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BODY, SOUL, AND ROLE:

Toward a Holistic Approach to Well-Being in Organizations

A dissertation submitted

by
SHELLEY OSTROFF

to
THE FIELDING INSTITUTE

In partial fulfillment of
the requirement for the
degree of

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in

HUMAN AND ORGANIZATONAL SYSTEMS

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BODY, SOUL AND ROLE:

TOWARD A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO WELL-BEING IN ORGANIZATIONS

BY

SHELLEY OSTROFF

ABSTRACT

Body, Soul and Role: Toward a Holistic Approach to Well-Being in Organizations

By

Shelley Ostroff

Body, Soul, and Role: Toward a Holistic Understanding of Well Being in Organizations is a multi-prism exploration of the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual processes that influence organizational well-being. The dissertation revisits metaphors from group relations (a psychoanalytic systemic approach), mind-body disciplines, and different spiritual traditions, to work toward a new, integrative framework for thinking about and promoting well-being at different levels of organizational life. The group relations approach, based in psychoanalytic and system theories, addresses conscious and unconscious attitudes, emotions, images, myths, meaning formations, and behaviors in and of human systems as well as the psychological mechanisms used by individuals and groups for coping with anxiety. The mind-body prism provides new ways of looking at organizational processes relating to the realization of individual and group thought into physical form. It explores the possibilities inherent in concepts such as the "system psyche-soma," "organizational dreambody," "energetic sources," and "blockages" and other metaphors drawn from mind-body disciplines to well-being in organizations. A spiritual perspective complements these by providing an evolutionary framework of meaning that focuses on cultivating inner potential in the context of interconnectedness with and service to the larger environment. It also

provides fresh ways of confronting, managing, transforming, and transcending pain conflict and dilemma at work. The applied hermeneutic approach used here is based on the idea that any theory of organizational well-being is but a useful metaphoric approximation of reality that is steeped in more or less evocative context framed rhetoric. The study uses these three complementary prisms to begin to create a holistic framework of meaning which has practical applications within the contemporary context of organizational development. By drawing on familiar metaphors from different disciplines and exploring their significance in a new and integrative context, the dissertation is intended to open a conceptual and applied work/play-ground for generative thought and practice.

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At this milestone in my personal and professional journey I feel so much gratitude to those who have joined me on my way. This work reflects the inspiration, wisdom, and support of many people.

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Fielding provides an unusual learning environment, a space where synchronicity thrives. The synchronicity of finding a mentor and chairperson who could connect deeply with the divergent elements I was bringing to my work was part of the magic of the Fielding environment. Will McWhinney accompanied my work at Fielding from the beginning, constantly challenging and supporting me with his incredible intellect and unique vision. I am particularly grateful also to the Fielding faculty members of my dissertation committee, Judy Stevens Long, Rich Appelbaum, and David Rehorick for their commitment and significant contributions to the quality content and style of the work. I benefited immensely not only from their academic input, but also from their warmth, humanity, and breadth of knowledge and experience. I feel fortunate that the dissertation brought Gouranga Chattopadhyay into my life. I asked him to be my external examiner, finding in his writings a kindred search for integrating spiritual and group relations perspectives. I have since been fortunate to work with him and learn not only from his expertise but from his sparkling, poetic engagement with life. Diana Escobedo was my student reader whose willingness to give of her time and her special gifts was especially meaningful as the process was coming to an end.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Body. Soul. and Role: Toward a Holistic Understanding of Well-being in Organizations is a multi-prism exploration of systemic processes and relationships that direct and determine the dynamic fabric of organizational life. Promoting awareness is central to individual, group, and organizational development and well-being. It is not always clear, however, what needs to be brought to awareness. For awareness to be effective as a tool for growth and well-being, meaningful and comprehensive conceptual frameworks and experiential practices are necessary. The dissertation revisits ideas from group relations (a psychoanalytic systemic approach), mind-body disciplines, and different spiritual traditions to work toward a new, integrative framework for thinking about and working towards the enhancement of organizational well-being.

In this chapter I will discuss the context of this dissertation in terms of its timeliness within the organizational development context. I will then briefly describe what can be considered the applied hermeneutic prism that I use and outline some of the key concepts and different traditions from which I will draw.

Organizational Development and Well-Being

Organizational theory deals with areas of interface between the human, technical, and environmental aspects of an enterprise, taking into account the multifaceted economic, political, cultural, psychological, and spiritual dimensions. Theorists not only offer language and frameworks for understanding organizational structures and processes but also provide theories for creating, managing, and improving organizations. In the widest sense, the field of organizational development can thus be seen as the study and promotion of organizational well-being. This dissertation works toward developing a deeper understanding of organizational well-being by exploring and integrating different systemic prisms through which the subject can be viewed.

The last few decades have seen growing numbers of management and organizational Gurus guiding the ever-growing ranks of managers trying to find their paths in unknown, changing territory. They range from the eclectic, wide-ranging vision of Drucker to the popular hype and "how-to", of Waterman and Peters, the academic research of Collins and Porras in Built to Last (1994) and the ethical, spiritual overtones of Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People (1989). The Gurus today must enact the same nimbleness, flexibility, and ability to reinvent themselves that they demand from their readers. Within 3 years Michael Hammer moved from his book Reengineering the Corporation (1993) to Beyond Reengineering (1996). Note the evolution of three among the many titles of Tom Peter's best selling books In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best Run Companies (1982) to Thriving on Chaos (1987) and The Pursuit of Wow! Every Person's Guide to Topsy Turvy Times (1994). They perhaps tell not only of the "topsy turvy times" in which the writers themselves must find ways to thrive but also of the

anxiety of large numbers of people searching for guidebooks to survival, success, and excitement in the constantly changing world of organizations today.

Within this flurry of popular and academic management literature there is growing interest in holistic approaches to organizational well-being which integrate humanistic and ecological principles. Writers are providing supporting evidence for the profitability and sustainability of organizations which are committed to social improvement. Moss Kanter argued that "Helping men and women succeed as mobile professionals is a matter of public self-interest." (Moss Kanter, 1997, p.145) She recommended new social contracts whereby organizations undertake to actively invest in increasing opportunity and power for their diverse work forces. This even includes ensuring that pensions and benefits are portable so that people are not prejudiced when changing places of employment. Joel Barker (1997) described the highly successful Mondragon Cooperative Model that in many ways contradicts conventional capitalist wisdom as a new pathway for the 21st century. This cooperative model based on principles such as shared vision, democracy, moderation, education, fair pay, self capitalization, and an equitable retirement plan was started by a Jesuit priest in the 1940s in Spain. It grew by 1990 to be worth $2.6 billion. Citing examples such as the Body shop and Ben and Jerry's, Philip Kotler (1997) argued that a company's civic character can become a fairly sustainable basis for differentiation in the mind of the public and a potent criterion for building customer preference.

In the book Built to Last, Collins and Porras (1994) presented research on the successful habits of visionary companies that have endured. They claimed through their research to shatter numerous myths about great companies. These include the myths that it takes a great idea to start a company, that most successful companies exist first and foremost to maximize profits, that visionary companies are great places to work for everyone, or that the only constant is change.

They discovered instead that many visionary companies get off to a slow start. Furthermore, while they seek profits, they are equally guided by a core ideology, core values, and a sense of purpose beyond making money.

They contend also that the core ideology is seldom if ever changed, and that only those who "fit extremely well with the core ideology and demanding standards of a visionary company will find it a great place to work"(Collins & Porras, 1994, p. 42). These are only some of their conclusions. One of the central findings is what they call the genius of the "And". They reveal how in attempting to find the golden route to success, many one-dimensional and polarized theories emerge. They suggest that the successful "visionary " companies which they researched do not choose between A OR B but figure out a way to have A AND B. They set out some of these possibilities in a table where for instance they suggest for instance that "purpose beyond profit" can coexist with "pragmatic pursuit of profit; "a relatively fixed idealogy" together with "vigorous change and movement"; "clear vision and sense of direction" together with "opportunistic groping and experimentation"; "Big hairy audacious goals" together with incremental evolutionary progress" and so on. (Collins & Porras, 1994, p. 44)

How does one bring about changes toward social and environmental commitment in competitive, profit-driven organizational cultures? Peter Senge, in his book The Fifth Discipline (1990), asked "How can the internal politics and game playing that dominate traditional organizations be transcended?" He proposed that this can be achieved in an organization that is committed to constant learning through dialogue conducted in the spirit of openness, freedom, and forgiveness. Covey (1989) emphasized the need for a principle-centered paradigm. Hesselbein, Goldsmith and Beckhard (1997) wrote about managing for a powerful and compelling mission, for

innovation, and for diversity, and Sethi (1997) proposed the "Seven R's of self-esteem" as guiding management principles.

The question remains as to what these high-sounding terms really mean, and how can they be nurtured in environments that are highly tense, competitive, conflictual, and basically human in their complexity. The authors do not fully address these questions and often create the illusion that the intention to be good and do good is sufficient for it to be so. They do not grapple with the darker sides of human nature or explore why it is so difficult for organizational life to look the way it sounds in the endless promising pages on the shelves.

In The Healthy Company (1991) Rosen and Berger argued for the importance of self-development and self-awareness of managers, so that they can identify and transform their limiting patterns of behavior. In the book Rosen and Berger provided numerous questionnaires that can be answered with a yes/no answer with which managers can evaluate themselves and gain some awareness into their concerns, and patterns of functioning. They also provided many markers of healthy companies, and guidelines to follow. Their questions, however, deal with material which lies very close to the consciousness of managers and less with the deeper unconscious material or dynamics relating to the link between the particular attitudes and feelings of the manager and those of the other individuals within the system and the system as a whole.

Herman Bryant-Maynard, Jr. and Susan E. Mehrtens (1993) provided a relatively utopic vision of the future corporation which "will recognize its role as one of stewardship for the whole in addition to providing goods and services to a particular customer base. It will have shifted its self-image from that of a primarily manufacturing to a primarily serving organization and will act as a leader in addressing global issues focusing on what is best for all" (Bryant-Maynard, Jr. and

Mehrtens, 1993, p.55). They distinguished between the different worldviews prevalent in the second wave -- the industrial era where a perspective of separateness and competition prevailed; the third wave, the present era, characterized by an understanding of connectedness and the need for cooperation; and the fourth wave which they envisioned as a worldview based on the understanding of oneness and the choice to co-create. Their view of the present era seems, however, overly optimistic, and they failed to address in a deep way how the changes they envision will come about in a global culture where the forces of competition, oppression, and stratification are growing alongside the positive movements toward transformation.

The very act of raising awareness as to essential parameters for promoting healthy companies and providing guidelines for doing so is a big step forward. Sometimes, however, the value of some of these books is counteracted by the illusions they create of relatively easy answers. A more complex, open-ended, introspective look may be aborted by the constant promise of recipe book solutions which do not address deeper unconscious processes of the individual and the collective.

This discussion touches on an ongoing tension. On one hand, writers attend to what is considered not only palatable but also digestible on a large scale by busy managers who have little training or experience in working with the unconscious, emotional, or spiritual aspects of organizational life. On the other hand, there is a need to provide deep and sustainable opportunities for insight and transformation. The illusions of relatively easy answers respond to but also define public taste and need. The simplification of the emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual life of organizations evident in some of the popular literature is not necessarily due to the need to "dumb down" complexity for mass consumption. It may also reflect a deep collective fear of encountering the unknown within ourselves and of facing fully the dilemmas, conflicts, and challenges of emotional and spiritual maturation. To avoid confronting the violence, alienation and lack of meaning within

oneself and one's community, there is a wish to fill the void and heal the pain in the instant, time-effective way with which we relate to any other commodity. The journey of transformation is frightening and thus avoided.

While the gurus' sounds may be soothing to the ears and conscience, and companies begin to wave flags of diversity, equal opportunity, employee benefits and development, social commitment, and teamwork, one may ask to what extent do they reflect the reality of organizational life?

> Despite these well-known and well-publicized sea changes, most organizations today do not look much different or operate much differently than those of twenty, thirty or fifty years ago. The control-based hierarchy -- with multiple levels, functional divisions, differentiated roles and rewards and fragmented information -- is still the prevalent organizational model. Despite years of total quality, reengineering, and dozens of other change prescriptions, fundamental transformation is still an illusion. The emperor has no clothes. (Ashkenaz, 1997, p. 100)

From the psychoanalytic point of view, one danger is that in the flight to happy, healthy, conflict-free environments, which embrace ideas of diversity and supportive communities, the very human struggles relating to power, sex, envy, competition, aggression, and fear may be repressed rather than dealt with in a constructive manner. Moralistic slogans such as "embracing diversity," "family values," "stewardship," and so on without acknowledgement of emotional complexity and struggle may induce repression rather than encourage introspection.

When issues such as those of power, competition, and sexuality are driven underground, repressed emotions are likely to erupt with greater force. They may manifest in a variety of mechanisms from scapegoating to scandal or irreconcilable division within a company. Violence can be denied

within the corporation by exporting it in the form of pollution, unethical behavior toward competing organizations, or the outsourcing of poorly paid manufacturing operations to sweatshops.

Organizations may be defined in terms of the tangible and intangible structures and processes through which they operate; however, according to psychoanalytic theory, they exist primarily in the mental and emotional lives of the different individuals who people them, observe them, write about them, and are affected by them. Human interactions and behavior that determine the quality of the organization are driven by images and emotions.

To understand organizations is to understand human beings and their functioning as individuals and groups. Most theorists will acknowledge that much of what drives the organizations is often not conscious in the minds of the members. Argyris (1993) has drawn attention to unconscious defenses through which members deal with situations that may be embarrassing or threatening. He showed how, as long as these defenses are activated unconsciously, work is obstructed, and he suggested processes for bringing them to consciousness in the interest of more effective work. Argyris did not fully address the roots of embarrassment, threat, and anxiety that occur in the organizational world.

Many psychoanalytic thinkers have attempted to understand the workings of the unconscious in the organizational world, yet these studies have rarely been taken up in mainstream literature. In the highly practical, goal-oriented world of organizations, the complex nature of human beings who live in the organization is often ignored. Perhaps it is neither politically nor economically savvy to see management and change as far more complicated than can be written about in one bestseller. It may also be premature to confront the still predominantly scientific cultures with the

subtleties and shadows that silently direct behavior and the implications of this for deep organizational transformation.

In this dissertation I draw on group relations theory and practice, spiritual traditions, and mind-body approaches in order to begin to develop a holistic approach to organizational well-being. Group relations theory, mind-body disciplines, and spiritual traditions themselves are each very broad and diverse areas of theory and practice. This essay will not be a critical survey of these fields or an exposition of the intra-or interdisciplinary discussions and controversies. My intention is to draw selectively on those areas of theory and practice that contribute to the line of argument developed here. The way in which these selections are used within the essay does not necessarily indicate concurrence with or criticism of the broader fields from which they are drawn. The following section presents some of the key areas and issues of the dissertation.

The Group Relations Approach

The group relations approach to organizational development originated at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations. The approach has since been developed widely with offshoots such as the socio- analytic approach originally developed in Australia and the institutional transformation approach developed by the International Forum for Social Innovation based in France. The broad field addresses the complex interweaving of individual and group dynamics in organizations. It is based primarily on psychoanalytic theory, the psychoanalytic study of groups, and on systems theories and draws attention to the emotional and unconscious aspects of human behavior and their impact on organizational functioning. This approach highlights the psychological matrixes within groups and organizations. These matrixes are the patterns of actual relations as well as the patterns of relatedness (the way in which the relationships are experienced by individuals and

groups) within the different systems. The conscious and unconscious attitudes, emotions, images, myths, meaning formations, and behaviors which drive the organization are explored as well as the psychological mechanisms used by individuals and groups for coping with anxiety. Individual and group processes related to issues such as identity, envy, authority, power, hate, aggression, competition, sexuality, fear, mortality, as well as self-actualization, cooperation, desire, and joy are considered core to understanding organizational behavior.

Mind-Body disciplines

"Mind-body disciplines" is used here in its widest sense ranging from the more scientific research into psycho-neuroimmunology to various alternative approaches to well-being less recognized by the scientific and medical communities. As the term suggests, mind-body emphasizes the integral relationship between emotional and physiological processes. Goleman (a. 1993) describes mind-body medical research as focusing on the three following converging areas:

> Physiological research, which investigates the biological and biochemical connections between the brain and the body's systems.
>
> Epidemiological research which shows correlation's between certain psychological factors and certain illnesses in the population at large.
>
> Clinical research, which tests the effectiveness of mind/body approaches in preventing, alleviating, or treating specific diseases. (Goleman, a. 1993, p. 8)

Mind/body disciplines include a variety of methods designed to enlist the mind in maintaining and enhancing emotional and physical health and in treating illness. These methods range from work with breathing, meditation, relaxation techniques, and imagery to social support groups. In

addition to those approaches adopted recently by the medical community, alternative mind-body medicine draws on different ancient and modern diagnostic and therapeutic techniques, including among many others working with energy meridians, herbology, symbology, spiritual guides, auras, and long-distance healing. The following is a text I wrote for the brochure of the first "Body, Soul and Role" conference. (See Appendix)

> Familiar concepts such as group mind or collective unconscious reinforce the conceptual split between mind and body. I propose the metaphor of a collective psyche-soma and suggest it can open important arenas for exploration that draw attention to the links between thought, emotion, and physical symptom and behavior on the collective level.
>
> What, for instance, on the metaphoric and symbolic level, would the experience of the "system psycho-soma" feel like, and what can exploring this dimension add to our understanding of organizational life? How does the interdependence and interconnectedness of individuals within a system manifest itself in the psychosomatic lived experiences of the individuals within the system? In what ways does vital energy flow through the organization, and in what ways is it obstructed? How can these obstructions be healed? Are there links between the psycho-somatic experiences of individuals within the organization? What are the implications of such links and their symbolic messages?

I do not presume to provide clear answers to these questions but propose that exploring them provides new and useful ways of thinking about and enhancing well-being in organizations.

Spiritual Traditions

While I will draw on different texts and personal experiences to explore the spiritual dimension of organizational life, I do so as a non-practicing outsider of all formal religious or spiritual

traditions. From this perspective, it is difficult if not impossible to speak with authority about any specific belief system. Instead, I draw on images, ideas, and practices which are meaningful to me and hope that in doing so I do not distort their essence in any way.

Today there is a reawakening of a spiritual consciousness and movements sometimes referred to as reflecting a "new spirituality." This trend is evident in the evergrowing number of spiritual groups and the huge industry of popular literature and workshops on the subject. New forms of spirituality draw on different spiritual traditions and sometimes seek to find basic and even archetypal spiritual principles, values, rituals, and practices. Such approaches claim to address an essence of spirituality not aligned with any particular religion or sect. American Indian spiritual knowledge and the Kabbalah, which have been carefully maintained in their oral form and transferred from generation to generation within specific groups, have recently become available to the public in the form of popular literature, seminars, and workshops. Buddhism from the East is spreading rapidly in the West. The danger in these developments lies in what skeptics may regard as a supermarket approach to spirituality reflecting the alienation and superficiality prevalent in modern society and a desperate search for simple and reassuring answers. New pluralistic spiritual movements can also, however, be seen as a growing desire to transcend alienation and violence by reconnecting to deep, spiritual, and universal principles.

Spirituality is such a broad concept that for the purpose of this paper I choose to focus on one aspect of it: the deep recognition that each individual is a unique but integral, and in some ways undifferentiated part of a larger system. From this perspective, spiritual development involves the evolving connection with one's unique core in the context of contribution to the larger system. I suggest that this metaphor can be applied to the systemic level as well where each system (group, organization, society, nation, etc.) can be seen as having a unique purpose and potential of serving

within the larger systems of which they are part. Previously, I raised the question of the psycho-soma of an organization. Similarly, the metaphor of the "soul of the organization" (found in recent literature on organizations) raises questions of the links between mind-body-spirit on the collective level. What would it mean, for instance, if an organization was thought of as an entity with an implicate learning path beyond the individuals who people it? What can it mean for individuals, groups, and organizations to confront the spiritual challenges that face them at work?

Together these approaches provide a more holistic system perspective than any one of these alone. They address mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual processes integral to individuals and to dynamic human systems and the interweaving of the related processes. In composing this tapestry, attention is given to the relationship within and between the different parts and processes of the system and the system as a whole,what is latent and manifest in the system and what is conscious and unconscious. The purpose of this work is not to provide a conclusive or comprehensive theory of well-being in organizations, but rather to promote awareness of the multi-faceted, dynamic, and often elusive qualities of complex human systems which need to be taken into account in any theory and practice of organizational development.

The Texts and Contexts

In this dissertation I take what might be thought of as an "applied-hermeneutic" approach, in that I seek to create a framework of meaning which has a practical application within the contemporary context of organizational development. The context is not only culturally and temporally determined, but also framed within the specific disciplines that serve as a backdrop to this discussion.

Hermeneutics seeks to understand the meaning of human experience by interpreting it within its fullest context. This includes the context of the dialogical and mutually affecting circle of interpretation of researcher and text. Whereas earlier hermeneutic approaches focused on written texts as the object of study, today hermeneutic approaches consider the full spectrum of human expression as valid texts for study. The philosophical hermeneutic process is one of an ongoing dialogic engagement with the text through which new dimensions of meaning are constantly sought out.

> The term has been extended to cover all processes of interpretation that mediate between and incorporate different cultural and historical meanings and traditions through the analysis of texts and symbols in their cultural and historical context with a view to applying or extending the meanings and traditions. In other words the interpreter is concerned with the "objective meaning" of ideas or symbols and what they have to say to us. A hermeneuticist sees his culture and self as the product of a tradition that he is both perpetuating and changing through the act of interpretation. (Malhotra Bentz & Shapiro, 1998, p. 109)

Heidegger and Gadamer opposed the Romantic hermeneutic tradition which they saw as striving to a Cartesian inspired search for truth beyond all doubt and rejected the notion of objective science as the measure of knowledge. Instead, they emphasized the essential subjectivity and cultural bias of any hermeneutic endeavour. The objectivity that Heidegger and Gadamer sought was one based on an intersubjective understanding and was to be achieved through argumentation and agreement. The process is a dynamic one, where the ultimate meaning is never actually reached as there are always other layers of meaning to be explored.

The hermeneutic approach itself has become a text that is constantly changing with its ongoing use and in engagement with the subjectivity of researchers in different social contexts over changing time periods. The way in which I, as a researcher, engage with the process given my own subjectivity and the theme of the dissertation also provides a particular interpretation of the process.

The hermeneutic approach can be seen as having a systemic foundation in that it recognizes the necessary interdependence and even mutual influence of text, researcher, and societal context. The language used, however, still implies these elements as somewhat discrete phenomena. The dissertation focuses on systemic prisms and on a metaphoric stance as the basis for knowledge creation. In line with this, the metaphor I suggest for the hermeneutic approach used here is not only one of a backward and forwards process between researcher, text, and context. Instead, it is an emergent process of interpretation that occurs within a co-creative space in which the different texts, contexts, researcher, and the processes that influence them participate, through which they are changed, and as a result of which a new dynamic understandings occur. Also, in line with the dissertation, I emphasize not only the subjective experience of interpretation but also the essentially metaphoric aspects of meaning making.

Much work has been done on the idea that knowledge is relative in that it is determined by the prisms of culture, language, and worldview. Given this contextual influence, one is only able to provide closer and closer approximations of a reality which is ultimately unknowable. If language is only a symbolic representation of an ultimately unknowable reality, then perhaps the function of knowledge creation or discovery is to enhance the experience of reality of individuals and communities by providing richer and richer metaphors that expand their horizons and their interactions with the external world. The absolute meaning of evocative metaphor is elusive, but

the unfamiliar and often chimeral juxtaposition of two sets of images catalyzes a process of an internal search for personal resonance.

Meaning can never be the same for two people, as it can only be discovered in the context of a person's resonances with his/her own internal images based on past experience and the particular way in which these interface with universal archetypes. The view of knowledge as closer to truth rather than to meaningful metaphor will hold very different implications for research. The first option will lead to a more concrete search for facts, certainties, and finite interpretations that are considered to be statements of what "is." The metaphor option will function on two levels simultaneously. This approach will strive toward generating knowledge which has greater and greater resonance with more and more people by articulating in a communicative way the unarticulated realities of human experience. The researcher will nevertheless perceive the paradox of the simultaneous truth and nontruth of the knowledge, the articulation of which is only one further image to enrich an ongoing process of discovery. Given "reality as ultimately unknowable," it is the process of the search itself which becomes the focus rather than the ultimate answers. The hermeneutic process is both the means and the end. Hermeneuticists view interpretation as fundamental to a person's engagement with the world. To be is in some ways to interpret. It is as if when the hermeneutic process stops, knowledge as a dynamic process dies. Instead, it becomes a crystallized specimen or relic of something once living.

The discoveries on the way are the dynamic and changing stepping stones in the ongoing dialogue between self-discovery of the individual or collective and their discovery of the external world. In this process transient and changing communities of individuals with intersubjective resonances about similar issues emerge and cluster momentarily sometimes creating an impression of a shared identity through a shared understanding.

It seems that the evolutions and revolutions in the study of the human sciences are happening at such a rapid pace that within a few years, the nature of research will have undergone dramatic changes. Influences on this range from the internet which is creating completely new possibilities of virtual and global research to the effect of spiritual traditions such as Buddhism (e.g. Varela et al., 1996, Bentz & Shapiro1998) that look to other "ways of knowing" on research. The interface between the individual and global search for knowledge is exemplified in the metaphor of the world wide web - a multidimensional virtual reality where concepts of normally recognized boundaries are constantly being challenged. On 23 April 1998, "The Great Experiment" advertised through the web took take place where individuals all over the world meditated on creating world peace at precisely the same moment. The research is based on the hypothesis that people, through working with their consciousness, have the capacity to create their own reality, and that the effect is cumulative when many people focus on the same thing at the same time. This is just one example of the more revolutionary changes possible not only in methods of research but in the very concept of reality that motivates the search for knowledge.

McWhinney pointed to limitations of some of the current ways in which research methodologies are categorized[1]. Building on the realities scheme developed in his book Paths of Change(1997a), he proposed a new organizing model to describe relations among different modes of inquiry. The model is based on the relation of the observer to the observed. He identified four elements basic to this model: data (actions), principles (rules), ideas (images), and values. The relations among them define the six "bases of inquiry" he termed: analytic, evaluative, interpretive, theoretic, normative, and intuitive. An example is the analytic mode that works from the axis of rules and actions. The familiar forms of inquiry in this mode would be those that use quantitative methods, formal arguments and

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[1] In his draft for a paper entitled "A Proposal to Transcend the Cultures of Inquiry" (1998).[1]

classifications. These approaches require the elimination of any observer effects, and their outputs would be applications or the testing of theories. Another example is the interpretive mode, which functions on the axis of images and rules. Familiar forms of inquiry in this category are phenomenology, ethnography, and symbolic and narrative construction. Here, the observer is intentionally connected to the observed in a hermeneutic process, and the outputs are evocative metaphors or meaningful texts.

Within the context of the ongoing debate as to the nature of truth and reality and the appropriate methodologies for the social sciences, McWhinney in his book Paths of Change (1977a) suggested that there are a number of archetypal ways in which people experience reality.

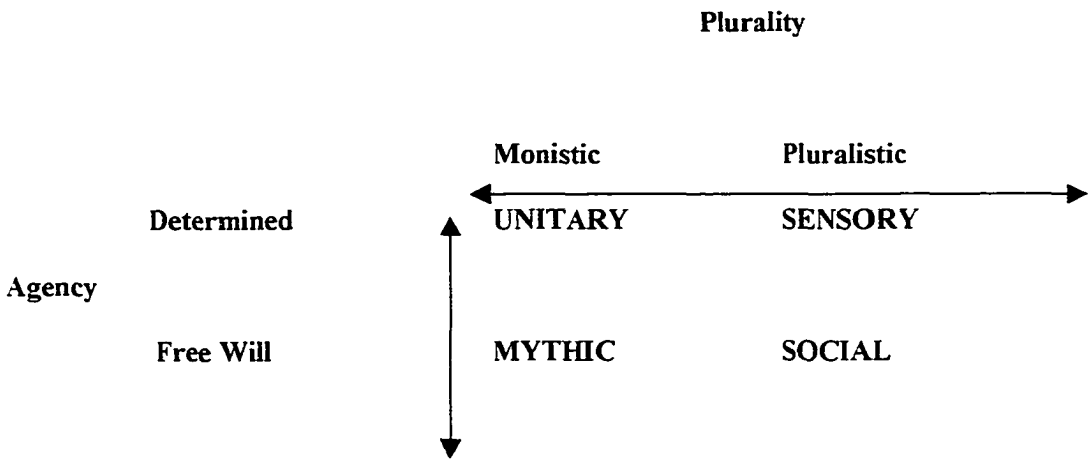

Figure 1. Dimensions of reality

(McWhinney,1997a p. 28)

The map of the archetypal ways in which humans perceive reality he based on two axes: plurality, which relates to whether change in that reality is perceived in terms of things being more alike (monistic) or more different (pluralistic), and agency which relates to whether the cause of change is perceived as an external natural condition (determinism), or intentional acts of change (free will).

He considered the unitary and mythic realities as more monistic and the sensory and social more pluralistic. While the unitary and sensory reflect a more deterministic approach, the mythic and social are steeped more in a view of free will. It is interesting to consider in which way these archetypes have been reflected in the ongoing debate and influence the choice of methodology for specific research. While the above scheme refers to ideal types, most people function with a combination of these realities, but their dominant combinations will determine the way in which they relate to explanations of phenomena and causality, ethics and rules of evidence.

McWhinney also suggested six basic styles of change and leadership on the basis of the relations of these archetypes. These are: the analytic, participative, imperative, emergent, inventive, and influential. These are similar to the six modes of inquiry based also on the four realities but defined according to the relationship of the observer to the observed. Combining models of the styles of leadership and the modes of inquiry offers insight about the way research language is framed, both on the level of choices and worldview guiding the individual researcher as well as predominant cultures of inquiry in different societies at different times. The empirical positivist mode, for instance, reflects a position heavily set in the unitary and sensory realities. Here, there is a deterministic and monistic worldview that looks to describe and explain the causes inherent in nature. The corresponding basic mode of change McWhinney called analytic. People with a dominant mixture of the unitary and sensory worldviews, he said, tend to impose "policies that have been developed with testing an idea, formally or casually, against empirical data. Actions derive from unilateral authority" (Mc Whinney, 1997a, p.85). People who seek to change or to develop knowledge by research will be drawn to modes that uncover causes and describe the predetermined laws, regularities, and patterns in nature by using sense data, the only "real" and reliable data. The corresponding mode of inquiry in the new model of inquiries is described as focusing on rules or principles and action (data) and looking to

empirical quantifiable (sensory) data in order to test or to apply theory. Observer effects are not seen as relevant and must be avoided. The anti-positivist response opposed this by presenting arguments from different experiences of reality. They emphasized values drawn from the mythical and sensory worldviews such as the importance of the subjectivity (mythic) of the researcher in the output (e.g., hermeneutics) and the necessity of exploring the richness of human experience and the meaning (values) of the social reality.

The thrust of this dissertation can be seen as based more in the mix of the mythic and social realities. The corresponding basic mode of change is the emergent mode, and it is "achieved through creating and accepting an idea that may have originated with an idea leader or emerged from the involved group"(1997a, p.85). People who look to develop new knowledge from this worldview, he said, are likely to be interested in images and symbols (mythic) and concerned with what matters to people (social). Researchers with this worldview, he said may be interested in intuitively or theoretically working on the creation of new ideas or theories which provide answers to time and society relevant questions. They may also instead focus on gathering data to discover what really matters to people and build the theories on the findings. In his model of modes of inquiry, the corresponding mode is called the *interpretive* and functions on the axis of values and ideas (images). The observer is very much a part in the hermeneutic process (mythic). The outputs are evocative metaphors and meaningful texts.

