

## NINE INGREDIENTS FOR A PANACEA

We know that understanding is the distinguishing characteristic of the more experienced and successful psychotherapists of all schools, and that, in addition to understanding, a therapist's "bag of tricks" also counts: the sum of techniques, strategies and theories constituting professional culture and education. Beyond these there is a relational and infectious element in psychotherapy too, that some today value even more than theory and technique a willingness to be for the other, and along with the capacity for benevolence, a degree of emotional and spiritual health on the part of the therapist, that may only be attained through a relative transcendence of the personal neurosis in the course of a deep therapeutic process.

Aside from these universal ingredients of psychotherapy, there are others that, universal as they may be, seem to fit the needs of a particular kind of personality most specifically. An ennead of these will be the subject of these paragraphs.

Let us begin with therapeutic insight. Insight is the designated task of many therapists and a vehicle for all kinds of passengers, but is most fitting in the case of a pathology at the heart of which lies precisely a sort of psychological deadness, a lack of psychological mindedness in the nature of a resistance to insight.

It behooves us all to come to know ourselves but it particularly behooves one whose style of defense is a distraction of attention from the center to the periphery. To engage in the pursuit of insight for EIX is to work against disconnection, robotization and self ignorance.

I think I can make my point clear if I explain the difficulty that I had for a long time in finding jokes illustrative of the psychologically lazy character. While jokes about astute people, complainers, cowards, self righteous people, etc, abounded, it seemed that abnegation and good adjustment had not inspired many a joke. At last, however, I realized that there is a particular type of joke that we all know which have EIX as its referent: those that about idiots.

Of course, personality style is something other than intelligence but a lack of subtlety that misses the obvious is something for which the situation of a moron is a good metaphor. Consider, for instance, the story of a man who falls from a second story with a great thump. Somebody runs toward him and discovering that he is conscious, anxiously inquires: "are you OK?"

The answer he gets is "I don't know, I just got here." It is a joke about disconnection from one's experience, being "out of touch" but is this not our common predicament?

We are all relatively unconscious imperfectly knowing what is happening in us, out of touch with our feelings, not aware of our thoughts, not even very aware of our bodies, and we can use more attention toward what we experience. To the extent that we all have a wish to not know (i.e. resistances) we can all benefit through looking inwardly. Early in our life we sensed that our experiential world was incompatible with the wishes of others and we learned to disown it. From an important point of view, psychotherapy offers us a mirror to help us see what is going on, what we feel, what we wish, and thus bring us out of confusion. To the extent that an EIX person is a specialist in playing dead, however, the insight medicine is particularly appropriate to him.

For an EVI, on the other hand, striving for self understanding may easily become a vice. Certainly the fearful person needs insight too and we all need to recover our natural capacity to experience, but the attainment of insight is not such a clear sign of improvement for an EVI as for an EIX. Don't we all know people who feel that they know themselves quite well, but there is nothing they can do about it? Their problem is with doing, not with knowing. And for one who knows what to do but doesn't dare, there is the trap of wanting to make sure that there is no other way, to seek further support in the intellect when the lack is in distrusting their spontaneous promptings.

The problem of EVI is an over inhibition of impulses. Freud's view of psychopathology as blockage of instinct surely was inspired by the EVI phenomenon, which he knew well in himself. Suspicious authoritarian character is over controlled, and acts not out of organismic intuitive promptings but in terms of reason, rules, duties and ideals. It needs to know whether to do things this or that way, needs to know what to believe and is excessively dependent on reference points and coordinates.

I suspect that the cultivation of spontaneity is a vehicle of no lesser importance than that of insight, and much of psychotherapy is an education in self liberation: a learning to let go and to trust one's organism and mind if not the world process itself.

And much of what goes on in psychotherapy is this invitation to greater freedom, beginning with Freud's free association. It is a technique that at the same time removes the usual reference framework of social games and invites attention to spontaneous preferences in an attitude of non interference. Decades later, Moreno was quite explicit in presenting psychodrama as a cultivation of

spontaneity, and later yet gestalt therapy, particularly in its group form, encouraged self expression to a more daring degree in a context of an organismic taoist faith. Anyone can be benefitted by all this, but who needs it most is the one who lives "in the head" rather than "with guts": an EVI.

