the spiritual aspects of human growth as its concern. The brief and definite time that this structured method requires makes it particularly suitable for groups in a school setting.

I hope that these words may further pave the way for the Process so that it can unfold its beneficial potential to individual mental health and also help nurture the development of such kindness as seems necessary for the success of our societal affairs.

Since I feel that I have been providentially allotted the launching of the Quadrinity Process into the world, it seems pertinent that I append to these reflections on the Quadrinity Process something about my personal involvement with the therapeutic and educational approach I am here recommending – for my close involvement with it has allowed me to be a witness of what value it has had for innumerable people, and it is this, in turn, that has implicitly supported my inclusion of this chapter in *The End of Patriarchy*.

I met Bob Hoffman at a private talk sponsored by Dr. Leo Zeff in Berkeley in 1972, in which he described the form of brief therapy he was practicing at the time. This was not a time in my life when I was seeking a new therapy. After years of seeking help from therapists and spiritual teachers I had come to what I call the “charismatic stage” in my life, when I felt, “I have gotten it” and was still excited about it. I do not think I would have registered for Bob’s eight sessions of psychic therapy had it not been out of a generalized interest in the issue of inner father/mother/child relations in the transformative process but it turned out to be a definitely valuable experience and I was impressed by the fact that Bob was able to describe for me my parent’s life histories and events in my childhood that he could not possibly have known by ordinary means.

Also it seemed to me that the basic strategy in the Process through which he had guided me could be applied to groups, substituting Bob’s psychic input with a structured, guided and supervised process of life recall and extrapolation from memories.

My first application was with a group of more than seventy people (culminating in Bob’s visit for the closure stage of the Process). This was a time when, in my work with people at SAT Institute, I was particularly

interested in the process of turning groups into self-healing systems. There followed a second application in which Reza Leah Landman led a group of about fifty people (with Bob present as silent witness) using the format of written guidelines. (I produced these guidelines at a time of rare inspiration, and when I visited Bob shortly afterwards, he interestingly commented, quite spontaneously, that Dr. Fischer had been with me.)

The Process was appreciated enough in this and other SAT groups that many of my students became Bob's first collaborators, and so the hundred or so people that underwent the experience started an avalanche that began to spread.

When about a year later Bob conducted the first group of his own at the Berkeley Club, I was his guest, and I could see that our approaches differed: he sought to exclude the encounter and peer therapy elements; he perfected, instead, the delivery of feedback to his students' homework through tape recordings.

Since that time I have been a witness to the ongoing refinements in Bob's work and have continued to offer occasional demonstrations of my own version of it to groups in foreign countries that, little by little, have come in contact with Bob's organization in California. Brazil was one of the first countries in which it became popular. Today it is in the German-speaking countries that the Process is attracting the greatest interest.

It fell upon me, too, to be the catalyst for the more significant new development in the Quadrinity Process. When I described to Bob the great success that I had in Mexico working with a four-day condensation of the method, his eyes sparkled and he soon thought of developing his own "intensive" approach, which is now spreading forth in the world. The seven days that it lasts constitutes such a modest proposition in proportion to the results that I do not feel that another therapy may compete with it in doing so much within such a brief span of time. In spite of this, it is not the therapeutic potential of the Quadrinity Process that has moved me to speak about it in this book but, rather, its educational potential; for precisely the characteristic of being so brief and structured and yet so powerful makes it ideally suitable for inclusion in any educational venture that wants to address itself to the affective domain. Exposure to the approach would also be extremely useful for educators who are interested in acquiring a means of knowing better their students, themselves, and human beings in general.