The works of Freud and Jung are probably good examples of this mode. Both, for instance, used their own imagination, experience, and observations to create powerful metaphors and images about what matters to people. While Freud was influenced by the positivist worldview, and many of his metaphors are causal, deterministic, and in some ways atomistic, the essential frame of reference is a mythic-social one. He published his theories at the the crux of the debate between the positivists and anti-positivists. Despite the rigorous and innovative research into human nature and the causal

character of many of his theories, psychoanalyis did not meet the requirements of the positivists to be considered a science. Between Hermeneutics and Science: An essay on the Epistemology of Psychoanalysis, (Strenger, 1991) reflects the ongoing and complex nature of the general debate and an example of the areas of knowledge which lie suspended irresolutely between two worlds.

All this seems particularly relevant in the discussion of appropriate modes of inquiry into human experience. The very search for knowledge and insight into reality is so bound up in pre-existing structures and assumptions that determine what will be looked for and how this will be done. The different attempts at creating languages and metaphors for dealing with these questions raises awareness as to the multiplicity of variables which need to be taken into account and provide us with a richness of possibilities and choices. The model based on the quadrants provides a meta-perspective that recognizes the contribution of each quadrant and the different modes of inquiry that emerge from the interface between them. It does not contend that one is right and the other wrong, or that one is closer to the truth than another. Instead, each are seen as essential archetypal worldviews that complement each other in the fuller scheme of things. The model pushes, however, toward the need for the self-awareness of the researcher to understand the opportunities and limitations of the worldview that pervades the research approach she uses. The hermeneutic approach that looks at the interface of different systemic perspectives in a new organizational context and the possibility of viewing knowledge as metaphor strongly reflects what can be considered the mythic aspect of my own worldview and assumptions. The current research is prompted by a lively internal dialogue, insights and images which enrich the way I understand myself, human nature, and the way "the world works." The content of many of these images which relate to human potential and what matters to individuals and groups reflects the social quadrant in the reality schema.

As mentioned, the texts and contexts that inspire this work are drawn from the psychoanalytic systems or group relations approach, mind-body disciplines, and different spiritual traditions. These frameworks provide the metaphoric foundations for the theory and practice of organizational well-being offered here. On the assumption of the inevitable subjectivity of any theory and research, any theory of organizational well-being is but a useful metaphoric approximation of reality that is steeped in more or less evocative context framed rhetoric. Given the largely conceptual and hermeneutic nature of this work, the measure of such usefulness will lie only within the subjective meaning and value which practitioners attribute to the framework offered. The value of the metaphors and concepts I use and develop in this context will lie in their intersubjectivity and the extent to which they resonate among theoreticians and practitioners in the field, and to which they are found as helpful and enriching in their work. Many of the ideas are not new. The proposed innovation is based on revisiting concepts taken from different disciplines and in exploring their similarities and differences and the implications of these within the context of organizational development. The interface and integration of these concepts seeks to work toward a fresh, comprehensive and practical model of organizational well-being.

A Model Based on Metaphor

The practicality of such a metaphoric model depends on whether the model generates new functional ideas or suggests new structures and processes. The view of the theory as metaphor rather than as an objective reflection of reality emphasizes the exploratory process that the theory is designed to provoke. Metaphor likens one thing to another so that an inner search for resonances, similarities, and differences is triggered. It is the search for meaning triggered by the metaphor which catalyses the meeting with the unfamiliar within oneself. The metaphor is at the

same time the object of focus and not the object. New connections are made by implied comparison, and emotional and imaginal echoes surface. In this "in-between" space of metaphor -- a space of play and creativity - one is aware that one is not describing reality but the way in which an image of reality reverberates within oneself. It is the movement itself, the process of exploration and discovery that allows for the experience of growth and development.

It is clear that metaphors resonate in each individual in a unique way. The more idiosyncratic a metaphor, the less it may resonate with a wide audience. When metaphors tap into archetypal realms in new ways, the resonances may be both personal and universal. As in a powerful film, story, or work of art, such metaphors are likely to create a generative social space for communication, exploration, creativity, and even cultural development. In his book Images of Organizations (1986), Gareth Morgan described how different images of organizations emerged in different societal contexts at different times both reflecting the societal context and, in turn, impacting it. In examining each image, he explored the contributions of the metaphor to thinking about organizations as well as its limitations.

One danger of a particularly evocative metaphor is its reification; another is its ossification. The creative potential of a metaphor lies to an extent in the individual or group's willingness to maintain an explorative attitude toward it and to move in and out of it and also beyond it. It lies in the willingness to constantly breathe fresh life into its multiple facets. No matter how encompassing and comprehensive a metaphor, it is limited in that it offers only one of many possible prisms. The seductive quality of a particular metaphor can lead to the temptation to reify it or to discourage the energizing flow and fertilization between metaphors. The metaphor then becomes a prison rather than a prism, an exclusive and excluding truth or ideology which limits creativity. Having initially catalysed innovative and exciting discoveries, the metaphoric images

and the structures and processes they engendered become crystallized and bureaucratized as the fear of the unfamiliar once again takes hold.

The spirit of this dissertation is in the surfacing of new and useful meanings in familiar metaphors. By drawing on powerful metaphors from different disciplines and exploring their significance in a new context, I hope to open an interpetive work/play-ground for generative understanding and practice about organizational well-being. In doing so, it is important to take into consideration certain cautions.

Some of the concepts which I refer to as metaphors are not necessarily considered as such within their original disciplines, as certain reification has already taken place. Psychoanalytic concepts such as defense mechanisms or even the unconscious have taken on somewhat standardized meanings and have lost their original freshness. Similarly, concepts such as soul, god, spirit, good and evil have taken on very different specific connotations within different spiritual traditions. The terms energy, energy blocks, somatization amd so on are words that articulate processes within a specific conceptual framework. By drawing on and juxtaposing these different frames of reference, I do not wish to undermine their contribution as independent disciplines or approaches, nor do I wish to enter into a discussion regarding their respective truths. Rather, by focusing on their metaphoric qualities within the particular disciplines or belief systems, I acknowledge that I explore only one dimension of their richness.

Another danger lies in the possibility of taking concepts out of the context from which they originally derive their meaning. The question arises whether the result is an artificially contrived, perhaps elegant system but one that lacks internal organic coherence, or whether it genuinely

uncovers a deep, generative metaphor with significance within other metaphoric systems. This question will remain core to the whole endeavor.

Finally, in working with an applied hermeneutic methodology in mind, one needs to be constantly attentive to its practicability. For this project, I have chosen to focus on developing the conceptual arena without rigorous empirical research of its application. On one hand, this allows a space and freedom to experiment with ideas, images, concepts, and theories. On the other hand this choice can lead to a level of abstraction which is difficult to translate into the realities of daily organizational experience. In order to manage this tension, I will try to use language that bridges the theoretical and practical and will bring real and hypothetical examples from organizational life. I will also suggest some concrete and practical implications and applications of the proposed conceptual framework. While ultimately the goal of this work is to contribute to society in a practical way, I believe that the space for creative play with theory and concepts is an essential although not sufficient part of the praxis process and hope that this essay will stimulate further theoretical and practical contributions to well-being in organizations.

Body, Soul and Role: Toward a Holistic Theory and Practice of Well-Being in Organizations

The title of the dissertation "Body, Soul, and Role"[2] was used also for a conference that I developed together with David Gutmann and Avner Haramati, and which I directed in Israel in

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[2] Body, Soul and Role: An International Pilot Conference on Health and Vitality in Organizations directed by Shelley Ostroff in Israel in 1998. The conference was sponsored by The International Forum of Social Innovation, IFSI (France) and Tmurot (Israel). In October 2000 an independent workshop by the same name was held in Dublin, Ireland co-convened by Shelley Ostroff and Eamonn Bredin. In November 2000 an international conference directed by David Gutmann, "Le Corps, L'esprit et le Role" was held in Belgium sponsored by the Commissariat General a la Protection du Travail du Ministere Federal de l'emploi et du Travail with the help of IFSI. In March 2001, a Body, Soul and Role workshop was held in Karjat, India, Sponsored by ISABS and was co-convened by Shelley Ostroff and Gouranga Chattopadhyay..

1988. The conference was designed to provide participants with an opportunity for learning about organizational health and vitality. The terms body, soul and role reflect the intention to study the physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual processes that impact the way in which individuals and organizations take up their roles within the systems of which they are part. I use the term 'role' rather than 'function' as it conveys both the behavioral manifestation as well as the idea in the mind that influences the way in which a role is taken up or enacted. I explore formal and informal roles of individuals and organizations and how these are determined to a large extent by the 'individual' and 'collective unconscious'.

Role

The familiar definition of role as "expectations" for behavior and qualities of a person in a certain position is problematic in that while it suggests the subjective nature of role, it runs the risk of implying that there is a clearly defined basket of identical expectations. While there may be certain collective assumptions about a certain role, these assumptions, because of their subjectivity also necessarily vary. In work situations, "common enough" expectations and a "good enough" understanding of these will contribute to a person's ability to function in role.

Group relations tradition emphasizes the view of "role" as a construct in the mind which exists in relation to a general or specific task. Reed (1976) defined role as an idea held in the mind which he termed the "role idea" through which the individual marshals his skills, knowledge, and other resources, human and material, to deal with an external task or challenge."[3] The role

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[3] Quoted from Grubb Institute publication copy, p. 14.

idea, he said, constantly changes as it is affected by variations in the individual's own view of his relations with others, his assessment of the effects of his performance, and of his working environment.

Briskin also considered role to be a dynamic and fluid "psychological stance" that changes in relation to the environment. "Finding and taking a role is a way to organize our behavior in relation to tasks and other people. The things we do are only the outer shell, the visible half of the unseen inner work that gives it meaning" (Briskin, 1998, p. 197).

Triest discussed the meeting place of the formal and informal roles held by individuals in organizations. He described the "formal role" as

> that aspect of a role which is defined by the organization, regardless of the persona who is supposed to fill it; it is directly derived from the organization's primary task. The formal role refers to all of the role's components which are defined a-priori by the system; like the function assigned to the role-holder, the definition of his or her authority and rank within the organization's hierarchy structure, the resources at his or her disposal, the norms of communciation with subordinates, superiors and peers, salary and beefits, working hours, etc. (Triest, 1999, p.210)

The informal role is seen as the interface between the more unconscious relationship of the individual to the role and the less conscious projections and expectations of others onto the person in role.

> "The 'informal role' is the role which the individual takes, driven by needs which are more often than not quite unconscious, as part of his or her personality and as a response to the 'call' of the group which is operating on the basic assumption level." (Triest, 1999 p. 210))

Individuals, groups and organizations, and even cultures have multiple roles. In the sense used here, role can be seen as a sometimes more and sometimes less flexible and malleable shell that is given life and character when "inhabited" by a particular person or persons, a team, department, or organization. Even a role defined on paper is a subjective experience in the sense that it takes on certain images in the mind of a person who reads it at a certain time. A role lives in the minds of people who think about it and are in psychological relationship with it and who project onto it all sorts of pictures.

The term role originates from the theater, where it was linked to the scroll from which actors read. When the role of Hamlet is read, the role is given a subjective and unique life in the mind of the reader. The role emerges in the space between the written word and the subjectivity of the reader. The role of Hamlet as described by Shakespeare interacts with and is given dynamic life in the intersubjective space of the character in the mind of personality of the director, of the actor, the other members of the cast, and the unique energetic matrix that evolves between the actors and a specific audience on any particular night all of which can all be seen as co-creating the role at that particular moment in time.

Emery and Trist (1960) developed the concept of socio-technical systems and drew attention to the interdepence of the social system with the technological component and the environment of an organization. Role similarly exists at the interface between the technology and the primary task, the way it is consciously and unconsciously perceived and enacted by the persons who occupy it, those who are in relation to it, and the dynamic environment in which it is taken up.

The dissertation explores some of the conscious and unconscious systemic processes that impact the way in which a person, group, or organization take up roles within the systems in which they

exist. In this sense it is not only a psychological stance, an idea in the mind, or an objective job description. Role is a dynamic emergent and multi-determined phenomena. Role evolves in the ever changing meeting space between the formal definitions, norms, or regulations collectively attributed to a position, job description or task, the dynamic psychological stance of the person/s who inhabits the role, the changing projections of others onto the role, and the dynamic environment in which it exists. The holistic approach described here addresses the complex mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual systemic processes that enhance and inhibit the way in which individuals and organizations take up roles at any given point in time.

Holistic

The word holistic (as does the word health) derives from the Greek word holos meaning whole. In mind-body medicine, 'holistic' refers in particular to the integral relations and even inseparability of the constructs of mind and body. Holistic diagnostic and therapeutic methods recognize the inextricable nature of structure and process and attend to the relations between different dimensions of the individual within the context of his or her larger environmental (e.g., family, work, societal) system.

The term holistic as an approach to organizational well-being runs the risk of sounding either presumptuous or empty in its all-encompassing aspirations. The specific way in which the term will be used in this work indicates an approach which takes into account interconnectedness of mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual processes, on the level of the individual, the group, the organization, society, and the larger systems of which they are part. But to define holistic in these terms is problematic.

The Use of Language

Our everyday use of language is limited in its ability to express the paradoxical, non-dualistic and relational aspects of life. Rabbi Zalman Shachter pointed out, for instance, that there is currently no way of expressing ideas such as "The chair and I are intersitting"[4], and is concerned that human thought processes are limited by the fragmentary way in which we use language. The Vietnamese Buddhist teacher and poet Thich Nhat Hanh (1998) used the concept "inter-being" which gives expression to a basic interdependent experience of existence. Paradoxically, the very act of defining holistic in terms of addressing different processes, encompassing as they are, necessarily excludes other frames of reference, and in that sense the term itself become less holistic. Other problems arising from the definition of these dimensions are the temptation to reify them and the illusion created of the boundaries between them.

The demarcation of mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual processes seems to reflect primary archetypal distinctions that have repeatedly emerged in different spiritual and philosophical texts over the course of history. It is likely therefore that these distinctions are not coincidental but reflect a basic common enough experiential reality. They also offer frames of order and meaning within which conceptual and practical knowledge can be developed. For the purpose of this paper I will not deal with the question of their objective reality, but rather, with their usefulness as metaphors, and as such, it is important to recognize the simultaneous real as well as illusory nature of the boundaries between them. As with the wave and the particle, I suggest that their

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[4] From a lecture by Rabbi Zalman Schachter at "Kol Haneshama" in Jerusalem, June 1998

separate, linked, or even unified nature depend only on where we choose to focus our attention at any given moment.

Well-being

Well-being reframes the idea of health by emphasizing not only the absence of illness but also the presence of wellness. The term well-being is an essentially holistic and systemic one, being suggesting health as a dynamic process of a system rather than a static condition. Well-being is a relatively modern term that is generally used to signify a state of mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health and contentment of an individual. Given the difficulty in defining and measuring well-being in precise terms, I suggest the following as markers of well-being on the individual and group levels. In both, the subjective experience is a key factor.

a. A general sense of contentment, optimism, fulfillment, and self-actualization in the different areas of life.
b. A general experience of mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical health and vitality within the context of the individual or collective potential.
c. A sense of coherence between belief systems, values, and desires and behavior.
d. A sense of personal/collective evolution coherent with core potential through a process of discovering and expressing one's uniqueness.
e. A confidence in the ability to satisfactorily manage and, when possible, resolve experiences of pain, disease, and internal and external dissonance and conflict.

As mentioned previously, inherent paradoxes and limitations exist in the attempt to create a working definition of the term. They lie in the fact that a holistic concept of well-being involves using a language steeped in an atomistic paradigm which is in some ways antithetical to the holistic worldview. As systems theories gain prominence, new relational forms and structure of

language will perhaps emerge. In the meantime I will work with the terms, acknowledging their limitations.

The above picture is not intended to describe a static condition. I will use the term well-being to imply a general sense of health, happiness, and vitality but not one of ongoing peak experience in all these areas. Well-being is a dynamic state. Within the scope of feelings and sensations considered well-being, the individual or group confronts the inevitable vicissitudes of daily existence comprising a flux of emotions and attitudes. The arena of well-being does not have definitive cut-off points or lines where "well-being" starts or ends. Within this space the full range of emotions may be experienced, yet there is a predominant although not always present sense of contentment and optimism, together with a natural course of progression and regression, flow and obstruction. However, the predominant movement in a state of well-being is an evolutionary transformational one which is coherent with and gives expression to the individual's or group's core needs, values, purpose, and innate unique potential and developmental stage.

While certain aspects of well-being on the organizational level can be extrapolated from well-being on the individual level, other phenomena are specific to groups, organizations, communities, societies, and the even more encompassing systems of which human and non-human subsystems are a part. Within organizations, the more holistic the conception of well-being, the greater the awareness of the need to address the different aspects of employee well-being. A holistic view also emphasizes the integral relation between well-being of the individual, the organization, and the environment, and relates also to how mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual processes interact in and between these levels.

Summary

In this chapter, I have outlined the different contexts within which this work is framed and have addressed the manner in which some of the central terms will be used. The title *Body, Soul, and Role: Toward a Holistic Approach to Organizational Well-being* reflects the intention to explore the way in which individuals, groups, and organizations assume and experience their roles within the larger systems in which they function. The purpose is to extend how we think about well-being in organizations by taking into account the latent and manifest, mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual processes that impact well-being in role on all these levels. It is obviously impossible to create a comprehensive mosaic of system perspectives to reflect all the different aspects of organizational dynamics and the interdependence among them. In this dissertation I suggest it is valuable to juxtapose and integrate a specific set of approaches reflecting complementary worldviews, otherwise, the systemic picture that emerges is paradoxically atomistic in its unitary perspective.

The dissertation revisits group relations, mind-body, and spiritual traditions to explore the way in which separately and together these fields provide complementary prisms for understanding organizational well-being. Each of these fields are in themselves highly developed areas of theoretical and practical knowledge that provide frameworks of meaning and experiential practices considered to enhance well-being. The group relations field and derivative approaches have already worked to apply psycho-analytic and systems thinking to organizational life. The mind-body disciplines and spiritual traditions have focused more on individual well-being and development, and much work needs yet to be done on the integration of their wisdom into

organizations Each of these perspectives offers important insights into organizational processes but cannot stand alone. The group relations approach, for instance, based in psychoanalytic and system theories addresses the unconscious emotional and symbolic aspects of organizational life. However, it has so far to a large extent neglected the somatic and spiritual experience of people in organizations. The psychoanalytic influence in the group relations also colors the field with a somewhat pathological tint, often using diagnoses and metaphors drawn from psychoanalytic studies of individual pathology. The mind-body perspective throws light on processes relating to the realization of thought into physical form both on the individual and systemic level. A spiritual perspective complements these by providing an evolutionary framework of meaning that focuses on cultivating inner potential in the context of interconnectedness with and service to the larger environment. This is just one example of how the three perspectives complement each other providing a more holistic understanding of the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual of experience in organizations.

While much of the discussion may be relevant to systems of all sizes from the small group to the societal context, practical implications for small groups and organizations at this stage may more readily emerge. The process of integrating such knowledge into the workplace in a deep way will involve far more than the lone consultant stepping into an organization with the holistic view outlined here. The process is a complex one that will involve the ongoing development and refinement of theory and practice relevant for the range of organizational species alive today. In the different traditions from which I draw, awareness is an essential element of well-being. It is in the spirit of promoting awareness of as yet undiscovered, unacknowledged, or repressed aspects of organizational life that I have tried to approach this task.

In the second chapter I look broadly at the way in which the systemic insights drawn from the group relations, mind-body, and spiritual traditions complement each other in metaphorically highlighting mental, emotional, physical and spiritual processes in organizations. The third, fourth, and fifth chapters look more specifically at the implications of these insights for well-being in the way individuals, groups and organizations take up their roles. The third chapter explores how pictures held in the mind of individuals and groups impact the way in which they take up their roles within the larger systems in which they function. The fourth chapter looks at well-being in role in relation to the way in which the task/s at different levels of the organization are conceived. The fifth chapter explores the themes of shadow processes, pain and love as they impact organizational well-being. In the sixth chapter I present a conceptual framework for identifying markers of well-being and dysfunction in the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual processes in organizations and in the interactions between them. Finally, chapter 7 summarizes some of the ways in which an approach that synthesizes metaphors from the group relations, mind body and spiritual approaches provides a holistic framework for working toward organizational well-being. Vignettes are used to illustrate some of the implications of such a framework. An appendix provides a brief discussion of the tradition and development of the "Body, Soul, and Role" Conference.

CHAPTER TWO

Organizations as Systems

As system theories have evolved over the last hundred years, so have the implications of viewing organizations as systems. This chapter opens with a discussion about the contribution of the new sciences to understanding organizations as systems. It also addresses the limitations of organizational theory based on direct analogy from non-human system dynamics. I then explore some of the systemic premises of group relations theory, spiritual traditions, and mind/body disciplines that, in contrast to the new sciences, are steeped in the study of human experience. Using concepts from these arenas as useful metaphors, I discuss the way in which they reveal different and complementary aspects of mental, physical, emotional and spiritual processes key to individual and organizational well-being. The following chapters will deal more specifically with how these systemic, metaphoric frameworks can illuminate processes linked with well-being and dysfunction or disease and support approaches for healing and for enhancing and maintaining well-being in organizations.

Over the last 60 or so years in the organizational world, system theories based on the new sciences have contributed metaphors that support innovations in management practice and drive new ones. Despite the proliferation of this work, much is yet to be explored. The new sciences are today

providing a popular realm of analogy for organizational practice. They have inspired thinking about organizations as systems, yet insofar as they deal primarily with complex, non-human systems, the depth of the analogy to organizational life is limited.

The new sciences have challenged 20th century Western society in powerful ways, questioning the prevalent Cartesian worldviews and belief systems. With the evolution of system theories, we have witnessed a movement from thinking based essentially on parts of a whole to a focus on system and environment, from a search for fundamental building blocks to the exploration of the organizing patterns of a whole considered as an entity beyond the aggregate of its parts. The emphasis has moved from one of quantity to one of quality, from a view of causality as linear to one that is non-linear, and even of co-dependent arising. There has been a shift from the view that atoms exist independently in empty space to a view that space is full, alive with force fields with transitory areas of coherence, entrainment and pulses with relatively stable manifestations.

The notion that disorder and dissipation of energy are inevitable and destructive was replaced by an understanding of the necessity of disorder and chaos in bringing about higher levels of order. Living systems are no longer seen to be predictable or as functioning according to deterministic laws. Instead, specific events in open systems were seen as unpredictable, and there evolved a new idea of the possibility of creativity and generativity within the system unavailable in previous models. A separation between form and meaning and between structure and process allowed other conceptualizations to take form. Systems were understood to be energetically open while organizationally closed, and the holographic model was put forth as an alternative to a hierarchical

one. An either/or conflict between opposing theories was replaced with the view that opposites are essential and integral to systems, and paradox is an inevitable aspect of human beings' necessarily partial view of nature. Even the notion of boundaries, so fundamental to early system theories, was dramatically reframed by field theory. In biology and physics, the concept of global coherence as a function of iterating patterns across networks emerged. Non-local causality based on the whole being more than the parts and structure as an ongoing embodiment of organizing patterns has also been demonstrated.

These scientific findings are intertwined with our rapidly changing reality. We no longer live in discrete communities. From global politics to pollution, technology, travel, and terrorism, boundaries of time and space are rapidly dissolving. Industry is moving from tangibles to intangibles in an increasingly virtual marketplace. Hierarchical discrete organizational structures are being replaced by nimble, networking, project-based, re-configurable super-teams in organizations which claim to embrace chaos and complexity.

From Taylor's time management studies, through cybernetics and system engineering to concepts of complexity and creativity in organizations, scientific theories have provided evocative metaphors and practical tools for thinking about organizational systems. The developing fields of the new sciences continue to hold infinite opportunities for metaphor and exploration of the structure and processes that underlie human systems, and their implications for the world of organizations is only just beginning to be explored. However, the recent use of analogies (rather than evocative metaphor) from the new sciences which imply one-to-one correspondence between non-human and human

systems appears reductionistic. These analogies draw attention to aspects of system dynamics in organizations but do not address the particular characteristics of human systems where different levels of consciousness and meaning-making processes are an essential part of the emergent field. What, for instance, do self-organization, indeterminacy, strange attractors, waves, particles, and fields look like in a system where issues of uniquely human needs, attitudes, emotions, and symbolic processes prevail?

The messages of popular management theorists (Wheatley, 1992; Zohar,1997; Lewin & Regine, 1999), who draw on the new scientific theories coincide with and reinforce some of the latest trends in organizational theory. These trends emphasize patterns of relationships within the organizations, free flow of information, embracing change and the creation of flexible organizations, promotion of diversity, and porous and changeable boundaries. Many organizational theorists today are arguing for a holistic view of the organization and its environment, value-driven organizations which serve the environments of which they are an integral part, decentralization of authority and responsibility, and the active encouragement of play and risk-taking to stimulate creativity. Leaders are challenged to think of their organization not only in terms of what is manifest, but in terms of the unseen relational, emergent patterns, and in terms of the potentialities which need to be nurtured. They are encouraged to loosen their reins and lead with a trust based on creating shared values and visions through ongoing processes of dialogue and reflexive learning which promote the capacities of the organization for self-organization and self-renewal.

The new sciences have provided useful concepts for thinking about organizations. For instance, analogies from complex adaptive systems enrich the way one may conceive of organizational structures, decision-making processes, and relationships. The danger, however, is that these analogies are sometimes presented as generalized formulae for success rather than alternative ways of thinking about organizations. They need to be integrated in a discriminating way taking into account that each organization is a unique and complex entity comprised of human beings.

The metaphoric stance

Analogies drawn from the new sciences are often given a special credence. The assumption is that if new knowledge is derived from the sciences it holds an objectivity and validity and reflects organizational realities hitherto uncovered. In the statement on the jacket of Lewin and Regine's book (1999), Christopher Meyer is quoted as saying, "Leaders are beginning to acknowledge that businesses are social systems, while scientists studying adaptive systems are opening doors to a true science of organizations." In viewing the scientific analogies in this way, we are still trapped in the same pseudo-scientific cultural paradigm as to what constitutes reality and validity. The scientific halo effect bestows on an analogy-based theory a credibility and reality which is also its pitfall. *It limits our ability to struggle with the essential contributions and limitations of any metaphor that highlights certain properties and ignores others.*

Theorists who look to the new sciences and non-human complex adaptive systems for insight about organizational processes tend to focus primarily on overt structures, processes, behaviors, and conscious attitudes and values. However, they do not deal adequately with the multi-faceted nature of the psychic fields within organizations. Occasionally, they refer to the overt vision and values of an organization implying that these are something like informational fields which, when effective, create organizational alignment. In a human system, the emotional, attitudinal, and meaning-making aspects of the organization go way beyond issues of vision and values. The analogies they draw suggest conflict-free, cooperative, creative, and self-organizing environments. They do not, for instance, relate to ubiquitous discrepancies between declared as opposed to practiced values and principles. The intricacies of competition, ambivalence, conflict, mistrust, aggression, and fear which are part and parcel of human nature together with the capacities for love, cooperation, and trust are, for the large part, ignored.

Rather than moving in a reactive fashion to a completely new way of envisioning organizations, it may be more helpful for the organizational member at all levels to be able to hold in the mind a multi-level reality and an ability to discriminate when and where principles from the different systemic perspectives of reality are most effective in promoting the task. Which boundaries, for instance, is it worthwhile to define clearly, and which should be more flexible? What information should be transmitted through the organization and what maintained within certain settings? In what cases should one exercise trust, and where should trust be balanced with skepticism or supervision of sorts? What are the guiding principles of the organization, which are open to transformation, and what are the core aspects that cannot be changed? Where is it useful to use a more Newtonian

paradigm? Where is it relevant to look for circular feedback loops, and where does this causal paradigm restrict a wider understanding of the patterns of relations underlying the organizational structure and behavior?

Analogy used in this way implies a parallel between two contexts where meaning derived from or implicit within one context is directly applied to the other. The significance inherent in the comparison is relatively clear, direct, and often even didactic. The metaphoric approach outlined in the introduction chapter and adopted here is intended to be more evocative.

As Langer (1942) suggested, it is our nature to see the new in terms of the old and to look for analogies in order to make sense of experience. "In a genuine metaphor," she said "an image of the literal meaning is our symbol for the figurative meaning, the thing that has no name of its own" (Langer, p. 139). Drawing on Wegener, she suggested "that all general words are probably derived from specific appellations, by metaphorical use; so that our literal language is a very repository of 'faded metaphors'" (p. 140).

> Language, in its literal capacity, is a stiff and conventional medium, unadapted to the expression of genuinely new ideas, which usually have to break in upon the mind through some great and bewildering metaphor. (Langer, 1942, p. 201)

The process of abstractive seeing embodied in metaphor entails describing one thing in terms of another in order to evoke new ways of seeing and knowing. Siegelman (1990) emphasized that the power of metaphor stems from reaching the abstract through the concrete, felt experience. The

metaphoric image engages the senses in the search for the meaning implicit in the comparison of one thing to another.

The intention of this dissertation is to evoke or even provoke a new understanding of organizational well-being. Metaphor, as mentioned in the introduction, is one of the keys to this process. The juxtaposition of the different fields allows new metaphors to emerge in an integrative context. These metaphors are intended to facilitate an ongoing process of exploration and discovery of new conceptual and practicable insights by inviting the reader to resonate with the implicit links and connections. While much of the application of spiritual and mind/body systemic thinking to organizational life is relatively new, the group relations tradition is already a developed organizational discipline. Some of the group relations metaphors drawn from psychoanalytic and systemic fields and applied to organizations have already become faded and run the risk of being taken literally. Inasmuch as the metaphors and connections are new, they provide fresh catalysts for the discovery of new knowledge. Whether they are faded, familiar, or unfamiliar the reader is invited to adopt a metaphoric stance. The metaphoric stance is one that suspends the notion of reality and asks "what if" questions about possible connections. What if the organization has a "psychic matrix" in which all the individuals participate? What if the organization has something like a "dreambody" – a dynamic psyche soma in some ways similar to that of an individual? What if the organization has a "soul" and an "essential purpose"? What if...? And what are the ways that these connections can enrich or enhance understanding of the different dimensions of organizational well-being? This does not mean to say that the connections must then be taken as literal truths! Rather, to the extent that they are useful and relevant, the imaginative and poetic stance that bridges realms and resonates with

connections offers opportunities to engage in deeper and richer dialogues with everyday questions related to health and vitality in organizations. When things are taken literally, the learning stops. The metaphoric stance is an ongoing explorative one. Through this stance the individual and group is able to discover new sometimes personal and sometimes collective meanings.

The Group Relations Approach

The group relations approach draws primarily on psychoanalytic and systems thinking and highlights the complex interweaving of individual and group dynamics in organizations. It focuses on the emotional and unconscious aspects of human behavior and their impact on organizational functioning. This approach examines the psychological matrixes within organizations, the patterns of relations and relatedness (the relations in the mind) within and between the systems of the organization and between the organization and the environment. In this sense, it places an emphasis on those areas missing in many of the organizational development approaches. The conscious and unconscious attitudes, emotions, images, myths, matrixes of meaning, and behaviors which drive the organization are explored as well as the psychological mechanisms and processes used by individuals and groups for coping with anxiety. Individual and group processes related to issues, for instance, of identity, envy, power, hate, aggression, competition, sexuality, fear as well as to love, self-actualization, co-operation, desire, and joy are seen as core to understanding organizational behavior.