Something similar may be said in regard to vain or hysterical character. Inasmuch as the EIII aspect of the universal neurosis is in each one of us i.e. we all engage in self falsification, deception as to who we are, confusion of our reality with our appearance we all need authenticity. Correspondingly, much of psychotherapy from psychoanalysis to sensitivity training and MDMA therapy is an education in authenticity. The vehicle of psychotherapy is, of course, communication but there are degrees of communication and true communication not only leads to increasing insight but entails an education of authenticity remedial by itself.

As with the other characters, however, what is universal is also most fitting to those in whom all psychopathology revolves around the issue of pretending or image making. For them it is particularly remedial to educate themselves in discriminating between what they truly feel and the feelings that they automatically produce as part of a role and the sacrifice of the idealized self-image is likely to lead to the best results.

Let us now consider the deficiency of the perfectionistic or obsessive kind of person, and what its remedy may contribute to the psychotherapeutic need of all.

Apparently, the situation of EI is very much like that of EVI in that in both cases there is a lack of spontaneity -- a rigidity that is the result of being too much driven by rational control and fixed schemes. The problem of EI is not a generalized inhibition or timidity, however, and its rigidity is more behavioral than intellectual. While EVI lacks that spontaneity of the mind that we may call intuition, a "feeling" for what to do for which an appropriate prescription is a "way of the heart," an EI needs to let go of an excessive control over action -- putting aside the compulsion to do everything in a premeditated way and developing permissiveness in regard to impulse itself. While EVI is so afraid of thinking certain things that would make him guilty that he may may develop disturbances in thinking to eschew that danger, EI is implicitly intent on avoiding behavior that has not been previously intended and passed censorship in view of a code of goodness. The most avoided behavior is, of course, the expression of anger, and correspondingly, EI people particularly benefit from re-owing this freedom through techniques as diverse as those of bioenergetics or those developed in the sixties by Bach in his approach to encounter groups.

That in addition to being appropriate to the perfectionistic the liberation of anger meets a near universal need, however, is echoed in the fact that it is a ubiquitous resource of eclectic (or "multi-modal") psychotherapists today. Also in the striking benefit that people with different personality styles derive from the Hoffman Quadrinity Process, in which the catharsis of infantile rage is a major ingredient.

Let us now consider the therapeutic need of EVIII. EVIII people harden themselves too much. It would seem that they are more animalistic than the others, but they are not; it is, rather, as if they were partisans or allies of their internal animal. They go about this in a stereotyped way, however, and this is something quite different from organismic self-regulation. The situation is that of one whose main focus has become fighting oppression; yet an anti-topdog is not an id. His "for" and "against" positions are still too much tied to childhood, being the outcome of an early adoption of intimidation as a way to overcoming obstacles. The EVIII person become so occupied with the war against whatever might castrate him, that he must strive for invulnerability, repressing or suppressing all weakness. Correspondingly, the therapeutic process will be one of re-sensitization, and will involve the development of tenderness.

Yet practically all psychotherapy entails a cultivation of love. In the case of EVIII insensitivity is most manifest and we may call it sadism, but in any form of neurosis there is a loss of love-ability, and a hidden-insensitivity. Even people who seem strikingly sensitive harbor an underlying insensitivity beneath a layer of hysterionic empathy. And in view of this it can be said that a universal aspect of a healing and the return to wholeness is the recovery of the capacity of true empathy, i.e. the development of compassion. There is a giant in the story of Pinocchio who puts Pinocchio into a cage and exploits him and in whom it is easy to recognize an EVIII caricature. We are told that when he feels compassion, he sneezes. While I don't know this form of defense to be shared by other phallic-narcissistic, the observation that compassion may be inhibited is certainly valid and that such inhibition may support a symptom, also possible.

After having discussed the personality types mapped in the vicinity of EIX: the "benevolently" super-ego driven rigid EI - and the anti-super-ego oriented anti-social EVIII, let us move on now to ones mapped at the bottom of the enneagram: EV and EIV. These are the neurotic styles which in the more pathological forms of expression are receiving preferential attention from psychoanalysis: the schizoid and the borderline.

Let us consider the schizoid EV first. It has been proposed that the "schizoid phenomenon" is the underlying ground of all pathologies. Guntrip, who was a disciple of Fairbairn has elaborated on that idea, and I think that he voices a

truth -- but only one among several truths! For is not the ground of neurosis also the loss of the capacity to experience, the loss of authenticity, etc? From one point of view, however, it is the "schizoid phenomenon" -- i.e. a self-absorption involving the loss of relationship.