The following are some systemic premises that underlie group relations theory:

The Psychic Matrix

The group relations approach suggests that in human systems, groups, organizations, and even communities, a psychic matrix exists beyond the individuals. This matrix can be seen as an invisible network or informational field in which the individual mental and emotional processes meet, communicate, and interact -- something like a group/system mind or group/system unconscious.

The pioneering theories of Foulkes, Anthony, and Bion have contributed significantly to the development of the pscyho-dynamic systemic understanding of organizations. In 1957 Foulkes and Anthony developed the concept of the group as a matrix, a dynamic entity unto itself influenced by, but different from, the individual members.

> The network of all individual mental processes, the psychological medium in which they meet, communicate, and interact can be called the matrix. ... In further formulation of our observations we have come to conceive these processes not merely as interpersonal but as transpersonal. (Foulkes & Anthony, 1957, p. 26)

The matrix can be conceived as an interactional field. It relates to the processes of the group as a whole and derives from the dynamic interactions of the conscious and unconscious attitudes, images, feelings, and behaviors which members bring to the group.

People bring images based on past experience to any new group they join. These unconscious images or "inner groups" influence the expectations and behavior of the members and the way in which they interpret and react to group processes. The matrix can be seen as the informational dynamic field in which all these inner pictures and feelings interact and in which the patterns of behavior and development of the group are constantly determined.

Bion (1961), as well as Foulkes and Anthony (1957), explored the unconscious psychological processes of the system as a whole. The dynamics of the system influence and are influenced by the individuals within the system and by those of the larger environment of which they are part. Individuals in any system are seen to be linked unconsciously around specific and changing images and feelings which surface because of the specific composition of the group and the issues the group is dealing with at any given time. They pointed to multi-level functioning of the group: the conscious and unconscious and latent and manifest levels. Foulkes and Anthony (1957) differentiated between the occupation, which is the manifest declared activities of a group, and the preoccupations which are the latent occupations that a group may have.

Wilfred Bion took the idea of the group or system mentality further when he put forward the concept of the "work group" and the "basic assumption" group. This concept is particularly relevant to our understanding of organizational dynamics.

Bion (1961) suggested that in every group there is an impulse to work and to mobilize efforts and abilities to forward the task as well as a pull against the work with a tendency to avoid or sabotage the task at hand. A group that is working can be seen to have a relatively intact sense of reality and to focus in a way which actively promotes the primary task of the specific group. Sometimes the groups tend to connect in an unconscious way around a specific anxiety and the work of the group is obstructed. He proposed that there were three central mechanisms which groups activate in order to deal with anxiety, and that these mechanisms which he called "basic assumptions" seem to be based on common tacit assumptions that drive the group's behavior and interfere with its reality testing and ability to function effectively. The basic assumptions that he inferred from group behavior were dependency, fight/flight and pairing.

In the **dependency** group, members collude to function in a dependent way that expresses a search within the group for an all-powerful, all-knowing leader who will provide guidance, answers, and security. The members empty themselves of their own power and resources and revert to a regressive longing for a powerful parental figure. This is often manifested by asking the designated, formal leader many questions regarding knowledge or guidance, by raging at him/her for his or her fallibility, or by looking for an alternative leader who will answer the needs of the group. Dependency can also be manifested in overt claims or covert behavior indicating that the leader is unnecessary and

dispensable. Much of the emotional energy, whether in the form of anger or neediness, is focused on the leader.

The second basic assumption is **fight-flight**. In the fight mode, group members cope with anxiety and internal conflict by focusing on a real or imagined enemy who is outside of the group or on a fight in the group by creating internal subgroups. In the first option, the group comes together by creating a common enemy and displacing the internal aggression and conflict onto the external enemy thus preserving its own cohesion and identity. In the flight mode, the group may express its anxiety about the primary task by talking about seemingly irrelevant issues. Flight is often evident in "as if" work, where the group may be dealing with the task but in a highly ineffective way, for instance, by spending long amounts of time on simple administrative details.

When the third basic assumption of **pairing** is active, the group deals with anxiety by avoiding present work and creating a sense of hope or belief that the future will be better -- that a savior will arise who will answer the needs of the group. Often most of the group will sit quietly and watch while two people engage in conversation. The accompanying feeling is one of hope -- as if through the intercourse of two members a solution will emerge which will release the group from the anxiety.

Suggestions of other basic assumptions have been put forward by Turquet (1975) and Lawrence, Bain and Gould (1996). Turquet proposed the basic assumption of "one-ness." In this state, the members seem to seek to fuse with the group and the leader and deny their individuality. They "seek to join in a powerful union with an omnipotent force, unobtainably high, to surrender themselves for

passive participation and thereby to feel existence, well-being and wholeness' (Turquet, in Zagier Roberts, 1999, p.76) Lawrence, Bain, and Gould (1996) proposed a fifth basic assumption which they called "basic assumption me-ness". In this situation, the meaningfulness of the entity of the group as a whole, and the interdependence and relatedness within it is denied. Distrust, anger, and hostility may prevail, and members invest only in what is to be gained for their own advantage.

The anxiety that triggers these basic assumption states may stem from a resistance to change, learning, and progress, or to the content of the work that may be conflictual. Trigger events may infringe on the group from without or within. Bion thus posited the existence of emotional states that transcend the individuals and belong to the group as a whole -- emotional states in which the whole system is somehow caught up. In order to free up the energy for the work, the anxiety behind these strategies and the strategies themselves must be brought to awareness and somehow addressed and transformed.

Bion's work implies that a healthy system is not an anxiety-free system but, rather, is a system that is able to cope effectively with its anxiety so that it can function as a work group. It is a system that works with awareness in order to return rapidly from dysfunctional defensive states to a state where the system can function in an optimum way on the primary task.

Organizations as open systems

Organizations are seen by group relations practitioners as open systems in relation to their environment and to the interdependent subsystems within them. The psychoanalytic systems perspective was influenced in particular by the work of Bertalannfy on open systems. Organizations, subsystems within the organization, and individuals were seen as open systems which performs the task of converting inputs into outputs.

Group relations practitioners paid attention not only to the tangible transactions across boundaries within and between systems of an organization and between the organization and the environment, but also to the intangible transactions across the boundaries -- to the transfer of emotions, attitudes, images, and fantasies within and between systems and to the essential interrelatedness of emotional experience.

> "In this view, emotional experience is not bounded by one's own individual skin, and is not the property of the individual alone. Rather it is bounded by the system or systems in which individuals interact in collaboration or in conflict with each other and with their context" (Armstrong, Bazalgettte, & Hutton, 1994, p.4).

> A key concept derived from Lewin (1935, 1936) and developed in the open systems formulation, is that of boundary. The existence and survival of any human system depends upon continuous interchange with its environment, whether of materials, people, information, ideas, values or fantasies. The boundary across which these "commodities" flow in and out both separates any given system from, and links it to, its environment. It marks a discontinuity between the task of

> that particular system and the tasks of the related systems with which it transacts. Because these relations are never stable and static, and because the behavior and identity of the system are subject to continual renegotiation and redefinition, the system boundary is best conceived not as a line but as a region. That region is the location of those roles and activities that are concerned with mediating relations between inside and outside. In organizations and groups this is the function of leadership; in individuals it is the ego function. (Miller, 1989, p. 11)

While the metaphor of boundaries in this sense is taken from non-human open systems theory, group relations theorists explore what this would mean for human systems and their subjective, unconscious qualities.

In addition to the relatively concrete boundaries of time, territory, task, role, and systems, the management and transaction around additional abstract boundaries are also seen as central in understanding organizational behavior. These additional boundaries are, for instance, between person and role, the inner world of the individual and the external environment (Miller, 1989, p. 12), and between "order and chaos, certainty and uncertainty, construction and destruction, reality and fantasy, faith and doubt ..."[1]

Alderfer draws attention to the way in which concrete and subjective boundaries influence each other.

> Subjective boundaries may lead to the formation of concrete boundaries as when neighbors who wish to reduce their interaction with each other build fences. Concrete boundaries may lead to the

> development of subjective boundaries as when maximum-security prisoners become increasingly alienated from society as a result of their confinement. (Alderfer, 1974, p. 114)

The Symbolic and Unconscious Nature of the Matrix

The psychoanalytic systems perspective explores the links between the conscious and unconscious processes in organizations. Behavior in organizations is, to a great extent, determined by the conscious and unconscious attitudes, emotions, images, myths, behaviors, and allocations of meaning of the members of the organization and of those who are in some form of relatedness (psychic relationship) to the organization, and the way in which these phenomena interact.

> It must be remembered that what is dynamically unconscious is also at the same time subject to the primary process. It belongs to the system ucs (unconscious), that is to say it is cast in a primitive symbolic language. This language is understood unconsciously, and transmission - communication -- does take place without consciousness. The group, through processes of progressive communication, works its way through from this primary, symbolic level of expression into a conscious, articulate language. (Foulkes & Anthony, 1957, p. 28)

The language of the unconscious is symbolic, so much of what takes place on the unconscious level in organizations can be accessed and explored by attending to the metaphoric and symbolic aspects of language and behavior. This can be noticed, for instance, in the symbolic meaning in the

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[1] Quoted from brochure for conference "Authority, Leadership and Transformation", International Forum for Social Innovation, France, 2000

architectural layout of the company, the pictures on the wall, behavior, such as spontaneous seating arrangements in meetings, as well as the discussions themselves.

> Ideas which have a valid meaning at the conscious level may at the same time carry an unconscious hidden meaning. For example, a staff group talking about their problems with the breakdown of the switchboard may at the same time be making an unconscious reference to a breakdown in interdepartmental communication. Or complaints about the distribution of car-park spaces may also be a symbolic communication about managers who have no room for staff concerns. The pscyho-analytically oriented consultant takes up a listening position on the boundary between conscious and unconscious meanings, and works simultaneously with problems at both levels. It may be some time before the consultant can pick up and make sense of these hidden references to issues of which the group itself is not aware. (Halton, 1994, p. 12)

The mythic dimension of organizational behavior.

The mythic dimension extends system thinking to incorporating the dimension of time. It refers to the way in which the conscious and unconscious mythology of the history of the institution plays itself out in the minds and behavior of those who have a relationship with the institution. Often, certain "historical stories" that transcend the present situation and that are linked in some way with the founding acts of the organization pervade the behavior and feeling of the members and in this way limit the ability of the organization to transform itself.

For instance, founding stories may take on a repetitive form if not brought to consciousness -- as in the reenactment of the way in which the first founding father was deposed in a somewhat violent way by a younger challenger, or the way in which a company, founded in a state of protest against the existing corporate environment finds itself continually locked in similar struggles. Myths may also manifest in the form of fear. If, for instance, stories abound about a brutal and unexpected firing of a manager in the past, managers may function in a state of fear. This fear undermines their capacities to work and may lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy and a repetition of the original story.

> The way in which organizational roles are created, sought, taken up, given shape and enacted may be thought of as the space between the individual with her or his development, history, inner world, and relationships on the one hand, and the organization with its development, history, inner world and relationships on the other (Singer & Shapiro,1989, p. 1).

Thus the way that individuals and groups hold the "organization in the mind" necessarily influences the way in which they interact with each other and with the organization as a whole.

Summary

This section focused on the way in which group relations theory provides ways of exploring the system unconscious. Members of any system are linked in a dynamic unconscious matrix or informational field. Feelings and unconscious attitudes are transmitted across boundaries of individuals and groups through a variety of psychological mechanisms. The group relations

approach highlights the unconscious, symbolic, and emotional aspects of human behavior in systems and provides rich ways of looking at how these processes influence organizational behavior

Systems thinking from the perspective of different spiritual traditions

> The components of the natural world are myriad but they constitute a single living system. There is no escape from our interdependence with nature; we are woven into the closest relationship with the Earth, the sea, the air, the seasons, the animals and all the fruits of the Earth. What affects one affects all -- we are part of a greater whole -- the body of the planet. We must respect, preserve, and love its manifold expression if we hope to survive. (Bernard Campbell, quoted in Suzuki , 1997, p. 136)

> To see a World in a grain of sand,
>
> And a Heaven in a wild flower,
>
> Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
>
> And Eternity in an hour. (Blake, quoted in Stevenson, 1988)

> What is here is also there and what is there is also here.
>
> Who sees the many and not the ONE,
>
> Wanders on from death to death
>
> (Katha Upanishad, in Mascaro, 1965,p. 62)

Western society has been largely cut off from a deep systemic understanding of the universe because of the prevalence of the scientific paradigm during the last four centuries. With the split between science and religion, much of the ancient systemic knowledge available in different spiritual traditions was seen as irrational mysticism. Now that the new sciences touch on what has recently been considered the realm of the mystics, age-old wisdom is revisited with new curiosity and respect. This section explores the way a spiritual systemic view complements other approaches to organizational processes and behavior.

Knowledge of systemic processes available in spiritual traditions is partially conceptual but primarily gained by immersion and practice. As a non-practicing outsider, I base this section primarily on readings and on an eclectic array of spiritual study and practice gleaned from different spiritual teachers. Despite the inevitable limitations of such an approach, I believe that much of the essential wisdom common to different traditions can be accessible to the layperson.

The spectrum of spiritual traditions and knowledge is enormously vast and varied. While one may discover strong commonalities among these traditions, there are also striking differences and contradictions. A wide variety of religions and organizations promoting very different theses and lifestyles have laid sometimes questionable claim to spiritual foundations to their work. It is thus difficult to work freshly, clearly, and incisively with a subject as vast, subjective, abstract, and controversial as spirituality.

A comprehensive and comparative exploration of the way in which different spiritual traditions offer insight into systems theory or into an understanding of well-being and healing is beyond the scope of this dissertation. In presenting a spiritual perspective, I do so in a consciously selective way with an attempt to use and reflect only those elements which enrich the thesis at hand, sometimes at the expense of taking certain material out of its original context where it was used for a different type of argumentation at a different time and place in history. I do not address or argue with spiritual contentions, which may point to opposing ways of looking at the world. Rather, I look to some of the existing spiritual metaphors for insight regarding particular aspects of organizational life until now often neglected. While the material does not represent all traditions or knowledge considered spiritual, some of it has surprisingly emerged in similar ways in different traditions throughout time and seems to represent fundamental archetypal knowledge of the universe and innate ways of creating a sense of meaning and purpose.

In the context of this dissertation, "spiritual" is used in a specific way. It refers to the idea that human beings are integral parts of a much larger and divine system, and in this larger system each individual has a unique function -- a special purpose. The spiritual systemic view adds the quality of divinity to the larger system and to the parts within it. The divine energy is conceived of differently in different traditions. Often, although not always, it is seen as benevolent, infinite, and all encompassing and as existing both beyond and as part of all of manifested creation. In this sense, all human beings, animals, and matter are seen as containing sparks of the divine. Separateness evident in our everyday way of seeing the world is considered an illusion that conceals an underlying unity among all things.

Ideas of reincarnation, soul lessons, and purpose within a particular lifetime provide a chronological systemic context in which human beings participate.

Scientific and psychological systems perspectives referred to earlier, such as "chaos theory "or "unconscious matrixes," tend to diminish the metaphoric nature of their frames and create an illusion of objectivity. Spiritual material, whether it be story, poetry, or ritual, is generally steeped in symbolic and metaphoric form. It utilizes the power of imagery to inspire, uplift, and even to guide human behavior. Evocative symbols nudge the audience to look at and experience within themselves a sense of something beyond objective definition. The meaning of the imagery must be accessed with faculties beyond reason and the five senses, otherwise these metaphors may be taken literally or discarded as unscientific nonsense.

In this section I offer a glimpse at systemic perspectives embedded in a number of different traditions and what these may offer to our understanding of organizations. These fragments are gleaned mainly from books written by contemporary spiritual teachers who present wisdom of oral and written traditions in a language and form relevant to contemporary society. I suggest that a spiritually imbued systems perspective invites individuals and organizations to exercise their higher aspects - to introspect about their values and spiritual evolutionary potentialities and to consider their own good as well as that of the larger communities. The spiritual perspectives reflected below provide frameworks for working with dilemma, conflict, and pain as opportunities for development. While the aspiration is toward thoughts, feelings, and behavior of love, respect, and generosity, the shadow side of these is not denied. The spiritual path referred to here does not provide easy or instant

answers but, rather, a challenge that involves ongoing introspection and transformation of thought and behavior through practice, prayer, and meditation. In this sense it offers important insight and guidelines as to meaning and behavior within organizations otherwise much neglected in organizational literature and practice.

The underlying unity of all things

The fundamental spiritual systemicperspective represented here involves moving beyond a prism of separation to one of interconnectedness and unity. The physical manifestation of things as separate is not denied. Rather, we are invited to see beyond the apparent manifestation of separation to the underlying unity that connects all living and non-living entities.

> When one sees Eternity in things that pass away and Infinity in finite things then one has pure knowledge.
>
> But if one merely sees the diversity of things, with their divisions and limitations, then one has impure knowledge.
>
> And if one selfishly sees a thing as if it were everything, independent of the ONE and the many, then one is in the darkness of ignorance. (Bhagavad Gita XVIII, 20-22, Quoted in Mascaro, 1965, p. 19)

All is seen as imbued with the divine spark and as part of a common system. In many ways, the paradoxes of separation and unity are transcended in the poetry. This type of contemplation in which all is interconnected and imbued with the divine spark has clear behavioral implications. Any action that affects another living or non-living entity necessarily affects also the one who perpetrates it, for

the two are inseparable. Therefore, spiritual awareness of this kind, guides action in the direction of promoting harmony and well-being of what in ordinary consciousness, is viewed as self and other body and mind, spirit and matter.

There is a form of engaged Buddhism called the Tiep Hien Order, the Order of "Interbeing" founded by Thich Nhat Hanh in Vietnam during the war. The term Interbeing he said is a new word in English which conveys "The many in the one and the one containing the many". (Nhat Hahn, 1987, p. 87). To illustrate this concept, he gave the example of how "in one sheet of paper, we see everything else, the cloud, the forest, the logger. I am, therefore you are. You are, therefore I am. That is the meaning of the word 'interbeing'. We 'interare'".

> Just as a piece of paper is the fruit, the combination of many elements that can be called non-paper elements, the individual is made of non-individual elements. If you are a poet, you will see clearly that there is a cloud floating in this sheet of paper.
>
> Without a cloud there will be no water; without water, the trees cannot grow; and without trees, you cannot make paper. So the cloud is in here. The existence of this page is dependent on the existence of a cloud. Paper and cloud are so close. Let us think of other things, like sunshine. Sunshine is very important because the forest cannot grow without sunshine, and we humans cannot grow without sunshine. So, the logger needs sunshine in order to cut the tree, and the tree needs sunshine in order to be a tree. There-fore you can see sunshine in this sheet of paper. And if you look more deeply, with the eyes of a bodhisattva, with the eyes of those who are awake, you see not only the cloud and the sunshine in it, but that everything is here: the wheat that became the bread for the logger to eat, the logger's father - everything is in this sheet of paper. (Nhat Hanh, 1987, p. 46)

The way in which Thich Nhat Hahn described the cosmos in the piece of paper draws poetic attention to the interdependence of all things. With this type of inspired awareness of the fullness of every part of the system with the whole, one is guided to an inner space of appreciation of 'inter-being', rare in the fragmented routines and perceptions of daily existence. His teachings reflect a practice of mindfulness where his students learn the moment-to-moment apprehension of the one in the many and the many in the one. The language describing the relationship of logger to father, the sunshine to the sun and the cloud all within the piece of paper is not a scientific revelation but a poetic insight evoked through metaphor. It has the effect of stimulating on an experiential level respect and awe for self and other living and non-living entities.

Thich Nhat Hanh also emphasized the basic interconnectedness between perceived and perceiver, a concept now familiar in scientific thinking although with different emphases.

> To perceive means to perceive something. Perception means the coming into existence of the perceiver and the perceived. The flower that we are looking at is part of our consciousness. The idea that our consciousness is outside of the flower has to be removed. It is impossible to have a subject without an object. It is impossible to remove one and retain the other. (Thich Nhat Hanh, 1998, p. 53)

The kabbalah also points to the inherent relationship between the microcosm and the macrocosm, the finite and the infinite which are seen as having isomorphic and inter-dependent structures and processes. Afterman suggests that these isomorphic structures and process are the basis with which one can establish communion with all "levels of existence".

> The sefirotic system is the basic kabbalistic framework and language through which reality is perceived. ....The sefirot are powers or potentialities inherent within the Infinite light which traverse from infinity to the finite creation. (The universe described by the sefirot is relative to, and is affected by, the viewer, as explained in relativity theory and in quantum physics.) The two infinity points of the microcosm and the macrocosm unite in their one genesis, the primordial tzimtzum. ....A man who looks into his psyche sees the same universal structures and processes that are active in the physical world. This is the basis for the power of man to understand the Cosmos and to achieve communion with all levels of existence. (Afterman, 1992, p. 96)

Perception of relationship and unity beyond the illusions of separation are also basic precepts of the Native American worldview as described by Ywahoo (1987).

> All that we see is a reflection of consciousness, and to see requires pulling the veils from the eyes, pulling away the illusions that limit us in time and space, the illusions that say we are separate. We are not separate. We are all together. (Ywahoo, 1987, p. 73)

> The Native American worldview sees cycles of life and death and the individual always in relationship with family, clan, nation, and planet. This relationship is biological, mental, emotional, spiritual, economic. The circle is inclusive. By virtue of being on Earth, being a member of the family of humanity, we are included in the circle of life. (p. 139)

> We are in a very delicate balance within ourselves and with other people and our environment. We are all vibrating together, we are one resonant field, one field of mind. If there is an excess of unclarified emotion in the heart of the people, then there is unclear emotion expressed by the nation. There is no way to separate yourself from your nation and planet. This is your home. (p. 179)

It is striking to note the similarities in the above examples drawn from diverse traditions. Each emphasizes the underlying unity and the illusion of separation. Each implies that the spiritual

evolutionary path of human beings is to transcend everyday perception of separation and recognize the unity that binds all living and non-living entities together. Developing such perception through spiritual awareness, contemplation, prayer, ritual, and other spiritual practices is considered to bring about deep transformation of one's way of being. Sensing the unity between all beings, then, is seen as transforming emotions that are derived from feelings of separation such as envy, anger, power over, and so on. These thoughts are echoed by Albert Einstein:

> A human being is part of the whole, called by us the universe. A part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separate from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures. (Einstein quoted in Suzuki, 1997, p. 37)

The apprehension of unity achieved through this type of spiritual contemplation is neither an intellectual understanding of interconnectedness nor a moralistic device. In organized religions, codes, rules, and regulations have been developed, sometimes unsuccessfully and with distortions, to institutionalize behavior based on these precepts. The full apprehension of unity, however, can be seen not as behavior based on rules and regulations but, rather, as a deep comprehension, insight, or awareness which when experienced necessarily changes one's perception.

Thought, Matter and Right Action

What occurs around you and within you are the effects your own mind and shows you the dream you are weaving. (Ywahoo, 1987, p. 21)

Habitual thought patterns become your reality. (p. 74)

Many spiritual traditions emphasize the systemic concept of the patterns of relations between the field of thought and matter. The field of individual and collective thought is believed to determine that which is manifested. The relation between thought and matter in spiritual traditions can be seen, for instance, in creation myths in which the world is seen as the manifestation of the thought of God, as well as in practices of prayer and meditation by which people believe they can influence their reality. In this light humans must cultivate their thoughts in ways beneficial to themselves and the larger system.

> All physical form, the table that we see, the tree, the mountain was first a thought. Some thoughts originate in the mind of God, some originate in the minds of people. All thought is united in the sacred hoop, in that we are one in creation. (Ywahoo, 1987, p. 84)
>
> Destiny is a matter of our thinking. Life unfolds in the world around us, and our interaction is a part of its unfolding. So the world situation is not happening to us; situations are the results of collective thought and action. (p. 76)
>
> It is easier to place the responsibility on the great incognito, disguised "other." To be responsible for our thoughts is the first step in taking action for a true, inward revolution. You must feel responsible for everything happening in the world, without morose and pathetic mortification, but

> in full consciousness. Your own struggling thought, confused being, and competitive behavior create a dissonant energy that is, indirectly or directly, responsible for the disharmony in the field of Earth, for the wars and the misery of millions of people. (Simine Forest, 2000, p. 309)

The above quotes from different Native American traditions show a similarity to the kabbalistic notion that:

> Whatever one implants firmly in the mind becomes the essential thing. So if you pray and offer a blessing to God, or if you wish your intention to be true, imagine that you are all light. All around you -- in every corner and on every side -- is light; to your left, splendor, a radiant light. Between them, up above, the light of the Presence. Surrounding that, the light of life. Above it all, a crown of light -- crowning the aspirations of thought, illumining the paths of imagination, spreading the radiance of vision. This light is unfathomable and endless. (Matt, 1996, p. 110)

In the same way that thought is linked with matter, so the spiritual perspectives emphasize the importance of cultivating right action inspired by practices of mindfulness. In a variety of traditions, awareness of the interrelatedness of all things is the foundation for precepts of right action. Within this fundamentally systemic view, individuals, groups, and even nations are believed to shape reality not only by their conscious and unconscious thoughts and intentionality, but also by their actions. Understanding oneness and interrelatedness on a spiritual level, and not only as an intellectual concept, is considered to influence one's actions and infuse them with respect and love for oneself and the other and a sense of stewardship of the land.

Summary

With the predominance of the scientific and rational paradigm in Western society, credibility was established on the basis of what could be seen and measured, and little value was placed on knowledge attained through intuition. Soul, spirit, and symbolism were relegated to the realms of the arts and the mystics. The arts had a more socially accepted function than mysticism, which was generally placed at the fringes of society and, at worst, invalidated as irrational and mad. In this fragmented mode of existence in organizational life, the high value placed on the rational led to a large degree to the repression and even splitting off of the spiritual from the organizational context.

In arguing for the importance of the spiritual dimension of a systemic perspective in the workplace, some rationalist eyebrows may be raised. The argument, however, is for an integrative perspective to heal the split created over the last few centuries between the rational and the spiritual. It entails demythologizing and almost de-demonizing the concept of spiritual and reintegrating it into its natural place (alongside and not instead of reason and science).

> Albert Einstein was asked one day by a friend 'Do you believe that absolutely everything can be expressed scientifically?' 'Yes, it would be possible,' he replied, 'but it would make no sense. It would be description without meaning - as if you described a Beethoven symphony as a variation in wave pressure.' (Einstein, quoted in Suzuki, 1997, p. 29)

Over the past decade there has been a growing interest in extending the idea of meaningfulness at work to the contribution to the larger system beyond the individual and the organization. Many titles contain within them ideas of spirit and soul in the workplace revealing a growing awareness for meaning beyond the individual. These books reflect principles of connectedness and interelatedness that put forward the ideas of service and social responsibility.

Spirit at Work (Conger, 1994) and The Soul at Work (1999) are just two of the many current book titles reflecting interest in bringing spiritual awareness into the organizations. The goal is a complex one given the current alienation from such a way of thinking and particularly its exclusion from the workplace. The kind of spiritual awareness of unity, love (another "mushy" word often banned from the workplace), and right action cannot be easily achieved, and the process of introducing it in the workplace needs will be considered more fully later in this text. As mentioned earlier, it involves not an intellectual understanding, but one that is experienced in a more integrated way. Deeply comprehending unity obviously impacts intra- and interdepartmental and organizational relations. Concepts of win-win, environmental and social responsibility, competition, and cooperation take on new meaning. The chronological, cyclical perspective of the interconnectedness of past and future gives new meaning to the idea of the responsibility to the future generations.

The systemic spiritual perspectives presented in this chapter are generally presented in evocative imagery. They emphasize:

1. The inter-connectedness of all things, living and non-living within a divinely created and imbued system.

2. The relationship between spirit and matter.
3. The evolutionary spiritual path and responsibility for self-fulfillment, learning and "rectification"
4. The illusion of reality as we know it and the importance of shedding attachments to concepts of separation and duality in everyday ways of seeing
5. The importance of right action
6. The importance of the inspirational nature of poetic and metaphoric imagery in uplifting spirit and guiding actions.
7. Unique essential purpose on individual and collective levels related to the sense of connectedness with and service of the larger systems of which the individual or collective are part.

Spiritual awareness can encourage a deep sense of destiny to serve the larger system in a way that fosters spiritual growth and evolution. In contrast to the puritan work ethics, spiritual traditions do not necessarily indicate relinquishing material benefits but, rather, the integration of matter and spirit. Material abundance today is generally perceived as something to be gained at the expense of another. Perception of the link between matter and spirit and an understanding of unity and interconnectedness generates a more collective understanding of abundance rather than a win/lose mentality.

The danger of this approach lies in its perversion and simplification. The temptation for an individual or organization is often to profess the high sounding values and ideals without adopting the necessary process of working with and integrating the shadow side. When the approach becomes a self-righteous ideology of unity based on a fear and denial of conflict and ambivalence, the result is a split-off and dangerous perversion of the original intention. Denial of the fear of difference, envy,

ego-based needs and so on often leads to the shadow side emerging in violent and bigoted ways. McWhinney warned of a similar danger of the utopian side of the holistic model.

> The utopian side of the holistic model comes from the dematerializing concepts central to this world view -- a physical world without distinct boundaries -- an unbroken fabric in all domains -- acting only for "the synergistic good." And at this point, the consciousness of the Utopia becomes self-serving -- the dark side of the holistic model arising from its unarticulable boundary; anything not in harmony is "beyond the pale." The "evil ones" become the polarized, not fitable other. This is the source of Holy wars. (Mc Whinney, 1990, p.13)

It is important to emphasize again that a holistic spiritual perspective does not deny the habitual prism of separateness and its impact on our consciousness. Rather, it invites the individual to see beyond separateness and to touch the simultaneous dimension of connectedness. Neither separateness nor unity is the sole truth. We are inevitably in a constant struggle to live with paradox and complexity relating to the temporary meeting of spirit and body and the perceived limitations of the transcendent in the concrete without resolving it in a uni-dimensional way.

Holistic Approaches to Mind Body Health.

> We have gotten to a point in medicine where it is somehow considered radical or an ordeal to ask people to stop smoking and manage stress better and walk and eat a healthful diet. And it is considered conservative to saw people open and bypass their arteries or to slip balloons inside their arteries and squish them, or to put them on powerful drugs for the rest of their lives. So I think our priorities are a little topsy-turvy. (Dean Ornish, in Moyers, 1993, P.90)

On an individual level, holistic approaches to health and healing take into consideration a person's lifestyle, emotional and attitudinal links with his/her physical symptoms, as well as environmental influences. Likewise, a holistic approach to organizations takes into account general life and workstyle of members and the relationship between individual and collective well-being and organizational cultures, structures, processes, products, and problems. Metaphors drawn from the developing disciplines of mind-body studies and alternative medicines also suggest holistic ways of looking at the relationship between latent and manifest processes and structures as well as the link between mind and body and between consciousness and matter in organizations.

The conceptual separation between mind and body attributed most notably to Descartes impacted the evolution of modern medicine. The development of mind/body medicine reflects a return to previous knowledge of the inseparability of the two. On the notion that mind is distinct from the body, Candace Pert, a neuroscientist said:

> Well that just goes back to a turf deal that Descartes made with the Roman Catholic Church. He got to study science, as we know it, and left the soul, the mind, the emotions and consciousness to the realm of the church. It's incredible how far Western science has come with that reductionist paradigm. But, unfortunately, more and more things don't quite fit into that paradigm. What's happening now may have more to do with the integration of mind and matter. (Pert in Moyers, 1993, p. 180)

Her research indicates that emotions are manifested biochemically in neuropeptides that transmit information throughout the body as a kind of "psychosomatic communication network." Emotions are

thus the bridge between the mental and physical, and through the neuropeptides, they have a powerful impact on the immune system. This transforms the basic conception of the location of the mind in the brain. According to Pert,

> The mind is some kind of enlivening energy in the information realm throughout the brain and body that enables the cells to talk to each other, and the outside to talk to the whole organism. Study of neuropeptides and their receptors furthers the understanding of the integration of mind and matter. (p. 189)

The fields of what is considered mind-body and alternative or complementary medicines are varied and in many cases still controversial. There is growing scientific and medical research investigating biological and biochemical connections between the brain and the body's systems, the correlation between certain psychological factors and different illness and the effectiveness of meditation, visualization, biofeedback, and other mind-body techniques on treating specific ailments.

There is also a current revival in the West of age-old healing techniques developed through intuition, study, and experience within a wide range of cultures. These include among others, acupuncture, shamanism, herbal and flower remedies, and healing through energy fields. Common to all the practices is a deeply systemic understanding of the interconnectedness of body, mind, environment, and lifestyle. Physical symptoms are viewed as expressions of systemic imbalances, the cure for which must take into account the whole system (the individual, his/her mental, emotional, and in some approaches spiritual state and the environment in which he/she lives). Another way of looking at symptoms is through the Jungian metaphor of the shadow or unlit or repressed side of the system.

While the more scientific and psychological approaches focus primarily on understanding the connection between mind and body, approaches based on age-old traditions generally integrate attention to spirit and nature in wider holistic conceptualizations. Metaphors from these disciplines evoke an holistic view of well-being, which draws attention to the multiple factors at work in organizational life that need to be taken into account. For instance the repressed, unintegrated, or split-off parts of the organization can be seen as manifesting themselves in physical processes and behavioral symptoms of the system as a whole. Diseases which plague a society at a certain time can be seen as reflections of emotional or spiritual challenges facing that society. McWhinney suggested that tuberculosis, a disease of the breathing mechanism predominant in the industrial age, can be seen as manifesting "the loss of spirit in the fetid factory environments" (McWhinney, 1990, p. 12). Myss linked the polio epidemic in the United States to the "crippling" economic depression. (Myss 1996, p. 105)

Unity and interconnectedness in Mind-Body disciplines

In his book Radical Healing (1999), Rudolph Ballentine, a physician and psychiatrist who directs the Center for Holistic Medicine in New York, provided an overview of many of the different approaches to healing, including ayurveda, homeopathy, traditional Chinese medicine, herbs, diet, exercise and cleansing, psychotherapeutic body work, nutrition, and work with meditation, energy, and breathing.

> Heal, whole and holy all have the same root and (that) holistic healing requires that the way we achieve wholeness not only makes us more complete as individuals, but also reintegrates us into the whole of nature. The unique value of medicinals made from natural substances is that they weave us back into our place in the body of the earth. But there's an even more profound dimension to the deepest healing: it's also spiritual. The same root that gave us heal and whole gives us holy, too..(Ballentine, 1999, p. 5)

The radical healing approach that he described is based on many of these traditions. It reflects some of the spiritual wisdom described in the previous section and links spiritual processes and physical processes manifested in everyday life.

> The state of wholeness that heals us must be extended to include the spirit, and reconnecting to the whole means freeing yourself from the narrow consciousness of the constricted ego. Letting go the fear and isolation of the narrow ego allows you to open up to a larger sense of who you are, to identify with a more encompassing consciousness -- the universal matrix that sustains us, the healing force or higher power of the great spiritual traditions. (Ballentine, 1999, p.10)

Ballentine explained how natural remedies use an understanding of the subtle informational patterns that exist in the universe, are similarly in human beings and in nature.

> Natural remedies are made from any number of substances plucked out of the complex web of nature: leaves, roots, flowers -- even mineral deposits or insects. Each such component of the natural world has some basic quality or essence that sets it apart and makes it unique. Analysis of humans also reveals groups of similars, groupings of functional likeness.

> In the Western mind, however, classes of plants and classes of humans belong to separate universes. If I asked about a similarity between the daisy and the hyperactive child, I'd be regarded as confused. One of the least known truths of natural science, however, is that there are basic organizational patterns that cut across our commonly accepted categories. A given quality or essence can underlie both the flower and the hyperactive child. This is based on the fact that both are functional components of a larger, encompassing natural order.

> Two classes of "cells" in the organizm called Nature -- a particular plant and a specific person --can share a certain pattern of function. When they do, their congruence creates a resonance that can be used therapeutically. Such patterns may be obvious in the physical appearance of the plant. Their expression in the person, on the other hand, is likely to be subtler, coloring physiological functioning perhaps, or even the way thoughts flow in the mind. For example, the aspen tree has leaves that tremble or "quake" in the wind. Its flower essence is frequently used to calm the anxious mind. Something of the nature of that plant is echoed in the person's neurophysiology and in his or her mental processes. Although this principle is quite foreign to what has until recently been considered scientific thinking, it may become a key element in the science of the future. It is certainly a fundamental part of the medical wisdom of the past. (Ballentine, 1999, p. 26)

Diagnosis and intervention take place to a large extent on the energetic or informational level:

> It may be helpful to conceive of this reorganization as occurring first at a level within the body-mind complex that is more subtle than the physical. You might think of this as the "energy level." Just as the acupuncturist's needle will redirect the flow of energy or chi in a specific channel or meridian, so might an herbal remedy reorganize, in a more general fashion, the overall pattern of energy flow. The result, the energy shift, then has an impact on the physical body and how it functions. (p. 27)

The healing approaches described by Ballentine pay particular attention to the way in which subtle informational patterns cut across human consciousness, emotion and physiology and nature. The implications for organizations are manifold. This perspective involves broadening and deepening observational skills and knowledge relating to informational patterns of states of mind and emotions within the organization. It explores the links between these and the manifest physical disease or dysfunction in individuals and groups within the organization as well as in the organizational processes and structures relating to the primary task of the organization. It also raises questions regarding the relevance of informational patterns that cut across man, nature, and inanimate objects and the workings of energy in organizations. While the group relations approach provides some insight into the kind of emotional and attitudinal patterns which influence behavior in organizations, it does not deal adequately with the spiritual or somatic aspects of organizational life, nor with the physical, natural, and man-made products and environment of the organization.

The collective psyche-soma

Ideas of group mentality, collective consciousness and the collective unconscious are relatively common and accepted within certain disciplines. They do, however, in some ways reinforce the conceptual split between mind and body. Mind-body medicine and alternative approaches to healing emphasize the integral link between consciousness, emotions, and physiological processes. Some of the mind-body traditions work with the idea of a subtle body that can be seen as the informational field linking mind and spirit and the physical body.

On the individual level, the concept of a subtle or dream body is evident in a variety of spiritual traditions and psychotherapeutic and body work techniques.

> The gaseous, fluid and rhythmical nature of dreambody experienced by the yogi contrasts with the conscious concept of the body as an amazing machine with a hidden spirit. The flow and rhythm of the dreambody constitute a "field" experience to use a term from physics. The field is a definite sensation of one's self as a process with only vague extremities in time and space. In contrast, the real body can be defined as an object with a certain weight, temperature, etc.
>
> Instead of particles we have relatively high field densities at certain areas in space and time. These field densities and their associated discontinuities and intensities correspond to what classical physics calls matter. According to Albert Einstein, " We may regard matter as being consituted by the regions of space in which the field is extremely intense...There is no place in this new kind of physics for the field and matter, for the field is the only reality." (Mindell, 1982, p. 15)

Later Mindell added:

> The concept of the dreambody as a relatively high field intensity also corresponds to Taoist concepts. In Taoism the world is permeated by dragon lines of force ... which coalesce so to speak, in certain objects. The Tao is a force field permeating the universe. The human being in a certain place and time picks up a certain Tao and lives this in his own way. (p. 16)

What is the implication of the metaphor of a dreambody for groups? Is it possible, for instance, that there is also a collective psyche-soma or collective dream body which can be explored when looking at groups, organizations, or even nations? The metaphor of a collective dream body evokes the idea of a relatively cohesive dynamic energy field that links a group, organization, or nation as a whole. The field would probably influence and be influenced by the energetic purposeful core, soul, or spirit

of that individual or collective entity as well as its changing consciousness. This would imply that individuals are part of numerous collective dreambodies including those of their families and the groups and organizations of which they are members. The impact of these energy fields on the individual will depend on the varying degrees of intensity of the connection between the person and the larger collective systems to which he or she is linked.

Age-old spiritual ideas of collective prayer influencing the fate of the nation and new-age concepts of impacting the planet by mass planetary meditations that create shifts in human consciousness and bring peace and healing to the planet, tap into this type of archetypal experience of a collective dreambody. While to some, these ideas may appear irrational and ungrounded, they can reflect helpful ways of thinking about the link between collective consciousness and manifest reality.

A Proactive Holistic Approach

Many approaches to organizational development have emerged from the same scientific system as modern medicine. Like medicine, management theory has often reflected symptom-based, highly specialized approaches and analysis and intervention based on concrete measurable data about what is considered relevant aspects of the system. The holistic approach means working on healing what is diseased as well as promoting and maintaining well-being. In his book Healing and the Mind (1993), Bill Moyers presented interviews with many physicians who focus on the holistic art of healing. They describe in different ways their approaches which recognize the powerful impact of emotions and attitudes on the immune system and the importance of dealing with the patient in an integrative

way while taking into account his particular emotions, attitudes, values, lifestyle and family, and community environment.

Holistically oriented physicians emphasize their own role in influencing the psychological and physical well-being and healing of their patients. They often refer patients to stress clinics where they learn meditation and visualization techniques to be able to influence their own healing process.

Ron Anderson, a physician, suggested that greater investment needs to be put into preventative medicine rather than what he called resurrective medicine. The preventative approach involves looking at why people suffer from the diseases they are suffering and how physicians could have interceded earlier in the process. It also involves creating a health care system rather than a medical system and working not only on the individual level but also on the community level alone.

> I think we need to humble ourselves a little bit and realize that we don't need many more transplant surgeons , we need people who deal with fundamental things. If we really value human life, how can we not invest in prenatal care? How can we not invest in the children's programs or preschool education? Programs that work when done competently enrich people and make them better able to contribute something back to society. It's foolish to talk about the cost of medicine and doctor reimbursement all the time and not be addressing those things that can make individuals and communities whole. (Dr. Ron Anderson, in Moyers, 1993, p. 45)

A parallel can be drawn with approaches to organizational development. The holistic approach emphasizes the need to attend to the preventative and health-promoting aspects of the organizations, rather than a crisis intervention approach. It invites organizations to explore the processes that make

the individuals in the organization and the institution itself as "whole" as possible. It involves studying organizational well-being and developing ongoing processes for promoting it. It also entails exploring the underlying systemic causes of the symptoms and how interventions can be made as early as possible in the process.

Many companies are beginning to pay attention to the general well-being of employees in their companies in order to increase productivity and profitability and to encourage employees to stay within the organization. A variety of programs for promoting health and well-being in a holistic way are being developed.

Rosen and Berger, (1991) described the new psychological contract between employees and companies. No longer, they said, are there the traditional promises related to loyalties and lifetime contracts. The rapidly changing corporate environment which demands flexibility on one hand but committed employees on the other must offer workers opportunities for personal and professional growth as well as honesty, openness and fairness and a greater say in their jobs.

> The force (of this new contract) refers to the need for a dramatic expansion of companies' roles and responsibilities to incorporate the whole employee, not simply the person who works eight hours a day. This crisis demands that companies begin to pay attention to employees' minds, bodies, relationships, and families. Companies that ignore the total person will receive a very painful lesson in terms of the costs of employing a person who has physical and/or mental ailments or whose family life is a source of stress. (Rosen & Berger, 1991, p.4)

They detailed "Eight strategies to develop people, productivity and profits." These are management strategies, and involve the leader learning:

The power of respect.

To follow others and to develop forms of participatory management.

To manage change.

How to become a lifelong learner and create a culture of learning in the organization.

To promote mental and physical well-being of employees.

To cure sick jobs: to create healthy physical working environments and to prevent damage to individuals by environmental or job hazards.

To encourage and manage diverse work-forces

To support employees in managing their balance between work and family and become a "family friendly company.

Rosen and Berger's book The Healthy Company, is a combination of research, theory about best practice, and practical tools. The authors emphasized the self-awareness of the manager and provided questionnaires to help the managers learn about the way in which they work. This type of book reflects the growing awareness of the need to develop holistic approaches to health in and of organizations, and presents a relatively comprehensive picture of the state of the art in 1991. Since then, there have been many developments in the field.

The Swedish Liv and Lust program is one example of a comprehensive approach to promoting health of individuals in an organization and of the organization as a whole. The program, developed by Johan Holmsater, begins with individual health check-ups for employees together with a detailed questionnaire inviting them to consider carefully their lifestyle and their physical, emotional, and mental well-being at home and work. During the interview, the program leader works with each individual to develop a personalized health plan. On the basis of these initial results a supportive health plan is developed for the company as a whole which includes attention to group activities, nutrition, staff development, stress management processes, physical activity, and a variety of other arenas of intervention. Often committees that cut across the organizational hierarchies are developed in order to promote different aspects of well-being.

Summary

An overview of current holistic well-being practices in organizations is beyond the scope of this work. In reviewing existing programs, approaches to organizational well-being appear to be becoming more and more holistic in that they are taking into account the different aspects of a person's life (work, family, and leisure), the different dimensions of a person's self (emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual), and the different levels of the organization, from the individual worker, the group, and the environment. However, relatively few organizations adopt programs like these, and very few of the programs take into account all these aspects. While each program contributes to well-being in organizations and to the general state of the art, most seem to focus primarily on the conscious attitudes, behavior, and lifestyle of individuals and groups. These no

doubt impact although indirectly, the subtle informational field which transcends the individuals. Viewing holistic well-being in organizations with the subtle informational field view in mind, the following questions emerge:

1. Are there ways of attending more directly to the subtle informational matrix of the organization in which all the individuals participate, and can one find more direct ways of understanding and impacting this field?
2. Do programs which are directed to improving individual well-being in organizations sufficiently address or impact the latent unconscious emotional, attitudinal, and physical processes which are the source of the dis-ease in the organization, or do they more closely resemble symptomatic rather than source and system oriented healing procedures?

Similar controversies have emerged in psychology between behavioral and cognitive psychologists and depth psychologists. Behavioral psychology can be seen as focusing on changing the behavioral manifestation of the problem and working from the outside in. The impact on the realm of consciousness may occur, but it is not the focus. Cognitive psychology focuses on transforming conscious attitudes and paradigms that are the source of the pain. Psychoanalytic and depth psychology emphasize awareness and bringing unconscious material to consciousness in order to allow for significant transformation, greater choice, and the creation of healing opportunities. Healing can thus be seen as occurring more from the inside out. An either/or argument between the approaches seems pointless, as each has its advantages and limitations. The art lies in being able to

master the options and apply each in the appropriate situation. A parallel can be drawn with the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of different approaches to organizational well-being.

I suggest that until now, focus has been primarily on approaches which deal with more behavioral and conscious, cognitive, attitudinal, and emotional aspects of well-being because of their observable nature and greater accessibility. This more symptomatic approach may sometimes provide the needed answer. They do not necessarily, however, get at the roots of an issue and can run the risk of deflecting the disease or pushing it underground until it festers elsewhere to emerge in a stronger or more chronic manner. The more depth-oriented and holistic approaches that also deal with unconscious collective aspects of the organization are less developed.

In a company, for instance, where there are serious issues of distrust or anxieties regarding political issues in the organization, an attempt to bring in a holistic well-being program may be considered another temporary fig leaf to placate or seduce workers. The real issues that cause the anxieties and distrust may remain untouched and even be exacerbated. Finding the approach best suited to a situation necessitates awareness of the different options and working with them creatively. Metaphors from the realm of mind-body medicine can provide a helpful framework for addressing the underlying and systemic aspects of overt organizational symptoms.

Chapter Summary

Until now we have looked at the way in which three systemic prisms throw light on organizational processes. Organizational theory based on the New Sciences provides metaphors for understanding subtle and manifest processes and structures in organizations and the way in which patterns of relations and behavior can be seen as emerging. The limitations of this approach lie in the fact that the analogy is drawn from non-human systems and thus fails to deal adequately with the complexity of consciousness and emotions in organizations. The group relations approach, with its psychological systemic perspective, focuses on the mental, emotional, and symbolic conscious and unconscious systemic processes which occur in human systems and the way in which these determine behavior. Metaphors drawn from spiritual traditions and practices bring attention to essential purpose and spiritual evolution and learning of individuals and organizations within the larger interconnected system of which they are an integral part. It provides a spiritual evolutionary framework for managing, transforming, and even sometimes transcending dilemma, conflict, and pain and provides tools for releasing and transforming attachments to existing paradigms. Metaphors drawn from the developing discipline of mind-body studies and alternative medicines can offer an additional important complementary prism for thinking about processes in organizational systems. In particular, these approaches provide ways of looking at the relationship between latent and manifest processes and structures and the link between mind and matter and consciousness and experienced reality within organizations. Each of these perspectives addresses latent, shadow aspects of systemic

behavior and together provide complementary metaphors for thinking about organizations and for bringing latent processes in organizations to awareness so that they can be transformed.

CHAPTER THREE

Pictures in the Mind: the Impact of Thoughts and Emotions in and of the System on Organizational Well-being.

The previous chapter developed the idea of the existence of the system unconscious, a kind of matrix or informational field that transcends the individuals in the system and impacts them and is impacted by them. This chapter looks more specifically at the way in which the pictures in the mind or even the pictures in the mind-body/dreambody of the system reflect and influence the well-being of the system.

Pictures in the Mind, Emotions, Interconnectedness and Well-being.

From the group relations, spiritual, and mind-body perspectives, pictures in the mind projected onto experience, especially when accompanied by negative emotions, are key to understanding dysfunction and disease in systems. In this chapter, the discussion of each tradition begins with a story. The stories provide a space for imaginative reflection by encapsulating something of the way in which each tradition relates to the link between pictures in the mind and well-being.

Group Relations

In Emotions in Organizations (1993), Fineman noted the relative lack of literature to that date on emotions in organizations. In it, he reflected on the shift from the Weberian notion of an ideal-type bureaucracy where efficiency is unsullied by the personal, irrational and emotional to approaches such as that of Argyris (1964), Likert, (1961) and (Pfeffer, 1998), which Fineman saw as placing human beings and their subjectivity nearer center stage.

Nevertheless he said:

> When we look closely, the people presented are emotionally anorexic. They have "dissatisfactions" and "satisfactions", they may be "alienated" or "stressed", they will have "preferences", "attitudes"and "interests". The influential anti-rationalist writings of Peters and Austin (1985) speak boldly and refreshingly of feelings at work, such as of love, empathy, verve, zest and enthusiasm. But their principal interest is in presenting such emotions as "oughts" for managerial success, as bottled and packaged as the products and services (hamburgers, pizzas, computers, air transport) of the companies they admire. We find little or no mention of how feeling individuals worry, envy, brood, become bored, play, despair, plot, hate, hurt, and so forth. The feelings of being organized, doing work and organizing are hard to detect. The way feelings are produced, reproduced, camouflaged, communicated and acted upon in organizations are not revealed. (Fineman, 1993, p.9)

The group relations approach stands out in the organizational development field because of its particular focus on the complex unconscious emotional life of the organization.

Story One

David Armstrong (1991) illustrated his concept of the "institution in the mind" with a case study focused on the third in a series of consultations to the headmaster of a school. He described how, in walking together toward the consultation room he and the headmaster discussed the damage a recent storm did to the environment. Continuing the discussion within the consulting room, the head mentioned a recent interchange with his gardener who was also the school's gardener. The head's house was on the school grounds.

> He (the headmaster) had met the gardener surveying a beautiful beech tree and saying rather glumly, "it's got to come down. I'll get another to replace it". He remonstrated with him, pointing out that it was an old tree, it made the view, was it really necessary to chop it down etc. The gardener persisted. A week later he had chopped it down. It was pretty rotten inside. Also, once down, a different view opened up. It became possible to think about other changes to the layout of the garden. (Armstrong, 1991, p. 5)

Armstrong reflected on the timing of the story and recognized in it the theme of continuity and change which was one of the themes that had prompted the consultations from the start. The anecdote of the gardener he said, seemed to reflect the similar way in which the head was "poised between sensing a need for change to keep the school alive (not surviving, but lively, vital) and fear of destroying what was by all accounts a highly successful and predictable operation"(1991 p. 5). The head responded with his recent thoughts of a possible new organizational structure for the school in the context of the impending retirement of the Director of Studies who represented the old guard. "He could either act now or an opportunity would be lost. He had been wondering how to

broach this with senior staff, with an incoming Chair of Governors and with the powerful but reactionary old boy network, who never wanted or saw the need for anything to change"(p. 5).

Armstrong analysed the emergence of the story of the gardener at this point in the following way:

> The gardener had a picture of the garden-in-the-mind, not the same as the owner of the garden. He took a risk in acting on this picture, the risk of believing that if he did so the owner would see something new. The only authority he had for so doing was the authority of one who tended the garden, who had the garden in view rather than the owner. The story was a way of externalizing and testing the head's own situation, of rehearsing what it might require to take authority as a person-in-role from his position in this school, now.
>
> That is one way of looking at it. But it turned out not to be the only way. When the session was over I began to think that I had missed something. I had been implicitly treating the story as simply a metaphor for, a clue or probe to, the thought in the mind of the head.
>
> But this ignored the fact that the story concerned the wisdom of the gardener, who was the school gardener, not simply the head's gardener as a private individual. Just as the head's house and garden were the school's, not his alone. From this point of view, the gardener could be seen as giving a formulation, it seemed to me, to a thought that was there, in the present emotional experience of this school. By appropriating the story as metaphor, by my colluding with, indeed encouraging, this appropriation, the emotional reality of the story in the life of the school was denied.
>
> I then realized that this denial was itself an element in the head's relatedness to the school. That is, he had a tendency to see the school as over and against him rather than as in him. Hence a recurring difficulty he was experiencing in sharing with others the "thoughts" formulated in his mind. He experienced himself as **in** the school but not **of** the school, whereas the emotional reality was that the school was **in** him but not **of** him.
>
> His apparent dilemma as head, which he also interpreted as a personal dilemma – should I leave or should I stay – was, I felt, a dilemma of the school or, to put it another way, the emotional experience of the school contained this dilemma as one of its factors. To be free to work creatively as head of the school meant to be able to formulate this dilemma, given to him

> by the gardener, as the **thought that was there**, and to find a way not of solving this dilemma himself, but of giving it back to the school in a way which might liberate emotional energy in others, not in himself alone: energy to realise thought.
>
> To realize thought, I suggest, is to receive, to formulate (give expression to) and give back something that is there, which is not of oneself alone, is not bounded by one's own physical or mental skin. It is a mental process which stands out and against a more familiar model of thought as made, an object of ownership "my" thought, "your" thought, "our" thought. (p. 7)

In the previous chapter I discussed the idea of the group matrix, the dynamic, unconscious, and emotional informational field in which all the members of a group or organization participate. In the case study, Armstrong highlighted how thought and emotion are rarely located solely in the space of the individual. As mentioned before, individuals in any system are seen to be linked unconsciously around specific and changing emotionally laden images and feelings which surface because of the specific composition of the group and the issues the group is dealing with at any given time.

The group relations approach is steeped in psychoanalytic theory. Psychoanalytic theory pays particular attention to the unconscious life of the individual. It studies how experiences are stored and often repressed in the unconscious in symbolic form, and how these images, projected onto new situations, influence emotions and behavior throughout life. The emotional life of organizational systems is seen to a large extent as emerging from individual and collective "pictures of the organization or institution in the mind."

Given the symbolic nature of mental activity, the group relations approach pays attention to the symbolic content of conversation, behavior, and even the changing or unchanging nature of the physical surroundings. Attention to this dimension provides insight into the deep layers of pictures

in the mind of the organization that generate emotions and drive behavior in often-unconscious ways. Promoting well-being involves bringing these deep layers to consciousness in order to liberate energy for work.

Symbolic expressions, he argued, say something not only of the individual's own relatedness to the organization, but also about "the emotional experience that is contained within the inner psychic space of the organization and the interactions of its members – the space between". (p. 9). Armstrong suggested that the story of the gardener, told in the context of a casual discussion about a storm the previous day, enfolds within it not only the dilemma of the headmaster, but a thought of the system as a whole. The gardener and the headmaster, in their different ways, express a dilemma of the whole matrix of which they are part. They express the thought without connecting it consciously to the immediate retirement of the director of studies who represents the old guard.

> To work analytically in groups, or I want to suggest in institutions, is to use one's alertness to the emotional experience presented in such settings as the medium for seeking to understand, formulate and interpret the relatedness of the individual to the group or the institution. It is understanding that relatedness, I believe, which liberates the energy to discover what working and being in the group or the institution can become. (p. 9)

The following vignette based from a recent consultation with an organization of about 40 staff members is another example of the way symbolic expressions by individuals in seemingly casual conversation can be seen as enfolding and reflecting the thought and emotion of the system as a whole. During the consultation I sat down with the team leaders to prepare for a 2 day retreat. The informal chat prior to the work discussion focused on a film which one woman had seen on a young autistic boy. This triggered a lively discussion about other books and materials that were familiar to

the participants on whether or not autism could be healed. During the work discussion we spoke about the work of the teams in the organization and how some individuals had expressed a desire to get to know other members with whom they had not yet had an opportunity to work. The informal opening discussion about the possibilities of healing autism allowed me to be more sensitive to one of the prevalent organizational dynamics. As the conversation developed, it became clear that the working culture of the organization was superficially one of warmth and mutual support, but the deeper sense was one of aloneness, distrust, difficulties in communication, and fortification within one's own role and sometimes within one's team. There was little or no interaction between teams. The emergence of the metaphor of autism in the system at that time can be seen as the unconscious communication about the dynamics of pain and isolation in the system. By reflecting this systemic picture of the institution in the mind back to the staff, we were able to explore if and how the retreat could be used to develop a sense of greater involvement, communication, and connectedness.

Recently, the 14th International Congress of the International Association for Group Psychotherapy took place in Jerusalem. The conference was called "The Spirit of Groups 2000: From Conflict to Generative Dialogue." At the end of each day a large group of about 300 people and eight consultants was held to reflect on the dynamics of the conference as a whole and explore some of the unconscious processes in the system.

In one of these sessions, one of the younger male participants expressed his rage at an incident that had occurred in the same room during the previous event. The previous event was the only one in the conference where Palestinian members had presented their work. The presentation had been a panel of three Palestinians and one Israeli. The panel described group work with victims of torture

as well as with a group of Israeli and Palestinian students. The event was scheduled to end at 5 p.m., and the large group with about 300 chairs that needed to be set up in a form of circles within circles was scheduled to take place in the same room at 5:15. At some point during the panel discussion, the organizers of the conference entered and requested that it be shortened by 15 minutes in order to provide time for the consultants of the large group to set up the next session. This meant that one of the Palestinian presenters was not given his allocated time to speak.

In the large group, the man who expressed his rage implied clearly that this incident which cut the Palestinian presentation was not coincidental but an unconscious, violent act with political undertones. One of the organizers defended the accusation. He focused on the unfortunate technical reasons for the action and denied the implied unconscious social significance. Someone then pointed out that the organizer who had defended the action was also "by chance" (or unconsciously on behalf of the system) wearing his Israeli army uniform (he had obligations that day in a military service role outside of the conference). The Israeli woman who had presented during the previous session together with the Palestinian psychologists mentioned that "by chance" she was supposed to have been the last on the panel but had suggested to the other panellists that she present before because of the logical order of the presentations. If she had indeed presented last it would have been her and not the Palestinian presenter to be cut by the last 15 minutes. The young man became more and more furious at the denial of the implications of what had happened. One of the consultants suggested that in the absence of Palestinian members, the group was putting this man in the role of the Palestinian having to fight for his rights and raise the consciousness of the members to the political dimension of what had occurred.

The conversation continued with some members reasserting the coincidence and innocence of these events and others insisting on looking at the more ominous meaning of what had happened. At some point the man who had expressed his rage reflected on the fact that he was a Christian. His name is linked with that of Christ, and the previous day he had gone through the streets of the Old City of Jerusalem following the path of Christ on the Via Dolorosa. He realized that in some way his behavior in this group might reflect an unconscious enactment on his part of this link. He began to weep. Some women gave him tissues but the conversation went in another direction, until a man drew attention to the fact that his weeping had been ignored. A woman responded, saying it was important not to collude with his weeping. She implied that by focusing attention on his weeping, the group would deny the fact that this was an issue of the group and not of the individual. She implied that he risked at this point becoming the martyr or crucified scapegoat if the group continued to project onto him the role of Christ.

The group relations tradition explores psychic, political, and mythic dimensions of the organizational pictures in the mind within the broader context in which the system exists. The name of the congress and its location of Jerusalem in the year 2000 had evoked many feelings in the members. From the group relations perspective, incidents such as the one described above are not coincidental but, rather, profound expressions of these dimensions. The protagonists are seen as carefully "chosen" by the unconscious of the group to enact collective issues on behalf of the system.

This incident can be seen as clearly holding within it the psychic, political, and mythic dimensions. The **psychic** dimension generally involves pictures and emotions stemming from archetypal family

and social dynamics. In this sense, the man (relatively young in relation to other participants) can be seen as chosen by the group from a counterdependent stance in the role of angry adolescent to question the values and actions of the parents (the organizers) and to express rage at their inadequacy.

The **political** dimension expresses those aspects of emotional experience linked with conscious and unconscious projections based on representations of groups in the mind. These projections generally occur in relation to qualities such as age, color, gender, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, profession, institutional affiliation and so on. The Palestinian Israeli conflict was somehow unconsciously enacted by this subsystem, mirroring the larger Jerusalem context, both in the event leading up to the large group and in the role taken by the man who expressed rage.

On the **mythical** dimension, the assumption is that we have pictures in the mind of founding myths and collective histories of the systems in which we live and work. These myths and shadow stories continue to impact the way we take up our roles and perceive the reality around us. They are continually reenacted in different ways, generating histories that repeat themselves with different actors at different times. The way in which the man connected to his identification with Christ, and the way in which the system used him to do so, speaks to this dimension of the collective unconscious.

Protagonists "chosen" by systems generally embody key representations around a central issue on all these dimensions. In this event the three dimensions surfaced relatively clearly, as the experienced members were at home with tapping into the symbolic levels of group behavior.

The group relations approach suggests that in everyday organizational life, these dimensions are constantly at work determining to a great extent manifest behavior. Often these pictures, laden with emotions jeopardize the work of the system. Well-being of the system depends to a large extent on being able to surface unconscious contents and to reflect on the way in which projections are driving the system. Bringing the projections and pictures of the organization in the mind to awareness enables them to be recognized for what they are and transformed. When individuals recognize the way they are unconsciously using each other to play out core conflicts, they are more able to release the way pictures in the mind activate behavior and to work with more choice in a way that is freer of the projections.

Spiritual Traditions

Story Two

> There was an old man in a village, very poor, but even kings were jealous of him because he had a beautiful white horse. Such a horse had never been seen before – the beauty, the very grandeur, the strength. Kings asked for the horse and they offered fabulous prices, but the old man would say, "This horse is not a horse to me, he is a person, and how can you sell a person? He is a friend, he is not a possession. How can you sell a friend? No, it is not possible." The man was poor, there was every temptation, but he never sold the horse.
>
> One morning he suddenly found that the horse was not in the stable. The whole village gathered and they said, "You foolish old man. We knew it beforehand, that some day the horse would be stolen. And you are so poor – how can you protect such a precious thing? It

would have been better to sell it. You could have fetched any price you asked, any fancy price was possible. Now the horse is gone. It is a curse, a misfortune."