Even in the highly contactful personality of EII it is possible to find, when sincerity and self-awareness are sufficient, a schizoid layer -- an incapacity to feel behind the histrionic apparatus. But the loss of relatedness is the foreground in the EV, who is an autistic person in the broad sense of the word: one isolated, relatively forgetful of the existence of the other; EV lives with a minimal capacity to know what goes on with the other. So psychotherapy in EV will be successful when it leads to the recovery of relatedness, and this it will probably do through the unfolding of the therapeutic relationship itself. But cannot we also address the essence of psychotherapy as a healing of contact, as gestalt therapy has?

Also in EIV the person takes a subordinate, inferior position that involves self-frustration; but there is here a paradoxical phenomenon in that desire is not only blocked, but vehemently intensified, as if to compensate for its prohibition. One's wishes are not fulfilled, yet envy arises as a super-wish into which all the unmet wishes are transformed. As EIV heals, the person begins to do that she likes and experiences less envy as a result of her satisfaction. The position of envy, then, is one of self oppression and at the same time painful yearning. And it is a dependent position: another must give her what she cannot give herself, the other must give her permission, appreciation and satisfaction. It is in regard to this kind of person that Fritz Perls' statement on human growth is truest. He saw human development as a shift from dependency to autonomy. Yet practically all of us are more or less dependent, and we need to become autonomous. From one point of view, then, psychotherapy is an over-coming of excessive dependence and the achievement of an increased self sufficiency -- and we know that this involves a shift from self-hate to self-love.

Let us now consider the personalities that we may call pseudo-social rather than anti-social, over-social or asocial: the seductive ones.

EVII, we know, is one who is excessively inclined to pleasure, but I believe that more important than the appetite for pleasure is the avoidance of pain. Much of the life of an EVII person is better described as comfortable than pleasurable: there is a reluctance to take trouble, and an avoidance of ordinary life with its difficulties. There is too much of an attitude of wanting things to come as we say in Chile "like a peeled pear in the mouth." And only fantasy can give that immediate gratification; it's only a shame that it's pure fantasy.

Can it not be said that psychotherapy in general entails a reconnection with repressed or avoided pain? Psychotherapy is helping people to make contact with the pain of their past, and the pain of looking at things squarely. Acceptance of pain, we know, leads to a more satisfactory situation, for pain avoidance brings about a narrowing of consciousness and this leads to an impoverishment that, in turn, makes pain less easy to bear.

That we can all benefit from a willingness to plunge into the suffering that pervades our life experience is made evident through the success of therapies that emphasize abreaction -- from primal scream to gestalt, and is deeply known to those schooled in the Gurdjieff heritage, with its emphasis in conscious suffering. The willingness to embrace the discomfort of purgatory, however, is most remedial for EVII persons, who might otherwise waste their life in the enjoyment of their talents or the impression caused by their charm -- only to end up feeling insubstantial.

The EII person, we know, is affectionate, thirsts for the love of others, and harbors a passion for being treated nicely. What is it that is missing here? While EVII disconnects from pain, EII represses the sense of lack. EII goes through life as if she (or he) had a surplus, in a position of false abundance sustained by a denial of frustration. Since she has to live a lie -- a sort of movie -- life cannot be satisfactory any more than fantasy life can; and the hysterionic domain is similar to fantasy, except that it is not constituted of imaginative representations; it is, rather, an acted-out fantasy, a dramatization in the nature of a motor equivalent of fantasy (inasmuch as it replaces reality).

Supplying what is missing, then, involves reconnecting with the early sense of lack at the heart of the character. It is much easier to demand than to ask, easier to push or seduce than to feel in need. All of us have been more or less traumatized in early life; the original wound for us all has been the painful frustration of our need for love. It sometimes seems as if the EII person didn't experience such trauma, because she has always felt so lovable. What is missing for EII people, then, is to connect with their sense of insufficiency or inner poverty.

Yet is this not part of everybody's therapeutic purgatory? Not only in the field of therapy is concentration upon the pain of separation known to be a vehicle of growth. It is a substantial part of prayer, and those willing to burn in the torment of yearning know how, paradoxically, the intensification of separation leads to unity, and concentration on frustration is known to lead to a paradoxically gratification. This is vividly apparent in the exhilaration with which an EII patient once repeated in the end of a gestalt session: "my emptiness is my treasure!"