The old man said, "Don't go too far – simply say that the horse is not in the stable. This is the fact; everything else is a judgement. Whether it is a misfortune or not, how do you know? How do you judge?"

The people said, "Don't try to fool us. We may not be great philosophers, but no philosophy is needed. It is a simple fact that a treasure has been lost, and it is a misfortune."

The old man said, "I will stick to the fact that the stable is empty and the horse has gone. Anything else I don't know – whether it is a misfortune or a blessing – because this is just a fragment. Who knows what is going to follow it?"

People laughed, they thought the old man had gone mad. They always knew it, that he was a little crazy; otherwise he would have sold this horse and lived in riches. But he was living as a woodcutter, and he was very old and still cutting wood and bringing wood from the forest and selling it. He was living hand to mouth in misery and poverty. Now it was completely certain that he was crazy.

After fifteen days, suddenly one night the horse returned. He had not been stolen: he had escaped to the wilderness. And not only did he come back, he brought a dozen wild horses with him. Again the people gathered and they said, "Old man, you were right and we were wrong. It was not a misfortune, it proved to be a blessing. We are sorry that we insisted."

The old man said, "Again you are going too far. Just say that the horse is back, and say that twelve horses have come with the horse – but don't judge. Who knows whether it is a blessing or not? It is only a fragment. Unless you know the whole story, how can you judge? You read one page of a book – how can you judge the whole book? You read a single word in a sentence – how can you judge the whole sentence? Life is so vast – and even a single word, a fragment of a word and you have judged the whole! Don't say that this is a blessing, nobody knows. And I am happy in my no-judgement; don't disturb me."

This time the people could not say much; maybe the old man was again right. So they kept silent, but inside they knew well that he was wrong. Twelve beautiful horses had come with the horse. A little training and they could all be sold and they would fetch much money.

> The old man had a young son, only one son. The young son started to train the wild horses; just a week later he fell from a wild horse and his legs were broken. The people gathered again- and people are people everywhere, like you everywhere – again they judged. Judgement comes so soon! They said, "You were right, again you proved right. It was not a blessing. It was again a misfortune. Your only son has lost his legs, and in your old age he was your only support. Now you are poorer than ever."
>
> The old man said, "You are obsessed with judgement. Don't go that far. Say only that my son has broken his legs. Who knows whether this is a misfortune or a blessing? – Nobody knows. Again a fragment, and more is never given to you. Life comes in fragments, and judgement is about the total."
>
> It happened that after a few weeks the country went to war with a neighboring country, and all the young men of the town were forcibly taken for the military. Only the old man's son was left because he was crippled. The people gathered, crying and weeping, because from every house young people were forcibly taken away, and there was no possibility of their coming back, because the country that had attacked was a big country and the fight was a losing fight. They were not going to come back.
>
> The whole town was crying and weeping and they came to the old man and they said, "You were right, old man! God knows, you were right – this proved a blessing. Maybe your son is crippled, but still he is with you. Our sons are gone forever. At least he is alive and with you and, by and by, he will start walking. Maybe a little limp will be left but he will be okay."
>
> The old man again said, "It is impossible to talk to you people, you go on and on and on – you go on judging. Nobody knows! Only say this: that your sons have been forced to enter into the military, into the army, and my son has not been forced. But nobody knows whether it is a blessing or a misfortune. Nobody will ever be able to know it. Only God knows." (Osho, 1976, p. 37)

In his comments after the story, Osho said:

> Once you judge you have stopped growing. Judgement means a stale state of mind: now the movement has stopped, the effort to know more has stopped, the effort to grow has stopped. You have already made the judgement and it is finished. And the mind always wants to be in

> a judgement because movement is troublesome – to be in a process is always hazardous. To come to a conclusion means you have reached the goal; now there is no journey.
>
> A man who wants to journey to the ultimate should make it a basic point not to judge. Very difficult, almost impossible – because before you know it, the mind judges. Before you have even become aware of it, the mind has judged. But if you try, by and by, a subtle awareness arises and then you can suspend judgement. If you suspend judgement you have become religious. Then you don't know what is right and what is wrong.
>
> But ordinarily the people you call religious are the people who know everything- what is right and what is wrong, what to do and what not to do. They have all the commandments with them. That's why religious people become pig-headed, thick-skinned. Their journey has stopped; they are not growing at all. The river is not moving; it has become stale. If you want movement, growth - and infinite movement and growth are possible because God is not a static point; God is the total movement of life, of existence - if you want to walk with God then you have to move continuously. You have to be continuously on the journey. (p. 41)
>
> If you don't bring the past in, then a totally different quality of beauty will happen. It will not be your judgement, it will not be imposed, it will not be an interpretation. It will simply be a participation with his face here and now, a deep participation with this mystery, with this person here and now. In that moment the person is neither beautiful nor ugly; all judgements have disappeared. An unknown mystery is there, unnamed, unjudged – and only in that unjudged moment love flowers. (p. 47)

In this story, Osho illustrated fundamental principles common to a variety of spiritual traditions. In his discussion he differentiated between what can be seen as static thinking, thinking that creates artificial boundaries, and classifications in the mind as opposed to dynamic perception which recognizes the ultimately unknowable, interrelated process aspect of experience. He showed how judgements of the villagers, based on pictures in their minds, caused them anxiety and suffering. The story refers specifically to judgements that order experience in terms of tragedies and blessings. The story emphasizes that ordinary perception that judges and creates clear boundaries between

things and events cannot begin to grasp how all is interconnected. One cannot directly perceive the larger context. Knowing it exists, however, can allow one more easily to suspend judgements that distort reality, cause pain, and often lead to erroneous decisions.

On an individual level, spiritual well-being entails bringing to awareness false perceptions that generate both emotional and physical suffering. Unlike the group relations tradition, the spiritual path focuses less on understanding falsity of particular images in terms of their symbolic meaning and/or their roots in past experience. Basic distortions of reality are viewed in more primary and generic terms. Suffering is understood as caused by illusions of separateness and permanence. Habitual, everyday perception is seen as denying the dimension of interconnectedness within the larger scheme and meaning of things. As shown in the story, the inability to conceive of interconnectedness can bring about painful attachments to objects, people and concepts and foster emotions such as greed, envy, and fear, especially fear of change.

On a group level one can understand systemic well-being in terms of the group's ability to see beyond the manifest level of separateness typical of ordinary view. In a system where there is a deep understanding of interconnectedness and impermanence, emotions of compassion and loving kindness within the system and toward the environment are more likely to arise spontaneously. Cultivating awareness through the practice of mindfulness involves looking at the thoughts that populate the systemic mind-body and the way in which they impact behavior. The awareness one strives toward in spiritual traditions is that of a consciousness of interconnectedness that sees beyond the veils of everyday reality.

> From the viewpoint of ultimate reality, Right View is the absence of all views. (Nhat Hanh, 1998, p. 56)
>
> The Buddha advised us not to be fooled by what we perceive. He told Subhuti, "Where there is perception, there is deception." The Buddha also taught on many occasions that most of our perceptions are erroneous, and that most of our suffering comes from wrong perceptions. We have to ask ourselves again and again, "Am I sure?" Until we see clearly, our wrong perceptions will prevent us from having Right View. (p. 52)
>
> "Right view cannot be described. We can only point in the correct direction. Right view cannot even be transmitted by a teacher. A teacher can help us identify the seed of Right View that is already in our garden, and help us have the confidence to practice, to entrust that seed to the soil of our daily life. But we are the gardener. We have to learn how to water the wholesome seeds that are in us so they will bloom into the flowers of Right View. The instrument for watering wholesome seeds is mindful living - mindful breathing, mindful walking, living each moment of our day in mindfulness. (p. 55)

In his book The Meditative Mind,(1998) Goleman said the Abhidhamma distinguishes between mental factors that are kusula – pure, wholesome, or healthy – and akusula – impure, unwholesome, or unhealthy. Most perceptual, cognitive, and affective mental factors fit into either the healthy or unhealthy category. The criterion for this differentiation is based on whether a particular mental factor facilitates or interferes with attempts to still ones mind in meditation. There are seven neutral properties in every mental state. These are apperception, perception, volition, feeling, the sensations aroused by the object, one pointedness, and the involuntary directing of attention and psychic energy. These properties he says, form the basic framework of consciousness in which the healthy and unhealthy factors are embedded.

> The central unhealthy factor, delusion, is perceptual: Delusion (moha) is defined as a cloudiness of mind that leads to misperception of the object of awareness. Delusion is seen in

> Abhidhamma as basic ignorance, the primary root of human suffering. This misperception of the true nature of things – the simple failure to see clearly, without bias or prejudice of any kind – is the core of all unhealthy mental states. Delusion, for example, leads to false view or misdiscernment (ditthi). False view entails placing something in the wrong category or miscategorization. The working of these factors is clear in the case of the paranoid, who misperceives as threatening someone who wishes him or her no harm, and so categorizes the other person as part of a fancied conspiracy against him or herself. The Buddha is quoted as saying that while a person's mind is dominated by false view, whatever he might do or aspire to could only "lead him to an undesirable, unpleasant, and disagreeable state, to woe and suffering" (Anguttura nikaya, 1975, I, p. 23). Among the pernicious false views the Buddha explicitly criticized is one of the pervasive assumptions of many Western personality theories, namely, that there is a fixed "self" or "ego". In Abhidamma there is no self as such but a "self-consuming process of physical and mental phenomena which continually arise and again disappear immediately" (Nyanatiloka, 1972, p.25) (Goleman, 1988, p. 122)

Soygal Rinpoche wrote that as long as one has a mind, there will be thoughts and emotions. Well-being can be enhanced by meditation as a way of taming them and gradually releasing the crystallised patterns of thinking that cause pain and disharmony. Meditation practices involve becoming aware of the fragmentary nature of perception and releasing attachments to limited concepts which cloud our minds and obstruct the perception of the reality which is ultimately beyond knowing and beyond description.

> Everything that we see around us is seen as it is because we have been repeatedly solidifying our experience of inner and outer reality in the same way, lifetime after lifetime, and this has led to the mistaken assumption that what we see is objectively real. In fact, as we go further along the spiritual path, we learn how to work directly with our fixed perceptions. All our old concepts of the world or matter or even ourselves are purified and dissolved, and an entirely new, what you could call "heavenly" field of vision and perception opens up. As Blake says:
>
> If the doors of perception were cleansed,
>
> Everything would appear ... as it is, infinite.
>
> (Blake quoted in Rinpoche, 1994, p. 115)

Kabbalists also recognize the fundamental illusion of the self as a separate entity bounded in space and time. Aryeh Kaplan pointed out that in Hebrew the same letters make up the word "I"(אני) and the word "nothingness" (אין), implying, he said, that the "real me is the nothingness within me" (Kaplan,1985, p.87). The ultimate illusion, the illusion of the self, is that which when overcome can create the most fundamental change in perception and behavior.

> Think of yourself as Ayin[1] and forget yourself totally. Then you can transcend time, rising to the world of thought, where all is equal: life and death, ocean and dry land. Such is not the case if you are attached to the material nature of this world. If you think of yourself as something, then God cannot clothe himself in you, for God is infinite. No vessel can contain God, unless you think of yourself as Ayin. (p. 71)

Afterman described the way in which everyday consciousness cannot fully behold the infinite and creates the illusion of dualities and separation. It invests the objects perceived with power and emotional attachment and in some sense reifies them so that they become idolized.

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[1] nothingness

> The fall of Adam symbolizes the shattering of the primordial unity of human consciousness. The "Shattered" nature of ordinary consciousness parallels the primordial cosmic cataclysm known as the Breaking of the Vessels. The cosmic Breaking of the Vessels, which is the genesis of reality could be likened to the breakdown of the mind resulting from an overwhelming revelation or mystical experience. The mind is too immature a "vessel" to hold the pure revelation of the light of Infinity and cannot integrate it into its ordinary awareness. It breaks apart - that is, it begins to invest phenomena and people with god-like qualities, most especially the ego. It may run from one shining fragment to the next, idolizing each and then rejecting it. The mind may embrace visions, then become violent; it may run back and forth from one teaching to the next, fall in and out of love, in and out of fear.
>
> The extent of the fall or breakage in each person's consciousness is expressed by the distance his awareness is from the infinite, and by the degree to which aspects or components of reality are idolized. In everyday life, this is experienced inwardly as a person's inability to control the chaos of his thoughts and emotions; or at times, as a profound although sometimes repressed sense of meaninglessness and futility. Outwardly, it is experienced as the drive towards possession and power in all of its manifestations.
>
> Ordinary consciousness (the fall from the Garden of Eden) manifests primarily in the fundamental dualities of life and death, good and evil, spiritual and physical, etc., which break down further into the various modern forms of "idol worship" (e.g., egoism, materialism, nationalism, excessive categorization of knowledge and specialization, etc.). The struggle of consciousness is to liberate itself through the reunification of these images.
>
> The process of rectification (tikkun) is the returning of mankind and all of physical nature into unity with God. (Afterman, 1992, p. 6)

The process of rectification (tikkun) reflects the concept of the spiritual path as an evolutionary one filled with challenges for growth. Spiritual evolution involves learning how to see unity beyond normal view of separation and to act in accordance with this spiritual understanding. It is an ongoing path nourished by devotion and practice which allows the individual to gradually raise,

mature, or expand his/her consciousness in order to be able to behold the divine light in more full and direct ways and to learn how to see beyond dualities and act in accordance with this perception.

The spiritual view of the connection between thought and matter described in the previous chapter suggests that collective well-being is enhanced by the cultivation of harmonious thoughts.

In the same way that on an individual level illusory thoughts and attachments to concepts can create ill health, so if one understands interconnectedness, certain illusory thought patterns and attachments to concepts can be common to groups of people. Perhaps the work of identifying and transcending common illusions and attachments can be seen as the spiritual journey of a collective. Simine Forest's discussion of the four inherent walls of the ancient Medicine Wheel can be interpreted in this way.

> The ancient Medicine Wheel teachings show that there are four inherent walls, each specific to a race. Every race must move through them and the wall that is faced is not necessarily the inherent direction a race may represent. These veils demand to be faced, learned, and transcended by every one of us. For the Red people, the wall of past and shame in the South appears as a dark hole within, where hope is often buried deep in the shadows and nights of our hearts. .... In these times, the Black people, the Africans and Afro-Americans, share the same wall of shame as the Native American, while the Eastern people must meet their wall in the East. This wall is called the wall of religion or dogma, often translating into their religious system as an obsession for illumination or as a bloody fanaticism that we have observed, for example in the last decades, bringing terrible clashes between opposing the religious beliefs.
>
> Ultimately, the White people have two walls to penetrate: the western wall of arrogance, self-importance, and illusions, and, afterward, once the lesson is learned, the northern wall of conditioning and lack of true wisdom. (Simine Forest, 2000, p. 17)

Many spiritual traditions have thus developed special meditation, prayer, and contemplation practices that transform consciousness and foster behavior based on love and respect for all living and non-living entities, all seen as containing sparks of the divine.

Concepts of Unity and Oneness, relationship between thought and matter, and dedicated practice of mindfulness and meditation may not be appealing at first glance for the busy manager trained in a very different way of thinking about success and prosperity. Paradoxically, the executive market is flooded today with workshops on the power of positive thinking and use of affirmations. While these may be effective to a degree, they can also be seen as distorted and depleted versions of the spiritual approach described above, packaged for an instant market looking for tools for individual gain.

It is interesting to note that meditation has recently been introduced into some organizations as a stress reduction tool. Meditation, mindfulness, and related practices can also, however, be used as powerful tools for transforming thought and releasing attachments to crystallized perceptions of one's organizational reality. Much organizational conflict results from differing reified views of a particular situation. Understanding *Right view* as *the absence of all views* fosters flexibility and diminishes attachment to specific ways of thinking. These practices steeped also in an understanding of unity and relationships are likely to transform many organizational paradigms regarding purpose and success.

Current organizational trends that suggest mottoes like community and values seem to embrace some of the spiritual concepts and practices outlined above. The danger lies in doing so in a way that depletes them of their deeper profundity and comprehensiveness. Organizations that espouse love, respect, and co-operation may encourage overt denial and repression rather than the transformation of conflict and aggression. The spiritual practices described here do not deny or repress the shadow side. Emphasis on practice and dedication reflects the need to recognize and transform limiting and painful perceptions including emotions such as fear, hate, and envy rather than to deny and repress them. To integrate such ideas into organizations demands radical changes in ways of thinking and working with issues such as values, purpose, and organizational dilemma.

Right Action and Organizational Well-Being

The systemic spiritual traditions have often developed precepts of what is considered right action in terms of action generated from a deep recognition of interconnectedness. The group is seen as

shaping reality not only by their thoughts and prayers but by behavior which impacts thought and is impacted by it.

> Right action is that which eases suffering, causes no harm, and inspires others to generous caretaking. Right action enables one to honor the fire of clear mind with one another without need to perceive one above or below, more or less than another. Right action perceives the cycles of relationships and creates order within one's own mind, putting forth-disciplined action free from desire to dominate or be dominated. Mind dedicated to right action perceives that we are the ancestors to those yet unborn and considers the effects of thought, word, and deed unto seven generations - each moment a holy moment, pregnant with tomorrow. Best to speak kindly, act with care, lest your tomorrow be filled with fear. (Ywahoo, 1986, p. 57)

In Buddhist tradition right action is closely linked with mindfulness trainings. The following, for instance, are the first two trainings described by Thich Nhat Hanh.

> The First Training is about reverence for life: " Aware of the suffering caused by the destruction of life, I am committed to cultivating compassion and learning ways to protect the lives of people, animals, plants, and minerals. I am determined not to kill, not to let others kill, and not to support any act of killing in the world, in my thinking, and in my way of life." We may be killing every day by the way we eat, drink, and use the land, air, and water. We think that we don't kill, but we do. Mindfulness of action helps us be aware so we can stop the killing and begin saving and helping.
>
> The Second Mindfulness Training is about generosity: "Aware of the suffering caused by exploitation, stealing, and oppression, I am committed to cultivating loving kindness and learning ways to work for the well-being of people, animals, plants and minerals. I will practice generosity by sharing my time, energy, and material resources with those who are in real need. I am determined not to steal and not to possess anything that should belong to others. I will respect the property of others, but I will prevent others from profiting from human suffering or the suffering of other species on Earth." (Nhat Hanh, 1998, p. 94)

The very term "mindfulness training" reflects the recognition of an ongoing process of work rather than a static concept that can be achieved through desire or statement of values alone. Similarly, Ywahoo describes teachings of the Tsalagi Clan about relationship, generosity, respect and stewardship is the following Code of Right Relationships.

> Speak only words of truth
>
> Speak only of the good qualities of others.
>
> Be a confidant and carry no tales.
>
> Turn aside the veil of anger to release the beauty inherent in all.
>
> Waste not the bounty, and want not.
>
> Honor the light in all. Compare nothing; see all for its suchness.
>
> Respect all life; cut away ignorance from one's own heart.
>
> Neither kill nor harbor thoughts of angry nature, which destroy peace like an arrow.
>
> Do it now; if you see what needs doing, do it. (Ywahoo, 1987, p. 21)

Boundaries as Illusions in Organizations

In the article "A Fresh Look at Authority and Organization: Towards a Spiritual Approach For Managing Illusion" Gouranga Chattopadhyay (1999) suggested integrating three kinds of educational approaches to promoting a cultural understanding of the fact that boundaries are only structures that are derived from the limitations of human perception. This, he said, can be promoted by learning about quantum physics, group relations theories, and spiritual development. Quantum physics, he said, have led to the hypothesis that boundaries we experience are the result of the

limited nature of perceptual ability. Group processes reveal aspects of psychic boundarylessness such as the way in which we unconsciously take in other people's emotions and act them out on others' behalf, and spirituality is about discovering connectedness and managing perceived differences.

Chattopadhyay integrated ideas steeped in group relations theory and in spiritual practice. He suggested that a new understanding of management and authority in organizations, freed up of these illusory boundaries, will enable people to more effectively exercise their own personal authority and creativity.

The central thesis of Chattopadyhay's argument is the following: All boundaries are illusions: The boundary of hierarchies in organizations is an illusion, and treating these boundaries as real rather than as structures in the mind can cause various forms of dysfunction in the organization which he specified. The way hierarchy is structured in the mind is derived from early experiences in childhood and reinforced by religious structures that are also influenced by early family experiences of subordination and superordination. These internal structures create situations in organizations where people lose touch with their personal authority. The phenomenon is reinforced by the fact that difference is perceived as inequality. Hierarchy, he said, can also be seen as a social defense against different forms of anxiety. He then provided an alternative model drawn from the Fox Society where parental hierarchy is not experienced in the family structure, and the social and religious myths and models of behavior encourage personal authority rather than a hierarchical mode of relating.

Chattopadhyay asserted that manmade boundaries in organizations are defined to enable engagement with the task in hand. They become taken for granted, however, even when they become dysfunctional. In the case study of a consultation with a ball-bearing company, the consultants uncovered the dysfunctionality of the boundary between the cutting and grinding sections of the company. Knowledge available in the more highly skilled grinding section was unavailable for the cutting section, where it could have been useful in diagnosing problems in the metals. The unavailability of this knowledge because of the boundary in the mind led to wastage of human and material resources. Exploring the unconscious dynamics revealed how management and workers colluded to maintain the dysfunctional boundary between the sections, the high wastage, and low profits. The collusion occurred to defend against the anxiety that if the company showed increased profit, the new owners would make a heavy investment in machinery, and this would threaten the workers' positions. The concrete suggestion to merge the two sections could only be implemented effectively when the new CEO understood the need to allay such anxieties. Chattopadhyay suggested that in problem solving in organizations it is useful to keep in mind that the boundaries have been imagined in the first place.

Following the previous discussion about the illusion of the self I would add that the question of identity is also relevant in the example of the boundaries between the cutting and grinding sections. In the same way that one identifies with the self as real, one tends to identify with one's department or organization as real and as an extension of one's own self and identity. Any changes to one's reified sense of self, and the groups or organizations that are part of one's extended identity can be experienced as threatening. The attachment to these boundaries as real often creates fear and resistance to the change in organizations.

Citing other authors, Chattopadhyay suggested that hierarchy can be seen as a social defence. For those high in the hierarchy, the hierarchy serves as a defense against the anxieties that result from being accountable to the many subordinate role holders, for decisions that misfire, and having to deal with the trust of subordinate role holders. For the subordinate role holders, it serves to defend against anxieties associated with possible failed dependency.

He maintained that hierarchy is also an unconscious way of defending against anxiety related to change. It relates to parents' vested interests in maintaining their own authority and defending against cultural uncertainties. He hypothesized that "the task of bringing up children to be creatively contributive in society becomes corrupted into producing 'chips off the old block', rather like slightly faded carbon copies of the original, in order to block the possibility of change."

In this article, as in other material on boundarylessness, it is important to clarify the use of the term. I believe there is a danger in a dualistic contention that argues in a binary way the reality or non-reality of the phenomenon of boundaries. To transcend the dualism would be to recognize that boundaries both exist and do not exist at the same time. Even if boundaries are constructs of the mind or illusions, they generally have a common enough mental and emotional and sometimes physical reality for people to negotiate them and transact across them. There is the level where they exist at least in the inner reality of experience, and that needs to be taken into consideration. There is also the other level where one can transcend them and recognize their illusiveness. Chattopadhyay showed how when we raise our awareness as to their illusory quality, we can constantly choose to define them in different illusory ways. This allows for a more dynamic and

conscious imaging of reality that serves the task more effectively, rather than out of inertia maintaining crystallized definitions of boundaries that have long lost their usefulness. In the case study, he showed how the boundary between two departments could be dissolved by understanding its dysfunctionality and the unconscious defensive purpose it was serving. The case study illustrates the impact of looking at the boundaries as structures created in the mind which need to be reexamined on a continual basis in terms of their functionality.

If this deep awareness of boundaries as illusions were fostered in organizations, it would have a tremendous impact on the way organizations work. While ideas of reframing boundaries are not new in organizational work, psychological and spiritual prisms contribute different emphases. The group relations perspective highlights the emotional coloring and tendencies and the way boundaries often serve as social defenses against anxiety. Within the spiritual context, working with the illusion of boundaries is not just an intellectual practice of deconstruction but a deep awareness of the interconnected and divine context of the boundarylessness. Questions that accompany the exploration of the boundaries in the mind would thus include those that explore which illusory boundaries serve the larger system and which create a sense of fragmentation, alienation, isolation, and hostility. Which boundaries at this moment promote love and which hostility? To what boundaries do we cling and why? What are the fears behind releasing those illusions? What is our sense of relatedness to those who we perceive as on the other side of the boundary we have created in our mind? What are the qualities of the bounded concepts we have reified? To what extent do they promote a sense of co-creation within a larger context, or to what extent do they conjure up images of war, conquest, acquisition, and neediness? What kind of organizational practice can be used to develop the organizational consciousness (consciousness implying a deep sense of

compassionate and loving interconnectedness and the awareness of all boundaries as illusions including those of the self and the organization)? How can we promote understanding of the way in which this practice serves the organisational essential purpose and those of the people within it?

In the same way that individual spiritual development involves ongoing practice with certain routines or techniques, so it would be important to develop spiritual practices appropriate for organizational life in order to support this work of liberating the organization from limiting boundaries in the mind.

Mind-Body Disciplines

Story Three

The following is a case study described by Karma Castleberry (1988) illustrating the power of unspoken, implicit family rules to foster and maintain psychosomatic illness in children. Family rules, she said, "are repetitive interactional sequences." They are predictable and expected patterns of behavior that become the truth or reality for the family. In this case study she showed how marital discord was detoured by a child's illness.

> Kim, an eight-year-old girl, was referred by her pediatrician who had repeatedly hospitalized his young patient. During the past year, Kim had missed more days of school than she had attended. Typically, she would develop high fevers, lassitude, and blood chemistry changes indicative of serious illness. Extensive examinations revealed no apparent physical cause for

these episodes which left the child exhausted, the parents worried, and the pediatrician puzzled. On most occasions, the episodes were severe enough to require hospitalization.

During an initial play interview, Kim appeared to be a bright, engaging child without any apparent difficulties in her home, school, or intra-psychic life – hardly the child I had expected to see from the referral information. The initial interview with the family quickly revealed the following rules.

Act like an all-American, country-club family.

We must always remain together, especially in sickness.

Do not admit negatives, especially fears and problems.

Protect the children.

The parents claimed an idyllic family life except for Kim's recurrent illnesses. They were however, willing to explore any avenue of treatment suggested by the pediatrician. As we mutually searched for some way to make sense of Kim's illness, her parents assured me that the best thing the family had going for it was the strong marriage. However, comments on the marital relationship dealt with parenting, not the roles of the spouses in the marriage. A high commitment to caring for the children was expressed. The initial session ended with a homework task to think of how Kim's illness could be saying something about the family.

The second session began with the parents storming into the office without Kim or her older brother. The parent's former laid-back, relaxed style was replaced by tension and the pronouncement that the marriage was the worst thing in the family. The illness of Kim was never mentioned as their stories of mutual suspicion, extramarital affairs, and fears of divorce tumbled out. The family rules were now seen as stultifying. Maintaining the thin veneer of the all-American family diverted attention from the spousal conflict. Not admitting fears and weaving webs of deception had prevented honest communication and had not protected the children at all. Yet Kim's series of illness somehow bound them together.

The rule "We must always remain together, especially in sickness" made sense in an often-repeated scenario. Kim's father, a salesman, would leave home on a sales trip. Kim's mother would begin to worry about her husband's fidelity when he was out of her sight (Perhaps in reaction to her own recent, undisclosed history of extramarital affairs). She

> wished to check up on him to confirm her suspicions, wondering if he were in some motel room with another woman. By late in the day, Kim would begin to get ill, and by the middle of the night, she would be hospitalized. Kim's mother, frantic with worry over her daughter, could then legitimately telephone her husband, not to confront him with marital concerns, but with protective, parenting concerns to which he quickly responded. Later, hovering over Kim's bedside together, suspicions and fears of separation were put aside, obeying the rule "We must always remain together, especially in sickness." As Kim recuperated in a week or two, her father would think about getting back on the road again and the cycle would repeat itself.
>
> Kim's parents worked on marital issues in therapy that overtly challenged the rigidity of the rules. Although they feared the effects of separation on the children, they decided to leave one another soon before school started in the fall. Follow-up at one and two years indicated that Kim never experienced a recurrence of the fevers and had nearly a perfect attendance in school. Kim's symptoms were no longer required to maintain the marriage. (Castleberry, 1988, p. 367)

This story, like the other stories, illustrates the way in which symptoms or dysfunctional aspects of a system originate in unconscious perceptions of reality, as well as the way in which the thoughts and symptoms are not only of an individual but also of the system as a whole. We are usually not aware of the somatic aspect of our experience in systems. Previously, we discussed how behavior of an individual expresses the conscious and unconscious thoughts of the system as a whole. From this story we can also see how thoughts and perceptions of the system can be embodied and expressed somatically.

The mind/body perspective emphasizes the interplay between thoughts, emotions, and the physical body and points to the inseparability of mental and physical processes. Francis Pert's research mentioned earlier revealed how neuropeptides function as the biochemical mediators of emotion.

Thoughts and images, both conscious and unconscious, are accompanied by emotions. Emotions through biochemical processes bridge mind and matter, conscious and unconscious ideas and images, with the physical body. On the individual level, the emotional state that accompanies thoughts always has a somatic component.

Sarno (1998) suggested that current laboratory science may not be able to answer questions regarding the functioning of the brain, processes of thought and communication, the elaboration of emotions, and the way the brain chooses and produces a psychosomatic reaction and its location, and a whole new epistemology may be required.

Kemeny studied the role of emotions on the immune system.

> From my own viewpoint, the mind and the body are two manifestations of the same process. Even to say that they are "interconnected" is improper, because they are two parts of one whole. (Kemeny in Moyers, 1993, p.207)
>
> Although feelings and thoughts seem intangible, the brain is active any time we feel or think anything. That activity can then lead to a cascade of changes in the body. The brain, as you know, regulates the heart, the gastrointestinal system, the lungs, and probably the immune system, and each change in the brain can lead to a sequence of changes throughout the body that can have an impact on health. (p. 209)

Thoughts, attitudes, and emotions are thus seen as impacting not only the mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being of an individual but also physical well-being. There has been much recent research on the role of emotions in health.

Jon Kabat Zinn, in discussing the role of emotions in health, stated how stress affects the immune system. He asserted that thought patterns and emotions shape and influence each other, and that it is difficult to determine in a particular situation whether one is more fundamental than the other. In his review of some of the studies of emotional elements in different diseases, he mentioned those that demonstrated how particular constellations of features and emotional experiences in early life are associated with an increased likelihood of having cancer later in life. Among these, he said, are a lack of close relationship to parents and an ambivalent attitude toward life and human relationships. Other studies, he said indicate a correlation between the inability to express emotions and the mortality of lung cancer patients. "Those people who had the poorest ability to express emotions had more than four and a half times the yearly death rate than those lung cancer patients with the highest ability for emotional discharge"(Kabat-Zinn, 1990, p. 207). He mentioned that in the literature the cancer-prone pattern is frequently described as having a tendency to conceal feelings and to be very other-oriented while actually feeling deeply alienated from others and feeling unloved and unlovable. A study of Redford Williams, he said, found hostility and cynicism factors to be stronger predictors of heart disease than the full Type A pattern which includes characteristics such as time urgency and competitiveness. For the research, Williams defined hostility as "an absence of trust in the basic goodness of others" linked with "the belief that others are generally mean, selfish and undependable".(p. 211) Kabat-Zinn also quoted surgeon Bernie Siegel whose books put forward the strong relationship between surviving cancer and the degree to which one can love oneself and be open to receiving love.

Kabat-Zinn emphasized that because a connection has been found between thought patterns, attitudes, emotions, and illness, it does not mean that being a certain way or thinking a certain way

causes a specific disease. "It is more accurate to say that it may increase to some extent (that extent depending on the strength of the correlation and a lot of other factors) your risk of getting the disease." (p.206)

Dean Ornish, in an interview with Bill Moyers, also emphasized the correlation of emotional factors with heart disease.

> A number of studies have shown that people who feel isolated have three to five times the mortality, not only from cardiovascular disease, but from all causes, when compared to people who don't feel isolated. What is also interesting is that this mortality rate is usually independent of their blood cholesterol level, their blood pressure, and even whether or not they smoke. (Ornish, in Moyers, 1993, p. 107)
>
> There's a difference between aloneness and loneliness. You can be alone by choice, and not feel isolated. You can be the head of a large company, you can be the center of your world, and still feel very isolated. By isolation I mean not feeling a real sense of intimate connection with other people. Many people with a lot of friends and family will say to themselves, "There are parts of me that no one really knows – and if they did know, then they'd be out of here, they'd leave me." To a degree, we all put our best foot forward, and we create facades, some more than others. (p. 108)

The Symbolic Nature of Symptoms

Core to many of the mind body and alternative-healing approaches is the work with the symbolic nature of our unconscious mental and physical processes. The different approaches range from shamanistic use of altered states of consciousness to psychologist's use of healing visualizations.

Freud first drew attention to the way in which painful material is repressed in the unconscious and to the symbolic language of the unconscious that manifests itself, for instance, in dreams and slips of the tongue. He also showed how unconscious repressed feelings can be expressed symbolically in physical symptoms. Foerenbach, Celentano, Kirby and Lane (1997) describe the origins of exploring the systemic unconscious manifestation of the symptom with Freud.

> Over 100 years ago, Freud described a 'leap' that moved in the direction of mind to body. In studies on hysteria and in conversion symptoms, Freud (1893/1955) recognized the psyche's power over the soma. He described these manifestations as a body expression of compromise between a forbidden wish or impulse and the defense against that desire. Simply put, the overwhelming urge to kick an offensive sibling can be prevented by the body suddenly taking over with a paralysis of the leg. And so it was in the case of one of Freud's (1905/1953) women patients who sat at her ill father's bedside. When her repressed oedipal sexual desires pressed for consciousness, the result was the conversion of this instinctual wish to the paralysis of the arm that would have reached out to express that desire. (Foehrenbach et. al., 1997, pg. 20)

They mentioned also Alexander's attempts in the fifties to connect certain stimuli with specific organ choices. "For example, skin with its eruptive and oozing sores was seen as representing unrecognized weeping on the inside. The other disorders were also linked to symbolic meaning." (p. 20) From a psychoanalytic perspective, symptoms are unconscious expressions of repressed material, and relief of the symptoms can occur if the symbolic material is brought to awareness and worked through. Eye disease may be linked to what a person may or may not want to see, shoulder problems may hold emotional burdens, but symptoms need to be explored in terms of universal and individual meanings.

Martin Rossman (1993) presented an example of work with the personal imagery of a patient, Jason, who suffered from severe asthma attacks. During guided imagery in which Jason was asked for a clue to the mystery, he began to see an agitated dwarf who called himself Romeo. Romeo was dressed like

a Roman soldier, and he was patrolling the entrance to a tunnel. If anyone got too close, he would close off the entrance to the tunnel. Jason associated the tunnel with his bronchial tubes and began to link the onset of his asthma attacks with a new involvement with a woman and the fear of intimacy.

The diagnostic and therapeutic use of imagery is widespread. By allowing the patient to access internal images and symbols, bring them to awareness, and explore them, the need for the symptom as messenger of the unconscious is thought to disappear. Therapeutic techniques sometimes also involve sending symbolic messages through suggestion, sometimes hypnotic, directly to the unconscious.

The following is another excerpt from Moyers' interview with Ornish:

> *Ornish:* There is an emotional heart disease, if you will, and there is a spiritual heart disease if you will. And Susan Sontag notwithstanding, there is a metaphorical basis to heart disease. It's not just because we don't know enough to understand the physical basis, as she might say. In fact, the more we learn about it, the more we see how multilayered it is.
> *Moyers:* Are you talking about emotional heart surgery?
> *Ornish:* Well, you could say it's a different kind of open heart surgery. We are asking people to open their heart in ways that go beyond just splitting open their chest.
> *Moyers:* People are going to say, "Yeah, that's where he gets off science and into psychology."
> *Ornish:* Well, that may be true. But I am not sure that science and psychology are mutually exclusive. It is true, though, that if I give a lecture, some cardiologists will say, "Your lecture was really good until you got to all the touchy-feely stuff." (p. 109)

Many physicians like Ornish are becoming more aware not only of the inseparability of mind and body, emotions and well-being, but also of the multilayered and metaphoric nature of symptoms. The combination of the mind/body and group relations approach opens the arena for exploring this not only in individuals, but also in systems. The story above shows how a child's body speaks about the dynamics of the family system. This has important implications for thinking about somatic symptoms of individuals within an organizational system. The mind/body perspective suggests a symbolic link between the chosen symptom and the nature of the specific thoughts and feelings. Family systems

theory and group relations raises questions as to the link between specific dynamics of a system and the way in which individuals unconsciously choose and are chosen by the system to take on a role at a certain time. The system hones in to the individuals with a natural predisposition to that role, often in areas that are sensitive and relatively unconscious. Pictures and accompanying emotions prevalent in the system are translated symbolically by members into somatic symptoms. It is likely that a person who embodies a symptom somatically has a special relationship to the particular issue that is being symbolically expressed through him and an emotional/physiological predisposition to the symptom.

Once again, parallels can be drawn in thinking about organizations. Various organizational phenomena such as chronic neglect of the building, or lateness in delivery, faulty products or incessant staff conflict can be seen as symptoms which symbolically express some unexpressed issues of the group matrix, the unconscious informational pattern in the organization. The symptoms need to be understood by exploring the possible symbolic messages and by taking into consideration the unique history and characteristics of the particular organization. What is going on somatically for people within an organization has not been studied in terms of its systemic meaning. The argument put forward previously was that the thoughts and feelings held by individuals are not only of the individuals themselves but of the system as a whole. The way in which an individual holds a thought and feeling reflects the specific interface between the dynamics of the system and those of that particular individual. It reflects an interaction between what the system unconsciously puts into the individual and what the individual is unconsciously willing to hold on behalf of the system. But, as mind/body studies make clear, thoughts and emotions have physiological components. Therefore, thoughts and feelings of the system held by an individual have a physiological component as well. Because of the unconscious nature of much of what occurs in systems, the physical symptom may be a messenger of unconscious dynamics that are otherwise intangible and hidden.

It is not the norm for people in systems to make space to share and explore what they are experiencing somatically, although if the above suggestions have any validity it is likely to be a very revealing exercise. At any given point it may be interesting to look at the links between what individuals in the system are feeling and sensing and to try to understand what this may mean about the state of the system. At the conferences on "Body, Soul and Role" we designed an event called "The Social Sensing Matrix" to provide an opportunity to explore the emotional, imaginal and physical experiences of individuals in the system and the systemic meaning of the links between them. The event provides members with an opportunity to study the way in which images and sensations from their dreams, reveries, and physical experiences reverberate with the state of the system. As people shared somatic experiences, certain shared sensations became evident. Members also explored the systemic meanings of what different people were holding for the group as a whole.

The event was built on the concept of the Social Dreaming Matrix originally conceived by Gordon Lawrence and Patricia Daniel. The first such event was held in 1982 at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relation. The Social Dreaming Matrix is based on the assumption that an individual's dreams are dreamt within a systemic context and are dreams not only of the individual but also of the system as a whole. This concept of dreams holding communal significance is not new and historically can be found in the Bible and in many community traditions where dreams were considered to have tribal significance and explored in meetings of tribal elders. The Social Dreaming Matrix, perhaps a modern version, was conceived in order to provide an opportunity for individuals to gain insight into the system by exploring images from the dreams of members and the links between the images. The Social Sensing Matrix extends the exploration further, inviting learning about the somatic dimension of experience and the symbolic significance of somatic expression at any given time about the dynamics of the system.

While the logic of the argument has validity, the novelty of the idea of somatic experience as a diagnostic tool of the organization may require an initial suspension of knee-jerk disbelief. Let us imagine a situation following Dean Ornish's claim that heart problems have a metaphoric component as well. During a stressed period where an organization is considering downsizing, a middle manager develops a heart attack. It is not difficult to imagine that there may be a link between the heart attack and the tendency during the downsizing process to "close one's heart" to the sadness, fear, and even desperation of people in the organization. There are many ways in which stress can manifest itself in disease. In this case a heart attack may indicate the difficulty in dealing with the emotional pain in the organization. The heart attack can therefore be interpreted as a phenomenon expressing something not only of the manager but of the system as a whole. In carrying out the downsizing, the system responds by closing its heart on one hand and experiencing heartbreak on the other. The middle manager who is caught between the demands of the CEO and the employees and who, in his personal life, may be the most vulnerable to such a disease expresses the organizational symptom. Looking at this incident metaphorically may enable people in the organization to become more sensitive to the way in which the organization is dealing with the anxiety around downsizing by blocking any emotional expression. Open emotional expression, communication, and a sense of community are known to have a healing impact on heart disease (Ornish, in Moyers, 1993). Discovering this link, may in turn, trigger a process where the organization deals more openly with emotions and discovers more humane ways of handling the inevitably painful process of downsizing.

This is not to imply that there is a one-to-one correlation between a person's symptoms and organizational dynamics. The symbolic process of symptomization is a complex and multi-determined one. The suggestion is that awareness of this dimension and the ability to explore metaphor can often provide unexpected insights and reveal new aspects of otherwise all too familiar and known realities. The point is not to give the somatic experience too much weight in the process.

but to recognize that having denied and split off this part of our working life has led to the complete neglect of studying and understanding its possible significance.

In Ken Dychtwald's book Bodymind (1977), he mentioned that the emotional component is one of five which have traditionally been identified as influential in the formation of "bodymind." He listed the components as "(1) heredity, (2) physical activity, (3) emotional and psychological activity and exposure, (4) nutrition, and (5) environment"(Dychtwald, 1977, p.22). Looking at body/mind in organizational life is a step toward working with and understanding ourselves in our environment in a more integrated way.

In his book, Dychtwald provided a detailed look at the emotional component of the way in which we hold our body and how we store specific feelings in particular body parts.

> The third component, emotional and psychological activity and exposure, is the one that fascinates me the most. While most people will agree that feelings, attitudes, and experiences have an effect on the conditions of their bodymind, there is very little agreement about how much effect they have. For example, if I am nervous and I feel butterflies in my stomach, I naturally relate my physical symptoms to the emotional stress. Or, if I have just had a fight with my girlfriend and I notice that my neck is stiff and I've got a headache coming on, I'll probably admit to myself that the argument caused the tension.
>
> Yet, how far will I carry these psychosomatic associations? When I have a sore throat, do I associate it with restrained anger? If I sprain my ankle, did I do so at a time when I was feeling emotionally ungrounded? If I am asthmatic, am I this way because it is hard for me to take responsibility for the rage that is trapped in my chest? If I have hemorrhoids, is it because I have been holding on to all of my feelings too tightly? If I am blissfully happy is it because my bodymind is healthfully relaxed and intetgrated? (p. 22)

While the metaphor of the heart attack may be relatively clear, there are probably many symptoms where the symbolic implications are far less obvious. Each organ has a universal significance based on its function (e.g. Eyes – seeing, Legs – walking, etc.), cultural, and personal meanings area also

attributed to the organs on the basis of cultural and personal experience. In his book The Body in the Mind, Mark Johnson proposed the idea of the "indispensability of embodied human understanding for meaning and rationality" (Johnson, 1987, p. xv). He looked at image schema and metaphor as two types of imaginative structures through which we make sense of experience and claimed that it is "possible, and necessary, after all, for abstract meanings, and for reason and imagination, to have a bodily basis."(p. xvi). About metaphor he says:

> "Metaphor (is) conceived as a pervasive mode of understanding by which we project patterns from one domain of experience in order to structure another domain of a different kind. So conceived, metaphor is not merely a linguistic mode of expression; rather, it is one of the chief cognitive structures by which we are able to have coherent, ordered experiences that we can reason about and make sense of. Through metaphor, we make use of patterns that obtain in our physical experience to organize our more abstract understanding. Understanding via metaphorical projection from the concrete to the abstract makes use of physical experience in two ways. First, our bodily movements and interactions in various physical domains of experience are structured (as we saw with image schemata), and that structure can be projected by metaphor onto abstract domains. Second, metaphorical understanding is not merely a matter of arbitrary fanciful projection from anything to anything with no constraints. Concrete bodily experience not only constrains the "input" to the metaphorical projections but also the nature of the projections themselves, that is, the kinds of mappings that can occur across domains. (p. xv)

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It makes sense that while we all have unique experiences in the way we physically process reality, there is a common enough experience for metaphors to have collective significance. Evidence can be found in everyday expressions such as "to stand on one's own two feet," "to shoulder responsibility," to "bad mouth someone," "to give someone the evil eye," "to digest the information," "to grin and bear something." The collective associations and the universal function of specific organs can provide metaphoric insight into what a symptom in a specific organ may reveal. Shoulder pain may, for instance, reflect a person carrying a load of responsibility that is heavy on him, or digestive problems may reflect a difficulty in processing some of life's experiences. In her popular book You Can Heal Your Life (1984), Louise Hay listed different organs and the likely emotional causes and thought patterns that typically cause symptoms in those areas. Psychologists are sensitive to this dimension of experience and often work with clients on understanding physical symptoms in symbolic ways. What is suggested here is that within any organizational system it may be useful to be alert to possible systemic meanings of what a particular individual is carrying somatically for the system. This alertness can have diagnostic significance about the organizational dynamics as well as provide clues for what needs to be done in the system to open up the conflictual energy being expressed by the symptom.

The previous discussion focused on the concrete way in which people may actually embody symptoms in an organization on behalf of the system. This is but one way of using knowledge from mind/body disciplines for enriching our understanding of organizational well-being. The following discussion about a homeopathic, miasmatic approach to disease and its implications for organizational diagnosis and treatment is another example how metaphors from the theory and practice drawn from mind-body and alternative medicine disciplines can be used to throw light on aspects of organizational dynamics.

Hahnemann articulated the principles of homeopathy in the late 18th century. Ballentine wrote that Hahnemann noticed that there was a tendency of diseases to return after they had cleared up. Hahnemann then postulated that there was an "underlying pull towards the state of illness -- a sort of undertow that operated beneath the calmer waters he had been dealing with in treating the sick. He called this underlying derangement a miasm." (Ballentine, 1999, p. 99)

> The miasmatically affected body is, like a culture plate, the soil the germ grows in. Finding the gonococcus or the scabies mite thriving in a patient showed the homeopath which miasm was present. This is confusing for those of us who are used to thinking of the germ as the cause of the disease. The concept of miasms approaches disease from a perspective that might be considered more spiritual, since causality is seen as operative on a higher or subtler level, not merely physical. The organizational state of the system creates vulnerability to microbial growth. And it's on the subtle organizational level where the high-potency homeopathic remedies work. (p.103)

Ballentine said that the concepts of miasms developed at a time when diseases were thought to be related to "evil vapors that permeated a locale."

> Malaria, for example, was thought to develop in certain damp, unhealthy, swampy areas called "malarial miasms". Today we would laugh and say that malaria is caused by a parasite which is in turn carried by mosquitoes. It may be hasty, however to dismiss too quickly what was felt to be a meaningful concept. There may be value in viewing the energy and condition of a location as creating the tendency to disease -- and the mosquitoes and protozoa as mere intermediaries in the physical aspects of the process. In any case, Hahnemann took the miasm concept of his day and elevated it to a subtler level. His miasmatic swamps were in the mind and in the organizational structure of the vital force or energy level of the person a certain hidden mindset or energy state that allowed disease to take hold.
>
> To Hahnemann, the miasms were the common denominator in all chronic disease. Their presence, their characteristic ordering of thought energy and physical function were responsible for the recurrence of diseases that became chronic. (p. 100)

Ballentine saw " miasms as the manifestation of unconscious belief systems and archetypal psychological structures that furnish the underpinnings of our thoughts and ideas." (p. 100) A

metaphor of organizational miasms invites attention to the miasmatic climate of an organization that provides a culture in which certain diseases may flourish. Organizational miasms can be seen as the beliefs and assumptions which operate much of the time outside awareness yet shape patterns of thought and direct and circulate subtle energy in organizations. From this perspective, one asks: What is the "characteristic ordering of thought energy and physical function" responsible for chronic symptoms and problems in an organization? At the level of group consciousness, this approach complements the spiritual approach and group relations theory by highlighting the energetic link between consciousness and matter. Intervention can occur on both levels. One may either promote awareness about the limitations of the belief systems that block the flow of energy, or one may intervene in a behavioral way that is directly linked to the relevant aspect of consciousness. The diagnostic and interventional prism may support intervening primarily on one of these levels (consciousness or matter), while both levels are simultaneously held in mind as arenas of transformation. The following discussion about psychic miasm could apply equally to organizations.

> Many of the values and beliefs involved at this level, such as those surrounding the importance of material possessions are so widely held that we rarely if ever question them. Others -- for example, concepts about the primacy of linear time -- even provide the rough outlines of what we assume to be "reality". What is important to note here is that such assumptions, while they attune us to the group mind and gear us to function with relative comfort in society, may also place stringent limits on our freedom to change, evolve, and heal. More specifically, they shut off certain directions in which our consciousness might move, and do so in such a way that it has a strong impact on our spiritual life. For example, if I do not believe that there is a universal consciousness I can participate in, I am not likely to allow myself to experience it.
>
> Such beliefs and assumptions, though operating outside awareness, play a powerful role in shaping our patterns of thought and the way we direct and circulate subtle energy in our bodies. While a more superficial rearrangement of energy -- or even thought may result in the temporary resolution of disease, it is easy to see how the miasmatic foundations of function might reassert themselves and repeatedly bring a disorder back into being. Hahnemann's genius penetrated the veil of social norms to reveal the underlying roots in consciousness that feed the recurrence of chronic disease.

> Even more important, he was able to pinpoint the remedies that can free us from certain of these patterns. (p. 100)

Ballentine presented the three basic miasmatic patterns underlying chronic illness defined by Hahnemann. They are:

Scabies: (the itch): The disorder is focused on the skin. While it is the most obvious to the eye, it as also the least serious. The underlying pathologic process is one of deficiency.
Sycosis: (gonorrhea) are disorders of the mucous membranes -- the linings of the passageways that lead into the body (sinusitis and bronchitis, mucous colitis, middle ear congestion, and gonorrea). The underlying pathological process is one of excess.
Syphilis: which destroys innermost aspects of the body. Diseases involve vital structures such as the brain, heart and bones and often entail erosion and destruction of those organs. The underlying pathological process is one of destruction or erosion.

Ballentine noted that we might wonder what is being said in the language of disease by each of these processes about the mental and spiritual state of the person affected. In a similar way, I suggest that metaphors drawn from this framework can inspire new ways of thinking about chronic illnesses in organizations and alert us to different qualities of organizational miasms in the mind and their typical manifestations, for instance:

Disorders that are skin deep - based on deficiency or neglect of human and material resources (e.g. Unattractive or neglected facilities, poor public presentation of products, etc.).
Disorders of the passageways that lead into the organization, the processes, and structures which connect with the outside world and are diseased by excess (e.g., waste or hoarding based on greed, unmitigated competition, etc.).
Disorders that destroy innermost aspects of the organization, such as the ability of the organization to function as a unity (e.g., power or envy-based conflicts often fuelled with envy, fear, and aggression that lead to organizational splits or dissolution, irreconcilable differences among central figures, etc.).

The primary task of mind/body disciplines is specifically to contribute to well-being in human beings. On the basis of theories of interconnectedness and informational fields that transcend and link human

beings and other living and non-living entities, one may assume that there are patterns of relationships and processes common to individuals and groups and that thought patterns and emotions prevalent in an organization can be translated into organizational symptoms reminiscent of symptoms of the human body/mind. While there is not a one-to-one correspondence, an approach that uses metaphor from well-being on the individual is likely to offer new insights for the organizational level.

As Mark Johnson (1987) pointed out, the way we psychically structure experience is integrally related to the way in which we process reality through our body/minds. The ways we build, theorize, relate, and create all have a fundamental metaphoric link with the way we have processed reality through all of our senses. In a way, organizations can be seen as manifestations of the way in which humans physically and emotionally experience reality. We project onto organizations in their architecture, structure, and functioning aspects of our own psycho-physical experience. Does this mean, for instance, that on an unconscious level we may have common enough projections onto parts of the organization that are derived from our common psycho-physical experience? One of the well known images emerging during the early era of organizational development was that of workers as the hands of the organization who carried out the decisions made in the mind located in management. Separation of the "brains" from the execution served also to render workers less powerful and maintain power and capital among the elite of increasingly stratified industrial and capitalistic societies.

It is not unusual for writers to use body imagery when talking about organizational dysfunction or health. When Tom Peters used images such as "merger indigestion"(Peters, 1987,p.38) or "During the last fifteen years, most big paper companies have been hemorrhaging badly"(Ibid. p.68),he is perhaps tapping into an archetypal dimension of experience. In their book, The Healthy Company, Rosen and Berger used numerous metaphors of this type. "If American business is not yet in the coronary care unit, it certainly suffers from a severe case of structural arteriosclerosis."(1991, p.

xvii) "Values", they said "are the center of the enterprise; they circulate through every cell and artery of a company"(p.10) and they spoke of "a vital business that lives and breathes a healthy philosophy"(p. 11). Moss Kanter wrote that "increasingly the desire for 'fat' organizations, which relied on redundancy, encouraged overstaffing, and could afford to waste people on nonessential tasks, has been replaced by a preference for 'lean'" organizations with focused efforts." (Moss Kanter, 1997, p. 140). In another book, she said "some companies assume that if a little cutting is a good thing, a lot must be even better. They starve themselves into a state of organizational anorexia, the disease that occurs when companies become too thin" (Moss Kanter, 1989, p. 98).

These quotes show ways in which we tend to project onto the organization. They evoke the possibility that there are similar information patterns in dysfunction in individuals and organizations with parallel symptoms. Organizations are, after all, run by individuals who bring their basic way of thinking and feeling to their work environments. Indeed, an organization with anxiety around the issue of adequate staffing may develop something like organizational bulimia. The dynamic would probably involve fits and spurts of hiring and firing during stressful periods. The preoccupation about organizational leanness may develop into something like "organizational anorexia." This might be manifested in the organization constantly working at cutting down staff and the preoccupation with leanness taking precedence over and sabotaging the work.

The ways in which diseases are described in medicine are also only limited approximations of reality -- names, metaphors, and descriptions of phenomena rather than accurate and comprehensive accounts of cause and result. The relevance of this metaphoric way of looking at organizational phenomena must rest on its usefulness and the richness of information which it can provide. The proposal presented here is that exploring the organizational dynamics through mind/body prisms may offer diagnostic insights as well as possible opportunities for healing interventions. By

identifying processes in organizations that are reminiscent of certain diseases, one may look to the mind-body disciplines to explore what the typical thought patterns of an individual are associated with such symptoms. It may then possible to try to identify and transform similar individual and collective thought processes and images within organizations.

Summary

The group relations approach provides a way of looking at the symbolic, systemic aspects of thoughts. It explores the nature of collective projections based on common enough experience especially in the way that it activates behavior. Spiritual perspectives focus on the illusive nature of habitual relating resulting from ordinary perception. Work is directed toward liberating individual and collective attachment to concepts and cultivating a deep understanding of interconnectedness in a way that enhances love, community, and service. Mind/body perspectives offer metaphors that draw attention to the link between thought and physiology and the way thought is symbolically translated into physical symptoms. This can be imagined also in terms of the way thoughts are symbolically translated into physical manifestations in terms of organizational structure, behavior, and even architecture and design. An integrative approach works flexibly with metaphors from these different realms where appropriate. Such an approach recognizes thoughts, similar to emotions, as being "of the system" and steeped in common enough collective experiences, pictures in the mind and attachments to concepts. It recognizes that pictures in the mind, are accompanied by emotions and also somatic experiences, behaviors, and manifestations in the subtle energy field and physical matter and opens new opportunities for addressing this level of diagnosis and intervention in organizations.

CHAPTER FOUR

Roles, Task and Well-being

And what is it to work with love?

It is to weave the cloth with threads drawn from your heart, even as if your beloved were to wear that cloth.

It is to build a house with affection, even as if your beloved were to dwell in that house.

It is to sow seeds with tenderness and reap the harvest with joy, even as if your beloved were to eat the fruit.

It is to charge all things you fashion with a breath of your own spirit,

And to know that all the blessed dead are standing about you and watching.

Work is love made visible.

And if you cannot work with love but only with distaste, it is better that you should leave your work and sit at the gate of the temple and take alms of those who work with joy.

For if you bake bread with indifference, you bake a bitter bread that feeds but half man's hunger.

And if you grudge the crushing of the grapes, your grudge distils a poison in the wine.

And if you sing though as angels, and love not the singing, you muffle man's ears to the voices of the day and the voices of the night. (Khalil Gibran, 1980, p. 24)

This chapter addresses ways in which well-being can be seen as linked to essential tasks of the organization within the context of the larger system of which it is part and to the ways in which individuals, groups, and organizations take up roles in relation to these tasks.

Group Relations

Miller and Rice developed the concept of the primary task of the organization. A purposeful human system was seen as having a primary task -- "a task that it must perform if it is to survive." Within an organization there are multiple subsystems that need to be managed, each with their own primary task. The official primary task of the organization today may be seen as the mission or vision of the company. The primary task, they said, is not set in stone. They described it as "a heuristic concept which allows us to explore the ordering of multiple activities ...(and) to construct and compare different organizational models of an enterprise based on different definitions of its primary task" (Miller & Rice, 1967, p. 25).

The idea was to use this concept as a way of thinking about how to maximize processes that promote work and minimize conscious and unconscious processes that obstruct it. The assumption is that people will be more able to bring their full authority and creativity to their roles as appropriate to the task at hand when they are not activated by unconscious dynamics. On some occasions this will mean the authority to initiate and lead and at other times the authority to follow.

> Gordon Lawrence (1977) developed this idea of the primary task as a tool for examining organizational behaviour by proposing that people within an enterprise pursue different kinds of primary tasks. The normative primary task is the formal or official task, the operationalization of the broad aims of the organization, and is usually defined by the chief stakeholders. The existential primary task is the task people within the enterprise believe they are carrying out, the meaning or interpretation they put on their roles and activities. The phenomenal primary task is the task that can be inferred from people's behaviour, and of which they may not be consciously aware. (Zagier Roberts, 1994, p. 30)

The group relations approach considers the role of managers as creating the conditions that allow people to best manage themselves in relation to the normative primary task. The management role is conducted on the boundaries of the system -- those areas of transactions between concrete systems, psychological systems, and between these systems and their environments.

> The leadership exercised in this region can protect the internal sub-systems from the disruption of fluctuating and inconsistent demands from outside; but it also has to promote those internal changes that will enable the system to be adaptive and indeed proactive in relation to its environment. The health and ultimately the survival of a system therefore depends on an appropriate mix of insulation and permeability in the boundary region. (Miller Rice, in Miller, 1989, p. 12)

Looking at well-being in the group in terms of Bion's concept of the work group outlined in the previous chapter, a group is seen as healthier when its energy is successfully mobilized around furthering its primary task. The emotional life of a human system is so complex that the ability to take up one's role with appropriate authority in relation to the work is often very fragile. Group relations literature shows how participation in any group entity tends to evoke regressive feelings in members linked to early experiences in the family group. Some of the unconscious dimensions at work were outlined in the previous chapter. Among the feelings commonly evoked in groups are, for instance, dependency longings, tension between desire for individuation on the one hand and a sense of belonging and acceptance on the other, needs for recognition and accompanying fears of being exposed, and the desire for the love of the leader together with fear of competition it entails. All these feelings and more are likely to exist in any work group and to be disguised or hidden while influencing behavior in covert ways. In situations of ambiguity, tension, or conflict these feelings intensify, and the ability of the group to work is impaired.

Because of the tendency for strong parental projections onto the role of leader, the leader's personality powerfully affects the emotional climate of the group. For instance, a strong, charismatic, but unaware leader may encourage dependence and thus suppress the creativity and individuality of members and their ability to bring their full potential to the task. Competition around the charismatic leader's attention is also likely to be strong, in which case rivalry diverts energy from the work. When a designated leader is perceived as weak, other forms of anxiety may emerge. There may for instance be concern about the ability of the group to survive or to contain conflict or aggression from within or from the outside. By projecting his or her needs onto the group, the leader influences the emotional state of the system. A leader may have strong unconscious needs to be recognized for his/her wisdom, kindness, accomplishments, power, or even sexuality, and when unaware, will activate the group around the service of those needs creating dynamics that impair the work process. Bion (1961) described the mechanisms of dependency, fight-flight, and pairing as very common group mechanisms for dealing with anxiety, but they obstruct the work on the primary task and similarly can jeopardize the well-being of the system if the group gets locked into them.

In addition to emotions that arise due to recurring dynamics within groups, strong feelings may also arise in relation to imagined and real relations with other groups. This may be evident, for example, in dynamics between departments, daughter companies, or competitive organizations. Pride, humiliation, envy, fear, curiosity, aggression, and other emotions are often aroused around a group's sense of identity in relation to other groups.

Emotions in an organization are also influenced greatly by the nature of its primary task. For instance, an advertising agency is likely to engender emotional dynamics very different from those of a legal

firm or from a hospice. Much has been written in group relations literature about the specific way in which people in different organizations respond emotionally to the unique mix of primary task, the technology required to perform it, organizational structure, employees, and clientele. A classic study by Elizabeth Menzies Lyth examines the way in which "socially structured defense mechanisms become an aspect of external reality with which old and new members come to terms" (Menzies Lyth, 1975, p. 443).

In her study of a nursing service, she described how the emotional climate and the defenses against anxiety impacted the way in which the primary task of the organization was carried out. She showed how a social defense (a defense which becomes part of the system) "develops over time through collusive interaction and agreement, often unconscious, between members of the organization as to what form it shall take" (p. 443).

> The focus of anxiety for the nurse lay in the relation with the patient. The closer and more concentrated this relationship, the more the nurse was likely to experience the impact of anxiety. The nursing service attempted to protect the individual nurse from anxiety by splitting up contact with patients. It is hardly too much to say that the nurse did not nurse patients. The total work-load of a ward or department was broken down into lists of tasks, each of which was allocated to a particular student nurse, who performed patient-centered tasks for a large number of patients, perhaps as many as all the patients in a ward. As a corollary, the student performed only a few tasks for, and had restricted contact with, any one patient, and was thus prevented from contact with the totality of any one patient and his or her illness. (p. 444)

She went on to show how defenses such as depersonalization, categorization, and denial of the significance of the individual as well as detachment and denial of feelings were used in the system to defend against the anxiety of facing pain, illness, suffering, and death. These defenses, she said, manifested themselves, for instance, in an attempt to eliminate decisions by ritual task performance,

postponing final decision-making by an often inefficient system of checks and rechecks, collusive social redistribution of responsibility and irresponsibility, purposeful obscurity in the formal distribution of responsibility, the reduction of the impact of responsibility by delegation to superiors, and avoidance of change.

In considering social defenses in the training and role of medical doctors today, one may still find similar sophisticated structures and procedures such as controlled routines, time-limited meetings, white coats, and super specialization. These also seem to reflect mechanisms of depersonalization and denial that doctors use to cope with the anxiety aroused in their daily confrontation with suffering and death.

The group relations approach assumes that when a group is able to work with awareness and can adequately manage anxiety, it will be more able to carry out the primary task in the optimal way. One can look at Menzies Lyth's case study in terms of Lawrence's differentiation between the normative primary task, (the formal or official task), the existential primary task (the task people believe they are carrying out and the meaning they attribute to their roles and activities), and the phenomenal primary task (which may be inferred from people's behavior, and of which they may not be consciously aware). One may assume that the normative primary task was something along the lines of providing optimum health care to the patients. The existential primary task may be seen as the meaning that the nurses gave to their roles and activities and the phenomenal primary task to avoid the pain of treating the ill. When these three tasks are not aligned, as in the case described above, tension is created and energy is invested in oftencontradictory directions.

The differentiation between the three tasks provides useful parameters for thinking about task alignment. One implication is that it is important to articulate the normative primary task as clearly as possible in order to avoid ambiguity and conflicting interpretations. Secondly, it is important to provide an opportunity for exploring and aligning the meaning that the people involved in working on the task are attributing to it, as well as the way in which these links align with or deviate from the normative primary task. Finally, it is important to explore unconscious dynamics and defenses that may obstruct the work at any given time.

The group relations perspective sees the way in which individuals take up their role in relation to the primary task not only as the expression of an independent person but as an expression of the matrix of the system. The way this happens is explained in terms of unconscious communication and mechanisms such as projection and projective identification. Using these mechanisms, the group unconsciously colludes to activate behavior on the part of individuals and, in as much as behavior is unconsciously activated by the unconscious matrix material, the individual expresses something on behalf of the group.

As a function of these forces in groups, members and subgroups do not see each other realistically but, rather, project onto each other and interpret each other's behaviors according to their own inner world. Individuals and groups represent for others all sorts of identities based on their race, gender, profession, nationality, and other institutional affiliations. These identities which are unrelated to personality or skills evoke feelings and influence behavior.

The projections are triggered by what one individual or group may represent to others on the basis of political or institutional affiliations and formal roles as well as characteristics such as age, gender,

appearance, race, nationality, and profession. This means that the way a group colludes unconsciously to influence the behavior of a young White woman, an older White man with a military background, a Jewish person, or a person of Japanese origin would be largely determined by what these representative characteristics evoke in the group irrespective of the specific individual's personality or talents. The extent to which a person can manage him/herself in role depends greatly on his/her ability to maintain a sense of integrity in role rather than getting caught up in unconscious projections.

Alderfer commented that the unconscious transfer of information that occurs via projective identification is primarily a two-phase process that is both a defense against uncomfortable feelings and also a mode of communication that induces the unwanted feeling into another person in order to be understood.

> It begins with the denial and ejection of feelings which are inherent in a person's unconscious image (fantasy) of a situation. The person therefore alters his uncomfortable experience by imagining that part of it is an attribute of someone or something else rather than of himself.
>
> In the second phase of projective identification, the recipient of the attribution or projection is essentially inducted into the originator's scheme of things. He/she is subtly pressured into thinking, feeling and behaving in a manner congruent with the feelings or thoughts evacuated by the other. (Gilmore & Krantz, 1985, p. 1162)

Projective identification happens not only between individuals, but between individuals and groups and between groups and other groups.

> Projective identification enables us to understand a wide range of group and institutional phenomena. As various group members, subgroups, or organizational sectors come to symbolize or represent some unwanted aspect, they can serve as repositories for certain projected out elements and are then induced to enact these feelings or fantasies. (p. 1162)

Managing oneself effectively in role in order to be able to manage the primary task involves being able to manage the ongoing experiences of projection and projective identification. Through developing self-awareness and awareness of these processes, the individual is more able to identify these processes and avoid being drawn into them. Gilmore and Krantz suggested that the response of the recipient has an important impact on the experience of the sender. If, however, the recipient merely takes in the feeling and enacts the role projected onto him or her, the original meaning of the unwanted feelings or fantasies is confirmed and even reinforced. If however the recipient is able to become aware of what is happening and not be activated by it, the process can be usefully transformed into and through thought and meaning. Projective identification occurs not only between individuals but also between groups, departments and organizations, and between different socio-economic, ethnic, political, and other groups in society.

Kernberg (1980) has suggested that political strivings can be seen as the conscious or unconscious efforts of individuals or groups to defend their interests and expand their influence over other individuals and/or groups at their boundaries and is a normal aspect of institutional interactions. Miller (1983) added that the relations between two systems are political when one system is consciously or unconsciously attempting, or is perceived as attempting, to impose its goals and values on another.

The political dimension of group life can thus be seen as the way in which individual or group interests are linked with identifications with different social, cultural, professional, departmental, or institutional systems. These identifications may create tensions between interests that are task determined and those that are not. Affiliations generate real and imagined tensions of interests for the individuals or groups concerned.

> Each of us, of course uses constructs like this all the time as a way of imposing order and meaning on the world we perceive around us. They are related to personal myths and shared myths about the social order and the place of the individual within it. (Miller, 1983, p. 387)

Miller emphasized how we use such political constructs to classify people and added the dimension of the politics of personal identity which is influenced by the process of projection onto other's identity aspects from our own inner world . Based on the work of Szmidla and Khaleelee, he said that "Every interpersonal relationship is a political relationship involving continual negotiation of the boundary between me and not me, of the inline which represents how A sees himself and the outside line -- how B sees A" (Miller, 1983, p. 388) I would add that intergroup relationships can be seen in the same way.

Organizational life is fraught with politics of power, and sexuality and aggression are an integral part of these politics. Kernberg showed how the politics of gender and the accompanying sexual politics can be played out within an institutional system.

> The political equilibrium reached in the power struggle and the sexual tensions involving men and women as complementary or opposite sentience groups - are often played out at the top of the institution, as in the proverbial relation between the boss and his secretary and the chief doctor and head nurse." (Kernberg, 1980, p. 247)

> Oedipal and pre-oedipal regressive pressures may combine to activate the administrator's sexualized dependent relationships, typically that of "the great man" who is "babied" by "mothering" - often admiring and subservient and yet dominating women in his immediate "entourage".
>
> In general, groups operating under the basic assumption of pairing experience intimacy and sexual developments as a potential protection against the dangers and conflicts around dependency and aggression. Sexual pairing may also represent a real or fantasized escape from the dangerous and/or

> controlling group pressures in the organization; it may symbolize a condensation of oedipal rebelliousness against the "established order" with the defensive sexualization of more primitive conflicts around aggression and dependency. (p. 248)
>
> Thus, there may be sexually exciting and romanticized pressure around the administrator which fosters a sexualized bond between him and some administrative member of the other sex. Under optimal circumstances, this bond is expressed in a working relationship mildly infiltrated with sublimated erotic trends. Actually, a certain erotization of work relationships may be enhancing to the work group. But, when regressive pressures lead to crossing the sexual boundaries, a couple's sexual intimacy may not only bring about an exaggerated condensation of sexualized sentience of the work group, with consequent distortions in ordinary work boundaries and relationships, but may also lead to a freeing of the aggressive components related to oedipal conflicts in such sexualized relations, with a general breakdown of interpersonal relations in the system. In organizational terms it may be said that the sexualization of relationships among staff increases the level of aspiration to such an extent that ordinary gratifications at work will (sooner or later) fall disastrously short of such increased expectations, and a general breakdown of morale will ensue. (p. 248)

The management of oneself in role involves the management of the boundaries of the inner and outer realities and of what is within one's system and outside of one's system. Gordon Lawrence, who developed the concept of the management of oneself in role, saw each role holder as not only concerned with the

> management of himself in his role but (he) is also having to hold the management of the work group "in the mind". "In the mind" in this context, means that the individual in his role holds a *Gestalt* of the system as a whole with which he relates from his role, and that he can locate his work group as a system with the other systems of the enterprise. Consequently, decisions about the work and social life of the work group are located within that group, but have to be related to the realities of other work groups as systems with their primary tasks. (Lawrence, 1979, p. 45)

Just as multi-faceted unconscious dynamics impact the way an individual takes up a role within a system, similar processes determine the way in which an organization takes up a role within the larger

system. Hutton (1997) referred to the unconscious processes that occur between the organization and its environment. In thinking about the primary task of any organization, she questioned what that organization is being asked to do by society. In her paper she looked at the formal and informal tasks which society demanded of certain institutions such as centers for drug abuse and psychiatric institutions. Their respective primary tasks were formally defined as reducing the harm associated with drug abuse, enabling disturbed adolescents to develop into mature adults, and providing a decent quality of life for mentally ill people. But these organizations can also be regarded as serving to contain societal anxieties about the impulses and vulnerabilities around what might cause one to be extruded and marginalized.

This idea is echoed in the exploration of evil by McWhinney, who looked at the way certain organizations are created to hold and even display the shadow and abhorred aspects of society in order to manage the anxiety around them.

> It seems strange to discuss the "management of evil" when we typically work to wipe it out. It might better be called "managing the projections of our socially unacceptable desires", those which are acknowledged or hidden under euphemism -- that is what human civilizations have done.... We also create containers in which to display these evils, while fully containing them. Western cultures have always had their jails in highly visible locations -- even empty ones such as the infamous Bastille. Michel Foucault, in Madness and Civilization, suggests that each era has its particular focal projections. Each society rejects in some highly visible way certain aspects of its collective personality. (McWhinney, 1990, p. 12).

Similarly, Mc Whinney commented that the leprosaria serving the population during the medieval centuries were situated in highly visible urban settings. He suggested that these were the "projected

manifestations of the medieval abhorrence of the sensual; the damned were those whose senses were being visibly and painfully destroyed." (p. 13) During the age of rationality, Bedlam in London displayed the shadow side to all, and during the industrial era, sanitariums were the " holding pens for the shadow of industrialization."

> With the age of rationality, a new dark side needed to be managed. It was irrationality. In prior centuries, the insane were nuisances put aboard a Ship of Fools to keep them out from under foot. Now they were housed in full visibility; in Bedlam in London the citizenry paid to see their shadows perform in dark cages. The very buildings that had housed the lepers came to hold the now-feared insane person. Evil was managed; no one pretended "there were no shadows at high noon." And so this fear of the irrational has been maintained throughout the following centuries. Only in the last decade have we lost our concern for keeping them in visible display. Perhaps there is no better evidence that the Age of Rationality is over than the fact that Ronald Reagan could send the insane out to dissolve in back streets.
>
> There are many other shadows that have been so managed. For example, we might see tuberculosis as the shadow of the spirit that was denied in the age of the "Dark Satanic Mills" -- what could better have manifested the loss of spirit in the fetid factory environments than the contamination of the breath, the coughing and wheezing that crippled and killed. The Sanitariums were the holding pens for the shadow of industrialization. What then is the shadow of the new paradigm? What is being projected into the shadow even as we move into some great new world vision" (p. 13).

The well-being of the system, whether it be group or organization, thus is seen as depending on the way in which it manages the normative primary task. The extent to which the system is activated by unconscious dynamics and anxiety will have an effect on the well-being of the system. The more these dynamics are at work, the more the energy of individuals and groups will be directed into managing the anxiety and into acting out the unconscious fantasies and the predominant pictures in the mind. Enhancing well-being in a system entails creating processes for bringing these unconscious dynamics to the surface so that they can be liberated and transformed. Group relations training programs

provide opportunities for members to learn about the way in which these unconscious dynamics are at work in systems and the way in which the specific member tends to take up a role in relation to these dynamics. As individuals and group accumulate experience in these training programs they are more able to recognize their own dynamics as well as those of the system and more able to work with with awareness, choice and skill. Once the dynamics are surfaced they have less potency in activating the system unconsciously.

The Spiritual Perspective

The spiritual perspective contributes complementary ways of looking at the concept of primary task. Spiritual knowledge regarding wholeness, unity, and interrelatedness often includes the idea of the unique role or special purpose of each part or entity within the larger system. Each human being is seen as having a unique quality and purpose, the actualization of which is the evolutionary journey of the soul in this lifetime. Actualizing one's purpose is considered in these traditions to impact not only one's own evolution but also that of the larger system. These ideas are linked to concepts, such as unique lessons and potential of each individual, rectification of that which has been damaged or broken in this or past lives, and spiritual duty within the larger context or community. These stories can be seen as frameworks designed to give meaning to people's lives and to encourage an attitude of social consciousness and self-development.

In Jewish kabbalistic tradition, the spiritual evolution involves making right that which is damaged and distanced from the path of pure awareness and right action.

> Action that expands consciousness, that leads towards the revelation of the unity of all existence in God, is rectifying. Action that reinforces illusion or idol worship by denying the reality of the infinite is destructive; if it is done deliberately it is evil. No action is meaningless or without effect. Each man has a special purpose or life's work which is the major area of his tikkun; [i] this work, in turn, defines his true identity. The perfection of the individual is a necessary prerequisite for the perfection of existence as a whole. Therefore Judaism affirms that the world was created for the sake of each person. As each man's consciousness is the analogue of all humanity and the physical universe, to the extent that he is able to achieve purity of consciousness, all existence is illuminated. (Afterman, 1992, P. 105)

Ywahoo describes her Native American tradition as having a similar concept of special purpose.

> It is a common concept in Native American philosophy that we all have a purpose, a spiritual duty. The religion of the indigenous peoples teaches that we have a spiritual relationship and a responsibility with our entire environment. (Ywahoo, 1987, p. 77)

> So one goes on a vision quest to be sure one is truly doing the work one has come here for; to understand the seed that planted one in this time and place; to understand the sacred energy and the angelic guide that stands beside one, the protecting forces of life, the protecting angels of life. They too, are elements of the mind fire." (p. 77)

> In the circle of life we each have a special gift, a special function. In the Native worldview there is no in or out; everyone in the circle is necessary. The gift and function of each person are necessary for the benefit of the whole family of human beings and those that walk, crawl, swim, and fly. We are all relatives. It is this wisdom of compassion, seeing things in their balance, that is so significant in turning aside illusions of scarcity and bringing peace to our own hearts.(p. 163)

McWhinney has suggested that David Bohm's concept of the implicate order can be a useful metaphor for thinking about the inherent nature and potential which is to be unfolded. (Personal

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[i] rectification

conversation, July 2000). The explicate order which we can perceive with our senses is seen as a derivative of the implicate order which is primary, universal, and independently existent.

> The implicate order has its ground in the holomovement which is, as we have seen, vast, rich, and in a state of unending flux of enfoldment and unfoldment, with laws most of which are only vaguely known, and which may even be ultimately unknowable in their totality. (Bohm, 1980, p. 196)

Combining spiritual and quantum theory, Vernon Woolf (1990) suggested that every human being has a primary, controlling holodyne, a hidden order of the mind, which he calledthe "I" or the "full Potential Self." His theory of holodynamics is designed to help the individual and group "unfold the 'enfolded I' by clearing the channels of the mind of accumulated debris of immature and fractured holdynes" (Woolf, 1990, p. 33)

It is important to note the way in which similar ideas are emerging in the "Western informational matrix" as useful metaphors for thinking about self and organizational development and for raising consciousness. The aim here is not to delve into an objective validity of these ideas but, rather, to take their usefulness further within an integrated and applied context.

Bohm's concept of an explicate order derived from an implicate order where all is whole can be seen as linked with Jung's idea of individuating as a unique individual in the context of universal archetypes and the transcendent processes of infinity. Discovering and manifesting in an aligned way one's implicate purpose is part of this process.

The idea of the unfoldment of innate potential is reminiscent of Jung's approach to the unfolding of life. Stevens commented on Jung's psychology which he said actually became a cosmology, because he saw the journey of personal development towards fuller consciousness as occurring in the context of eternity. Jung, he said, saw the psyche as an objective part of nature and subject to the same laws that govern the universe.

> The infinite, the eternal, the imperishable were ever present and imminent for him as the bedrock of reality, all the more fascinating for being hidden (occult). "Life has always seemed to me like a plant that lives on its rhizome," he wrote. " The part that appears above ground lasts only a single summer. Then it withers away – an ephemeral apparition.... Yet I have never lost a sense of something that lives and endures underneath the eternal flux. What we see is the blossom that passes. The rhizome remains." (MDR)[2] The great secret is to embody something essential in our lives. Then, undefeated by age, we can proceed with dignity and meaning, and, as the end approaches, be ready "to die with life". For the goal of old age is not senility, but wisdom. (Stevens, 1994, p. 29)

Jung's spiritual approach to psychology drew attention to the unique creative potential of each individual. His term "individuation" refers to the lifelong developmental process through which a person gradually works toward developing his or her consciousness, self- awareness and self-expression, and uniqueness. Tapping into the creative wells of the unconscious and the illumination of the shadow aspects of the self furthers the process of actualizing one's potential. It entails recognizing the operation on the archetypes, as well as the inherent conflict of opposites.

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[2] Memories, Dreams and Reflections

> For Jung, aging was not a process of inexorable decline but a time for the progressive refinement of what is essential. "The decisive question for a man is: is he related to something infinite or not?"(p. 28)

The idea of the refinement of what is essential can to an extent be seen as linked with the group relations concept of primary task when it is shed of "noise" and interferences. The spiritual perspective, however, holds that what is essential or core is the unique potential linked with, nourished by, and in service of that which is transcendent. To achieve individuation, or to actualize one's essential, special, or implicate purpose may thus entail peeling off non-essential layers of personality, letting go of ego, transcending false perceptions and negativity, as well as tapping into one's infinite creative resources in service of the larger system.

In his recent book, The Soul's Code: in Search of Character and Calling, James Hillman put forward "the acorn theory" that each individual is born with a special calling. "You are born," he said, "with a character: it is given; a gift, as the old stories say, from the guardians upon your birth" (Hillman, 1996, p.7). In the book, he tried to bridge between psychological and spiritual concepts of calling.

> The call to an individual destiny is not an issue between faithless science and unscientific faith. Individuality remains an issue for psychology – a psychology that holds in mind its prefix, "psyche," and its premise, soul, so that its mind can espouse its faith without institutional Religion and practice its careful observation of phenomena without institutionalized Science. The acorn theory moves nimbly down the middle between those two old contesting dogmas, barking at each other through the ages and which Western thought fondly keeps as pets. (p. 11)

He recalled Plato's Myth of Er at the end of the Republic in which he set out the idea that

> The soul of each of us is given a unique daimon before we are born, and it has selected an image or pattern that we live on earth. This soul-companion, the daimon, guides us here; in the process of arrival, however, we forget all that took place and believe we come empty into this world. The daimon remembers what is in your image and belongs to your pattern, and therefore the daimon is the carrier of your destiny. (p. 11)

He mentioned the idea of Plotinus (A.D. 205-270) that the soul elects the body, parents, place and circumstances that it needs in order to develop in a specific lifetime. He noted also that Plato, on telling the myth, emphasized the redemptive and inspirational psychological function of the myth that allows one to better preserve oneself and prosper. In the context of this dissertation, based also on the inspirational function of metaphors, it is interesting to note Plato's recognition of the idea of the purpose of the soul as myth as well as the acknowledgement of the contribution of such a myth to psychological well-being.

> The myth leads also to practical moves. The most practical is to entertain the ideas implied by the myth in viewing your biography – ideas of calling, of soul, of daimon, of fate, of necessity, all of which will be explored in the pages that follow. Then, the myth implies, we must attend very carefully to childhhood to catch early glimpses of the daimon in action, to grasp its intentions and not block its way. The rest of the practical implications swiftly unfold: (a) Recognize the call as a prime fact of human existence; (b) align life with it; (c) find the common sense to realize that accidents, including the heartache and the natural shocks the flesh is heir to, belong to the pattern of the image, are necessary to it, and help fulfill it. (p. 9)

Rabbi Nachman of Breslov, a sage, mystic, and chassidic teacher who lived from 1772 until 1810 developed a holistic view of healing based on spiritual principles and the belief that physical ailments indicated ailments of the soul. He believed illness occurs when the soul has strayed from its purpose or mission in this world.

> In "Why do people get sick" Rebbe Nachman teaches that a person may become sick when he strays from his mission in this world, his (תכלית) (takhlit), while healing comes when he takes the first steps to direct himself to a higher goal. Our takhlit... is our ultimate goal or purpose in life. (Greenbaum, 1995, p.235)

What will the idea of calling, special purpose, or essential purpose offer metaphorically on the group level or organizational level? The idea of collective purpose is not a new one and can also be found in spiritual literature. Simine Forest's outlining of the different walls of the different nations mentioned before is an example of the idea of collective purpose. Ywahoo also described how not only the individual but larger groups also have collective purposes.

> Most significantly, each clan has particular spiritual responsibilities in maintaining harmony for the whole nation. (Ywahoo, 1987, p.184)

In Jewish kabbalistic tradition the idea of the collective purpose is also common.

> An individual's destiny certainly includes the unique mission he or she has in his or her particular life. But as Jews, our ultimate mission is to play our part as members of "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19.6), ruling over the angels through our prayers, Torah and mitzvot. When we rise to this mission we become true b'ney Adam, children of Adam, the pinnacle of creation. This is the ultimate healing. The takhlit of the Jewish People is the starting point of "Sound of the Shofar – Dominion. (Greenbaum, 1995, p. 235)

What would the metaphor of a special purpose of an organization imply? Individual purpose has been described as the evolutionary purpose that most fully expresses the evolution of the person's core potential in service of the larger system. Similarly, organizations can be seen as having a collective essential purpose within their concrete environments as well as in the larger cosmic context. If we take the idea of an organization as an energetic entity around which people connect and which they

affect and are effected by, the essential purpose will reveal the essence of the organization in the context of infinity, unencumbered by ego, accumulated illusory perceptions or confused motivation. In the same way that Jung saw the process of individuation as a "progressive refinement of what is essential," the organization must follow a similar process of ongoing refinement to discover and express its essential purpose. As people join and leave the organization, they can contribute to or hinder this process.

While spiritual perspectives describe the ultimate falseness of perceived boundaries, including those that separate the individual from his environment, many of the ideas of calling are nevertheless based on the notion of an individual who has a specific purpose. If we conceive of the perceived boundaries of an individual as reflecting a particularly dense dynamic energy field, the perceived boundaries around families, groups, and organizations can be seen in a similar vein. In the previous chapter, we discussed Mindell's concept of the dreambody as a relatively high field intensity and suggested a parallel concept of a collective dream body which can be thought of as a relatively cohesive dynamic energy field that links a group, family, organization, or nation as a whole.

The collective emotional and psychological matrix discussed in great detail earlier, is a relatively familiar concept. Defining a matrix only in terms of its emotional/psychological component, however, reinforces the perceived split between mind, body, and spirit. I suggest that collective matrixes can be thought of as having different intensities with emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual components. The different matrixes (individual, group, family, organization, nation, etc.) have different intensities, and individuals are aligned with them in different and evolving ways. The different intensities can be seen as dynamic ever-changing entities or processes with something that also has qualities parallel to what we consider a soul and a subtle body.

It is difficult to imagine the individual as an ever-changing entity as one does an organization, however, as Deepak Chopra said:

> If you could see your body as it really is, you would never see it the same way twice. Ninety-eight percent of the atoms in your body were not there a year ago. The skeleton that seems so solid was not there three months ago. The configuration of the bone cells remains somewhat constant, but atoms of all kinds pass freely back and forth through the cell walls, and by that means you acquire a new skeleton every three months. (Chopra, 1989, p. 48)

This description reinforces the idea of everything as process including the body that we falsely perceive as constant. It also corresponds with the Taoist notion of the self as one of the many illusions based on everyday perception. In our anthropocentric way, we tend to view people as creating the organization. However, we can perhaps see the organization as a manifestation of an energetic core principle around which people collect and disperse. The core energy or soul of the organization perhaps magnetizes and organizes members no less than members impact the organization. The synchronous meeting between the soul of the organization and the soul of the members provides an opportunity for spiritual evolution of the processes (not only the people) involved.

In the past, loyalty to an organization was seen as a value that was aspired to. Even though it may have been in his best interests to leave, the company man was encouraged by different forms of reinforcement to devote his life to the organization he worked for and was promised, in return for consistent service, pension funds and other forms of remuneration that discouraged leaving for other tempting positions. This value of company loyalty fostered from a dependent stance. The company provided a home, not always only a benevolent one, and loyalty of company to worker and worker to

company was expected. Today, with globalization and companies increasingly competing for skilled workers, the primary loyalty of the employee is rapidly becoming more and more to his or her own professional career rather than any company or organization. This can be seen as a counterdependent stance where emotional links and sense of commitment to a task, an organization, or the people involved in it are often denied. The spiritual perspective allows for a transcendence of the dependent or counterdependent positions. It opens up the possibility for viewing the relations between individual and organization as an impermanent yet deep convergence of service to the principles that both are able to serve through the coming together and alignment of purpose and potentiality at a particular point in time. The relationships that develop need not be based on a need (for instance for security) or fear (for instance of loss or failure) but on a recognition that this impermanent connection will last as long as the purpose can be served through it. Certain human relationships that develop through it may last longer: others may end earlier. It is not only the organization nor the person's career that is served through the coming together of organization and employee or group of employees but also the evolution of the principles all serve in the process.

The spiritual perspective regarding special purpose on the individual and collective level has many implications within the organizational context. It extends common concepts such as job satisfaction, self-expression, and self-actualization in new ways. Within this framework individuals are invited to explore for themselves what their unique contributions within the system may be, based on their unique qualities, potentialities, values, and desires. Similarly, organizations can be seen as having a collective essential purpose within their environments. One may ask, in what way is the special purpose of the individual linked with that of the organization in which he or she works? In what way can the organization create structures and processes for providing opportunities for individuals to actualize their purpose in alignment with that of the organization as a whole? Organizations can also

be seen as systems that provide individuals with opportunities to fulfill their spiritual purpose, and in doing so contributing to the purpose of the organization as a whole.

This perspective reflects a deep understanding of the interdependence of all human and non-human entities. It pushes the people in the organization to explore questions of the unique potential and role of service at different levels of the organization. Attunement to and alignment with special purpose is not an all-or-nothing state, nor is it immediately achievable. Rather, it can be seen as an ongoing process that provides ever-deepening challenges of growth and transformation in reaching greater levels of spiritual well-being. This does not imply a Utopian situation where everyone is able to become aware of and fulfil their essential purpose within the work environment. However, raising these questions as relevant both on the individual and organizational level and providing tools and workshops for people to explore this within the organizational context can enhance the quality of work, mutual respect, and appreciation of differences in the organization. It promotes a process of bringing out the best in people and of alignment around core values, and it refines awareness of one's place in the larger environmental context.

Obviously, such workshops and processes need to fully appreciate the resistances and fears people may have around working within these frameworks. Discovering one's potential often involves tapping into shadow parts of the self and touching the less nice aspects of one's own character. Spiritual processes are accompanied by the recognition that spiritual well-being entails an evolutionary path toward increasing alignment with one's essential purpose, and that the journey often involves encountering and transcending dilemma, conflict, and pain. The dynamic is one of ongoing learning and growth through increasing alignment of inside (the core potential/essential purpose) and outside (the core qualities and purpose of the larger system or environment).

Spiritual well-being can thus be seen as a commitment to constant spiritual growth and an ability to work with awareness, mindfulness, and carefulness in taking up the dynamic issues and challenges which constantly confront organizations. This would be encouraged and facilitated on the level of the individuals in the organization and the organization as a whole. Spiritual development entails working at discovering and expressing essential purpose, transcending dualistic prisms, fragmented paradigms, and habitual modes of engaging with reality in order to find new ways of creatively actualizing core potentialities. Essential purpose, like other concepts explored here, is conceived in a dynamic transformative way. The emphasis is on the evolutionary, changing internal and external conditions and perceptions which influence the evolution of what is considered purpose, and the focus is primarily on the intentionality that is brought to working with the dynamic conceptualizations of individual and collective purpose.

The ability to work on different levels of spiritual development can be explored in almost any realm. Democracy, for example, is a process often worked with from a fragmented and purely technical perspective. The focus becomes primarily the rules of the democratic game. When this happens the process is generally sullied with issues of power, influence, and corruption that only serve to reinforce pre-existing structural inequality and power relations. The humane principles on which the ideology is based are lost in the technicality of the rules, power struggles, and often subtle corruption and infringement on human rights that result from the legal misuse of power imbalances. A community that exercises democracy in a more spiritually mature way will be more concerned with the spirit and the humane values that underlie democracy than the technicalities. Such a community will struggle with the inevitable challenges to a truly democratic system by acknowledging complexity and will work toward transcending either/or conflict situations in order to guarantee the well-being of society.

At a discussion of the world forum of the United Nations broadcast on BBC on September 9, 2000, leaders spoke about the overt primary task of global institutions such as the World Trade Organization and the World Bank to protect consumer interests and decrease world poverty, while in reality, what is being protected is the existing structural inequality and corporate interests.

In other words, a society on a lower level of spiritual development may exercise the external framework of democracy without attending to or embodying its spiritual potential. In such cases, so-called democratic principles such as freedom of speech or majority vote are often taken to extreme forms that actually endanger the human rights which democracy comes to protect. The world, for instance, is currently struggling with what seems to be the effects of free expression taken in its simplistic form to the extreme degree. Adolescents, witnessing films of grotesque violence, are more and more perpetrating the acts that they witness on the TV screen and computer games. With a majority of one vote, the lives of almost half a population may be determined against their will. The problematics of this type of democracy has been graphically expressed in the latest elections in the United States. The conflict between the technical rules of the game and the anomalies, paradoxes, and questions of justice according to the spirit of democracy and the will of the people emerged strongly. Within this type of democracy it is typical for the sides to manipulate and interpret the technical rules to further their own interests rather than try to discover and be as loyal as possible to the spiritual aspect of acting according to the true will of the people. Organizations or communities dedicated to the actualization of their creative and spiritual potential will attempt to find transformative opportunities of growth within these dilemmas and solutions that transcend a technical framing of conflict or that serve agendas of fear and power.

Thus, in thinking about the primary task of an organization from a spiritual perspective, it is useful to think not only of the task itself but also the state of consciousness which one brings to the task. Aryeh Kaplan (1985) reflected on how meditation practice that develops consciousness can allow one many times to lock onto a similar state of consciousness in one's work, enhancing its quality. One of the words for meditation in kabbalistic literature, he said is the word "kavanah" which comes from the root to aim. He used the term "directed consciousness." It seemed that this type of directed consciousness which occurs in meditation and in fulfilling various commandments and rituals is similar to the meditative consciousness of mindfulness which Thich Nhat Hanh and other Buddhist teachers encourage to bring to one.s everyday living and working.

One may well ask what the essential purpose of a company that deals in tobacco or armaments may be. This question touches basic philosophic and spiritual issues of good, evil, free will, and predetermination which cannot be dealt with fully here. One answer, however, is that these companies and the people who work with them are expressing the disharmony and spiritual challenges of the system as a whole. In the same way that symptoms of disease develop in a body as a messenger of the unconscious, so these companies are symptoms of collective thought processes and patterns. They are enacting part of what is within all of us. Spiritual lessons are not always learned from places of advanced spiritual development. As in serious illness it is often the encounter with the darkest side that triggers the journey of transformation. These companies provide us with concrete, graphic externalizations of the collective dark side. As long as we perceive them from habitual vision -- as separate -- and use them to project onto them the persecutory, violent, abusive, sordid, and materialistic parts of ourselves, they will continue to exist. It is only when one is able to view them with a consciousness of interconnectedness that we are able to take back the projections and explore and transform those parts in ourselves. As people begin to acknowledge, reintegrate, and transform

those parts within themselves, these particular symptoms of the current malaise will begin to disappear. These companies have their own spiritual lessons and evolutionary path. As manifestations of the collective shadow side, it is not necessarily their special purpose that is relevant here but the essential purpose of the societies that create them. These phenomena function as important messengers of the collective unconscious and serve society by providing powerful mirrors of that which needs to be reintegrated and transformed. Companies that deal in destructive products, like any illness or crisis which touches the whole, serve to reawaken awareness as to the interconnected nature of reality. The challenge that faces society and its organizations is to awaken to the interconnectedness not only in times of crisis but also in times of health and vitality.

A spiritual journey led by management at different levels of an organization is beset with situations of practical, emotional, and ideological choice, conflict and dilemma, much of which is often handled with minimal awareness and mindfulness. The achievement of the spiritual level of functioning in an organization is thus a path that comes through choice, commitment, and awareness. As with the individual, the spiritual path is fraught with lessons, dilemmas, challenges, and conflicts which must be confronted and worked through to enable transformation and growth.

Mind/Body Disciplines

While mind-body disciplines do not deal directly with ideas of primary task or essential purpose, the mind-body approach to maintaining and enhancing the complex interdependent functioning of the different parts and processes of the human mind-body offers insight into what can be seen metaphorically as parallel concepts within the organizational context.

On the most basic level, the idea of the body as the vehicle for growth and spiritual development draws attention to the importance of encouraging knowledge and practice in these fields in organizations to enhance the mind-body-spirit of members. The more members in an organization function optimally in mind, body, and spirit, the more they can contribute these qualities to their work in service of their own and the organization's purpose. A person's work on his essential purpose or primary task will necessarily be enhanced when she brings herself in as whole a way as possible to it. The purpose or task will be effected if a person is mentally, emotionally, physically or spiritually lethargic, and imbalances in any of these processes may impact the person's ability to function fully. The assumption that derives from these fields is that for a person to function in an optimal way, the mind-body-spirit must be nurtured on an ongoing basis with a proactive approach to minimizing disease.

Andrew Weil distinguished between the predominantly structural Western view of healing and the predominantly functional approach of Chinese medicine that "concentrated on identifying body functions and clarifying their relationships to each other" (Weil, 1997, p.14).

> The healing system is a functional system of the body, not a structural component like the nervous system or the musculoskeletal system. Western medicine focuses more on structure than on function, with the result that conventional doctors learn a great deal about the body's structural systems and less about functional ones. Of course, in some cases – digestion and circulation, for example – structure and function are synonymous, but because the healing system does not correlate neatly with any one set of body structures, I cannot provide a line drawing of the healing system in the way that I could of the digestive system. The function of healing depends on the operation of all the systems known to Western medicine; it also draws on the mind and other nonphysical components of our beings. (p. 14)

Weil provided examples of some of the outcomes of these different approaches where "Western medical structuralists carelessly destroyed immune organs, whereas Eastern functionalists developed practical methods to improve their operation" (p. 15).

A mind/body approach to exploring purpose and primary task in organizations would, in a parallel fashion, take a functional view, looking less at the task of the structures themselves and, rather, at the different organizational functions and their interrelationships. Thus, instead of looking at the department of research and development in an organization, the focus would be on exploring the function of research and development and its processes throughout the system.

Weil argued that while most people take for granted the body as an organ that after the age of 40 begins to break down, he believed that much of the health problems that strike after this age can be averted. He saw them as the cumulative effects of unhealthy habits and patterns of living that are making themselves known for the first time. He regarded the defense or immune system as only one component of a "superfunction" he called healing and emphasized the ongoing maintenance and health enhancement procedures necessary to maintain optimum functioning of the different parts and their interrelated functions.

Because the many different mind/body disciplines deal specifically with well-being, one can use almost any as a potentially rich field for metaphors relevant to organizational life. Yoga, for instance, is one form of mind/body maintenance that is used in many stress management programs. Yoga uses asanas (postures) and breathing practice to enhance mind/body functioning in a holistic way. While certain postures are especially effective in opening the energy flow for certain organs, the intention is

the enhancement of the systemic and interrelated functions of the organs rather than the organ structures themselves.

In describing the different basic postures, Moyer (1993) said that backbends, for instance, open the chest, stimulate the nervous system, and increase vitality, whereas twisting postures help to neutralize the spine and give a gentle massage to the internal organs. Sitting forward bends, she said, are soothing for the nervous system and quieting for the mind and supine and resting postures leave one feeling rejuvenated.

Pullig Schatz also comments on the mind-body enhancement of the postures. When reading the following quote, it is possible to reflect on what these images would imply if superimposed onto organizations.

> Think of the yogic asana as mime – the architecture of each pose communicates not with others, but with the inner self. With the language of the asanas, one counteracts the feelings of helplessness and weakness so destructive to immunity. Each asana strengthens one's internal locus of control. The body becomes an actor, not a reactor. Self worth is enhanced.
>
> The vigorous standing poses exhibit strength and confidence and reinforce those personality characteristics, furthering internal locus of control. The backbends teach that flexibility, openheartedness, and strength can coexist. The forward bends demonstrate physically an environment safe enough from danger that vigilance can cease. The inversions and arm balances teach balance and poise in difficult and/or disorienting situations. One learns that when the mind is centered and the breathing quiet, energy can be directed into constructive solutions rather than wasted in the free-floating anxiety and helplessness so harmful to immune defenses. Self-imposed limitations relax as tight muscles lengthen and body carriage improves.
>
> The postures and pranyama provide the opportunity to explore the self and observe how it reacts to life's challenges and surprises. One's yoga practice can be a personal growth laboratory for

> working out in body and mind what can soon be applied to daily life. With time, one realizes that one can control how one responds to events, just as one can control how one responds to an intense stretch of the hamstrings or the fear of one's first full arm balance. (Pullig Schatz, 1993, p. 83)

What, for instance, would an organizational posture or asana mean? What kind of posture or positioning of an organization would develop the sense that strength and flexibility can coexist with openneartedness? How can an organization position itself to maintain poise in disorienting situations? It is possible to relate to these questions by seeking concrete answers such as teams for community projects or forums for creative thinking and so on. The spectrum of answers is infinite and needs to be custom created with depth and expertise for the specific needs of an organization at a specific time. The questions, however, are as important as the answers. In the same way that an individual is not necessarily aware of the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual benefits of yoga until he or she begins to practice it, so an organization is not necessarily aware of the fullness of well-being until the appropriate questions are asked and theoretical and practical knowledge is sought out.

> Yoga provides the means to become physically fit in the context of a philosophy that encourages positive health practices and personality characteristics. The body is no longer divorced from the mind and the spirit. Rather the body is the vehicle for growth and spiritual development – and the immune system becomes the guardian of high-level wellness. (p.83)

Metaphors derived from yoga practices designed to improve the functioning of the different organs and the system as a whole suggest processes one may need to foster in organizations. Yoga, for instance, considers activities of "stimulating, calming, energizing, building stamina or concentration, promoting sleep, internally soothing, and so on" as important for maintaining bodily function. Would there be important parallels in organizations, and what activities could be developed to energize, calm, or build organizational stamina? How can qualities such as mental strength, lightness, exhilaration and agility be fostered in organizations? Many organizational theorists encourage the creation of

nimble, flexible organizations and focus on structural solutions such as team- based organizations. Yogic asanas, considered as mime, convey to the self certain qualities such as flexibility, openheartedness, and strength, and by virtue of the ongoing practice actually develop those qualities.

Inspired by yoga and its emphasis on practice, one may begin to think of various forms of ongoing practice that encouraged a nimble organizational body/mind. Practice may take the form of creative simulations using meditation, visualization, and even movement, art, psychodrama, and other tools that engage the body/mind. Outdoor training programs with managers are already used in many countries with varying degrees of holistic awareness. Numerous dancers and movement therapists use bodywork with managers and teams to develop awareness of qualities they need to exercise in their work. Workshops, for instance, allow managers and employees as individuals and as teams to explore and develop their body/minds in relation to space, balance, groundedness, flexibility, softness, strength, extroversion, introversion, rhythm, pacing and so on. Ongoing practice of this sort provides not only the opportunity to become aware of the individual's and team's instinctive functioning but to consciously develop desired qualities.

As mentioned previously, the body aspect of work has been neglected. Only recently is it becoming part of organizational awareness. The field of ergonomics is developing, research is being carried out on the relation of work to stress and physical health, and more and more organizations are gradually introducing health programs and spaces for physical activity. In the group relations approach, we spoke of developing awareness of the symbolic aspects of somatic experience in organizations. Following the mind/body approach implies nurturing mind/body health as part of everyday organizational workstyle and as integral part of enhancing work on the primary task.

Yoga is described as developing the internal locus of control in the strengthening of immune defenses and lowering reactivity. The integrative and progressive practice of yoga holds wisdom developed over thousands of years which modern teachers adapt to today's context. The deeper the knowledge of yoga on one hand and organizational processes on the other, the more profound the application of its multifaceted wisdom within the organizational context can be. The ultimate processes will not only be based on analogy, but, rather, on an integrative life and workstyle based on the mind/body wisdom.

Yoga, tai chi, Reiki, acupuncture, and reflexology are some of the many mind/body disciplines that focus on well-being through the energetic prism. The object of these disciplines is to ensure the optimum energy flow throughout the mind/body in order to maintain optimum functioning of the system. Energy flow on the more concrete level relates to the oxygenation of the system and is linked to air and blood flow. These disciplines also address the subtle energetic body. The exploration of energy flow and obstructions in an organization can also be a useful metaphor. The different mind-body disciplines that focus on energy work with the functional (rather than structural perspective) as described by Weil and address different functions/primary tasks and the interaction between them.

An example of how these fields can provide enriching metaphors can be explored through the chakra system as applied to organizations. The chakra system has an evolutionary spiritual component and one can conceive perhaps of mind-body-spirit chakras in the subtle mind-body of an organization.

Caroline Myss (1966) created a table of the seven chakras in which she described their physical, emotional, mental and and spiritual dimensions. The following description of the first chakra located at the base of the spine at the coccyxis is an example of the way she addressed these on the individual

level. She suggested that the organs related to the first chakra are the base of the spine, the legs, bones, feet, rectum and immune system. The mental and emotional issues linked with this chakra she considered to be those related to social and familial law and order, the family, group safety and security, the ability to provide for necessities and to stand up for oneself. The first chakra she said is spiritually linked to the awareness of "all is one". The table sets out a similar analysis of each of the chakras. She referred to the first chakra as the tribal chakra , the second as the partnership chakra, the third, the personal power chakra, the fourth, the emotional power chakra, the fifth, the will power chakra, the sixth the mind chakra, and the seventh the spirit chakra.

Each chakra is also considered to have a particular color vibration and to be associated with a different energy state, element, sound, geometric shape, metal, gemstone and so on. (Anodea Judith, 1996). Based on extensive research of the chakra system as evident in different traditions, Judith linked, for instance, the first chakra located at the perineum to the psychological function of survival which results in grounding; the second located at the lower abdomen to desire and sexuality; the third at the solar plexus, to will and power; the fourth at the heart, to love and balance; the fifth at the throat, to communciation and creativity; the sixth at the center of the forehead, to intuition and imagination; and the seventh at the crown to understanding and knowing. She described the seven levels of the chakras as the vibrations that we can perceive with the naked eye similar to those of the seven colors of the rainbow. They can be opened through various exercises which also develop the corresponding levels of consciousness.

> At the inner core of each one of us spin seven wheel-like energy centers called chakras. Swirling intersections of vital forces, each chakra reflects an aspect of conscoiusness essential to our lives. Together the seven chakras form a system for modeling that consciousness that enables us to better see ourselves – in mind, body, behavior, and culture. This system is a valuable tool for personal and planetary growth. Chakras are centers of activity for the reception, assimilation and transmission of life energies. As all our action and understanding arise from and return to points within ourselves, our chakras, as core centers form the coordinating network of our complicated mind/body system. (Judith, 1987, p. 1)

The chakra system which is linked to different dimensions of consciousness and of concrete and subtle matter and to the emotional and physical well being and dysfunction in human beings, can perhaps provide a useful framework for understanding organizations. If the chakra system is a metaphor for a basic organizing pattern that manifests on macrocosmic and microcosmic dimensions, what can we learn by looking at organizations in these terms? Through such an energetic prism one may, for instance, explore functions in organizations as processes that permeate throughout the system rather than as confined to particular roles or departments where they are primarily located. A specific organizational function such as production or quality control can perhaps be seen in terms of the energy of the third chakra. One can then explore links between the way these are carried out in the organization and the emotional dynamics connected with that chakra such as trust, self-esteem, sensitivity to criticism. The insight about the spiritual challenge or principle related to that chakra, in this case what Myss refers to as the concept of "honor thyself," may also shed light on what needs to be developed so that that function can be executed optimally in the organization. Similarly, if one

looks metaphorically at the diseases associated with that function such as arthritis, a disease of the joints characterized by inflexibility and pain in movement, one may notice parallel patterns of dysfunction in the organization. Once again, it is important to emphasize that the knowledge about the chakras draws on traditions of thousands of years. The depth and richness of working metaphorically with the chakra system goes well beyond making the kind of loose and generalized connections implied here. The deeper one goes into the work with the chakras, the more profound the possibilities for insight and awareness.

Table One

Chakras corresponding with organizational functions

Chakra	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Perineum Red	**Lower abdomen Orange**	**Solar plexus Yellow**	**Center of chest Green**	**The throat Blue**	**Center of the forehead Indigo**	**Spirit Chakra**
	Survival roots and belonging	**Partnerships and sexuality**	**Personal power**	**Love, compassion, balance**	**Expression and creativity**	**Third eye intutition**	**Top of head Violet**
Organizational function	*Maintenance* *Administrative* *Financial* *Basic staff conditions*	*Creativity in the sense of providing space and opportunities for new ideas to emerge and incubate* *Partnerships* *Ethics and honor in relationships*	*Production* *Daily operation of task and its regulation (Transformation process of raw materials to output)* *Integration of new processes* *Personnel management* *Quality control* *Staff relations* *Remuneration* *Initiative*	*Relational interpersonal* *Customer service* *Emotional and motivational* *Entrepreneurial*	*Expression* *Realization of individual and collective potential,* *Information and communication* *Staff development* *Aesthetic* *Marketing* *Decision making*	*Cognitive intellectual* *Planning* *Data collecting* *Articulating* *Research and development* *Integrating*	*Values and ethics* *Visionary* *Community and environment development and service* *Inspirational* *Stewardship*

The table is a preliminary example of the way in which the chakra metaphor may be used to explore in organizational life. The ideas are put forward not as statements of fact but as concepts that need to be researched and developed in terms of their usefulness in organizations.

In the table I suggest the way organizational functions may be linked with the energy of different chakras. Further development of the concept would involve, for instance, exploring typical emotional and spiritual challenges and manifestations of well being and dysfunction in these different functions in organizations, learning from the way they are similar and different to those manifested on the individual level.

In looking at the roots of symptoms from this perspective, it is important to search beyond the particular department or organ. John Sarno (1998) argued that much of common back pain and sciatica has its roots in feelings of rage and grief and repressive attitudes toward expressing these feelings openly. Similarly, one may need to explore the roots of marketing dysfunction not in the marketing department but in the expressive energy and strength of will in the system as a whole. What, for instance, are the attitudes and emotions throughout the organizations that are blocking will, creativity, and self-expression? What are the spiritual challenges that need addressing? It is not sufficient to address only the attitudes and functioning where the symptom is most pronounced but to explore what the symptom is expressing on behalf of the system as a whole. One may need to look not only at the throat but also at the thyroid, the hypothalamus, and so on, as well as the interaction between them, and of course at the other bodily organs and the lifestyle and workstyle which impact them.

Yet another application of the understanding of energy flow in organizations is reflected in the field of feng shui, an age-old Chinese approach to working with energy in one's physical surroundings, buildings and their environments. Denise Linn (1995) combined knowledge of feng shui and her own Native American traditions for creating sacred spaces. Based on the idea that everything is interconnected, alive, and conscious, she works with the physical, emotional, spiritual and etheric energies which are constantly moving and swirling in any physical space. In her book, she described the way in which she worked with the energy fields of homes and work spaces by using intention (the energy of thought), the energy of the different elements, smells, sounds, light, and an understanding of the placement of rooms and of objects within the rooms in order to enhance the cleansing and the manifestation of intentions. Not quite acupuncture for the physical structure, this approach attends with great detail to maintaining and enhancing the energetic flow within a physical environment. Similar to the way in which different bodily organs have psychological and emotional correlates, so the different directions, room functions, shapes, and materials are considered to have different qualities and characteristics and have emotional and psychological ramifications. The placement and juxtaposition of rooms, furniture, objects and so on, all have a symbolic and energetic impact on what occurs in that space. Feng shui is an example of a practical application of working with energy flow within organizations which is gradually being integrated into Western cultures. The Chinese have for thousands of years developed their understanding of energy fields in the body, in the environment, and in the spaces which humans create. Exploring this wisdom can no doubt offer powerful new ways of working with the concept of energy flow in organizations.

The examples drawn from yoga, the chakra system, and feng shui, are just a small sampling of the way these and other holistic disciplines can offer insight into organizational primary tasks. At the outset, metaphors drawn from these fields run the risk of appearing superficial and vague. The object

at this point is not to provide in-depth comprehensive theories and tools but to provide thought-provoking questions and associations that can lay the groundwork for building useful theory and practice in the field and stimulate further discussion and research.

Summary

Exploring well-being in terms of role, function, and primary/essential task through these different prisms lays the foundation for an integrative framework that gives expression to the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual dimensions. While many organizations take their tasks for granted in the daily running of business, metaphors drawn from these fields raise questions that can promote a more whole way of dealing with the essential work of the system. An approach that synthesizes the three perspectives will look at the system in terms of the way in which it furthers its primary tasks. The definition of primary task will be defined in terms which give expression to the core potentialities of the system within the context of service to the specific environment in which it exists. Ways in which the organization can build its capacities to further its primary task will be developed by taking into consideration the different functions involved and the way the energies of these functions flow throughout the system.

The group relations perspective provides tools for working with unconscious systemic dynamics that impact the work on the primary task. It deals with the way in which individuals and groups unconsciously activate each other and are activated by the dynamics of the system as a whole, and how this influences the way in which roles are taken up in relation to the primary task. The extent to which unconscious dynamics drive behavior, the work on the primary task and the well-being of the system is jeopardized. This approach encourages learning about unconscious processes in order to be

able to liberate and redirect energy for work on the primary task. Identifying these processes also enables individuals and groups to take up their roles with the optimal authority and creativity rather than being unconsciously activated by what is being projected into them.

The spiritual perspective deals more with the need to explore the quality of the task itself and the quality of the intention of the individual or group in the way they take up their role in relation to the task. This perspective involves discovering and aligning the essential purpose of the individuals in the organization with that of the organization as a whole. It also emphasizes the development of the energetic intention and behavior individuals and groups bring to the essential task especially the capacity to work with a sense of love, service, and spiritual growth through managing and transcending conflict, pain, and dilemma.

Mind/body traditions which deal directly with the concept of well-being on an individual level provide a wide variety of metaphors for thinking about the optimal functioning of organizational systems. Such metaphors highlight aspects of individual and organizational task and role often neglected in organizational literature. Many mind/body disciplines already integrate wisdom from psychological and spiritual fields, and thus their contribution is particularly in linking the emotional and psychological with the physical realm. Ideas of energy flow and blocks that impact organizational functions, the link between the emotional, mental, and spiritual processes and their impact on the subtle body of the organization, and in the concrete and behavioral dimensions offers new arenas for exploration.

CHAPTER FIVE

Awareness, Health and Healing in Organizations

Awareness is key to well-being in all three perspectives. In this chapter I develop the discussion about the role of awareness in organizational well-being. Synthesizing the material presented from the three perspectives, I pay particular attention to awareness in terms of surfacing of latent processes: awareness as a tool for working with: managing and transcending pain in organizations: and awareness as process for cultivating love.

Healing and Awareness in Organizations

In discussing pictures in the mind and task and role in the previous two chapters, the process of making conscious underlying dynamics in organizations has been emphasized as an essential part of well-being. Bringing latent processes to consciousness does not only imply cognitive awareness but also greater attentiveness with all the senses to the fullness of the here-and-now emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of experience.

Here-and-Now Attentiveness

Group relations training involves creating spaces for learning through the here-and-now experience of participants. Members are provided with opportunities to learn about their own dynamics and those of the system by examining links between what occurs and what is expressed in terms of feelings, images, associations, and behaviors. The combination of action and reflection directs particular attention to the unconscious dynamics and repressed and projected shadow aspects in and of the system and the way in which individuals are given or take up roles in relation to these dynamics.

Numerous spiritual disciplines, in particular the Buddhist practice of mindfulness, also involve cultivating awareness of the here and now but with a different emphasis. The emphasis is not so much on learning about or analyzing what is going on in the individual or collective mind. It is more on noticing how busyness of mind interferes with the ability to be fully present with any task whether it be eating, reading, or working on a project. Rather than being preoccupied with future worries, past regrets, and the infinite pictures humans tend to project onto any situation based on previous experience, practices of mindfulness encourage what is known as "beginner's mind" (Suzuki, 1970), the capacity to experience fully and freshly the uniqueness of any situation. The practice involves also looking directly, as an observer, at disturbing thoughts and feelings. It entails surfacing them in order to be able to encounter the way they limit and cause pain. Awareness is not repressing what is considered ugly, evil, or unharmonious. It is looking at these elements more objectively, so that one is less caught up and identified with the related thoughts and emotions.

To develop the capacity of mindfulness to what one is doing, Jewish tradition has blessings for many everyday situations. These blessings, whether it be walking into a building or into a room, eating bread, washing one's hands, or eating the first fruit of the season, continually reawaken attentiveness and intention in the banal acts of daily living.

Mind/body traditions also emphasize the cultivation of awareness of here-and-now experience as an important factor in well-being. By being fully present to the most basic aspect of experience – the breath -- and by following the ongoing cycle of inhalation and exhalation, one is able to achieve deep levels of relaxation. (Benson, 1975) Attentiveness to the nuances of one's psychosomatic experience is encouraged in order to notice and deal with subtle symptoms before they develop or become chronic. The body is also seen as holding important knowledge. In his book Focusing, (1978), Gendlin discussed techniques for tapping into the wisdom of the body and for using the knowledge the body holds as a resource for guiding one in choices and behavior.

The learning about and through here-and-now experience by delving into less conscious aspects, attending to the body as a resource and guide, and cultivating being fully present in ones actions

together contribute in complementary ways to well-being which can be applied metaphorically on the organizational level.

On Light and Shadow:

The range of what we think and do

is limited by what we fail to notice.

And because we fail to notice there is little we can do

to change

until we notice

how failing to notice

shapes our thoughts and deeds[1]

(R. D. Laing quoted by Zweig & Abrams, p. XLV)

> The personal shadow develops naturally in every young child. As we identify with ideal personality characteristics such as politeness and generosity, which are reinforced in our environments, we shape what W. Brugh Joy calls the New Year's Resolution Self. At the same time, we bury in the shadow those qualities that don't fit our self-image, such as rudeness and selfishness. The ego and the shadow, then, develop in tandem, creating each other out of the same life experience. (Zweig & Abrams, 1991, p. XVI)

What is relegated to the shadow is not negative in itself, but, rather, it is those aspects which are perceived and internalized as negative through interaction with significant others whether they are parents, peers, teachers, media, and so on. The act of relegating to the shadow is not carried out with a fine-toothed comb, but in undifferentiated chunks. In the process, conscious access is denied to

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[1] (R. D. Laing quoted in Zweig and Abrams, 1991,p. XIX)

many valuable innate and archetypal potentials and creative wells that cannot thereafter develop easily.

> We see the shadow mostly indirectly, in the distasteful traits and actions of other people, out there where it is safer to observe it. When we react intensely to a quality in an individual or group – such as laziness or stupidity, sensuality, or spirituality – and our reaction overtakes us with great loathing or admiration, this may be our own shadow showing. We project by attributing this quality to the other person in an unconscious effort to banish it from ourselves, to keep ourselves from seeing it within. (1991, p. XVIII)

Zweig and Abrams reflected on the way in which the "world has become a stage for the collective shadow" (p. XIX). When we as a collective deny our shadow aspects, the compensatory nature of the psyche pushes them out in excessive and destructive ways. Jung viewed the psyche as "a self-regulating system which strives perpetually to maintain a balance between opposing propensities, while, at the same time, seeking its own growth and development" (Stevens, 1994, p.55).

> The psyche is a self-regulating system that maintains its equilibrium just as the body does. Every process that goes too far immediately and inevitably calls forth compensations, and without these, there would be neither a normal metabolism nor a normal psyche. In this sense, we can take the theory of compensation as a basic law of psychic behavior. Too little on one side results in too much on the other. Similarly, the relation between conscious and unconscious is compensatory. (Jung, quoted in Stevens, 1994, p. 55)

William Irwin Thompson looked at the unconscious systemic processes in society which are manifested in symptomatic products often discarded as noise. The noise then becomes emphasized in

a distorted and destructive way until it is attended to, but then it is already too late as a complex structure of negation and emphasis has been crystallized.

> The nervous system, in Bateson's descriptions, only reports on its products and not its processes; similarly, society only reports on its industrial products and not on the condition of its ecological processes. Economists will describe the conscious structure of a society in the ratiocinative language of quantitative measurement, and this conscious description is called the Gross National Product. The unconscious process, the actual life of the culture within an ecology, is peripheral to the value system and is experienced only as incidental pollution. It is paradoxical that although the GNP is invisible, and pollution is most visible, the abstraction is taken for concrete reality and the sensuous experience dismissed to the margins of society, where it is picked up by such marginal elements as artists, philosophers, and the generally disaffected. (Thompson, 1987, p. 167)

Thompson described how the repressed or negated shadow processes within a system becomes paradoxically emphasised in distorted and destructive ways. He presented eight theses for what he called a Gaia Politique. The following are taken from his third and fourth.

> 3. A World is not an ideology nor a scientific institution, nor is it even a system of ideologies; rather, it is a structure of unconscious relations and symbiotic processes. In these living modes of communication in an ecology, even such irrational aspects as noise, pollution, crime, warfare and evil can serve as constituent elements of integration in which negation is a form of emphasis and hatred is a form of attraction through which we become what we hate. The Second World War in Europe and the Pacific expressed chaos and destruction through maximum social organization; indeed this extraordinary transnational organization expressed the cultural transition from a civilization organized around literate rationality to a planetary noetic ecosystem in which stress, terrorism, and catastrophes were unconsciously sustained to maintain the historically novel levels of world integration.

> Human beings, therefore, never "know" what they are "doing". Since Being, by definition, is greater than knowing, human beings embody a domain structured by opposites by thinking one thing, but doing another; thus negation becomes a form of emphasis in which cops stimulate robbers, celibates stimulate sexuality, and science stimulates irrational superstition and chaos. In the domain of cops and robbers, an interdiction serves to structure a black market and a shadow economy. In the domain of religious celibacy, an interdiction serves to mythologize repression and energize lust. In the domain of science, the hatred of ambiguity, wildness and unmanageability creates a superstitious belief in technology as an idol of control and power; thus irrational experiments like nuclear energy and genetic engineering become forms of seemingly managed activity that generate chaos and disease. (p. 210)

While the works of McWhinney and Thompson are not directly from the field of mind-body disciplines, they show how collective symptoms can be understood in terms of the symbolic unconscious processes which produce them. In organizations, similar processes occur. The shadow side of an organization may manifest in physical symptoms of the individuals within the organization or in other forms of organizational disease.

In a previous chapter I discussed William Irwin Thompson's exploration of unconscious systemic processes (such as pollution) in society manifested in symptomatic products often discarded as noise. With the compensation principle, the noise becomes emphasized in a distorted and destructive way until it is finally attended to. By then he said, it is already too late as a complex structure of negation and emphasis has been crystallized.

When envy, greed, fear, anger, hatred, neediness, or desire are denied, they can, for instance, be rationalized into capitalistic or xenophobic theories or perverted into obese societies thriving on junk

food, pornography, and the poverty of others. The word "evil" comfortably holds within it an undifferentiated mixture of motivations, intentions, and behaviors. To ascribe to some person or act the word "evil" gives to the person or deed an almost innate and inevitable quality. By regarding it as innate or inevitable, we avoid exploring the complex dark web of pain and fear in the collective unconscious that nurtured the evil phenomenon and that needs to be healed.

The challenge lies in gently lighting those shadow parts so that they can be reintegrated, expressed, and transformed in creative ways. McWhinney (1990) suggested that the modern paradigm in a world where boundaries are gradually disappearing may be that of a fractal which casts no shadows. He warned that inevitably, if the fractal becomes the predominant paradigm, this too will trigger a compensatory reaction that we will need to discover.

In the meantime, however, the fractal metaphor may help to surface a relatively new creative way of working with dark and light as long as we are cautious not to get stuck with it. In fractals, the intricate interplay of dark and light form dynamic, aesthetic dancing patterns. The light is not a blinding one, and the darkness does not crystallize into malignant tumors that fester beneath the surface only to erupt at a later stage. The implication of the fractal metaphor is that if we are able to interplay dark and light, we are less likely to split the light into what we consider good and suppress the which we consider bad. The split between good and bad forces that which is in the shadow to crystallize extensively beneath the surface until it pushes to the surface in destructive ways.

A habitual tendency to make order in the world is to polarize, and this polarization often leads to shadow. In the latest management jargon for instance, we hear of male and female styles of leadership. There is a trend to compare and evaluate both styles and their relevance in different work

situations. But, in the attempt to define and choose one, we necessarily cast the other aspect into darkness.

That which is considered the typical male form of management -- the more active, assertive, directive, analytical mode, expels the feeling, intuitive side from the workplace. The denied feelings then drive behavior in the workplace from the shadow in the form of hidden anxieties around power, competition, fear, envy, mortality and so on. The female leadership style considered to be a more people-oriented facilitative approach often expels the so-called male behaviors such as certain kinds of assertive power, boundary creation and directiveness from the light. These qualities may then drive the organization from the shadow, for instance, in indirect power plays. In such an organization, informal hierarchical, bounded cliques may be subversively formed to compensate for the overtly denied need for clear work boundaries. In shying away from the masculine directive stance when it is rejected as power based and negative, organizations with female style leadership might run the risk of becoming manipulative with repressed power issues expressing themselves indirectly.

It seems that rather than developing theories about a desired masculine or feminine style of leadership, it is more helpful to think in terms of an integrative or fractal form of leadership. The fractal version leadership would be the ability for the system to access in a flexible, mature and dynamic way both the male and the female aspects at any given time. In most situations both aspects are needed, and optimally a person or group will have developed and integrated in a mature way both aspects in themselves so that they can move flexibly between the two in any situation as it develops. This is but one example of the many polarizations into good and bad, male and female, soft and hard, right or wrong and so on that is part of daily life and work experience.

Parker J. Palmer (1994) wrote about the importance of the inner journey, of going into the shadow so that one can lead in a more integrated way. He suggested that the shadow lives of leaders are inevitably projected onto institutions and society, and they need to look at the way this happens in order to lead differently. Among the numerous examples he gives of typical leadership shadows are those of insecurity about identity and worth and the fear of failure and death.

Palmer wrote that the deep insecurity of many leaders about their own identity and worth is often covered by an extroverted facade. The identity of many leaders, particularly men, is so hooked up with external institutional functions that the loss of these functions, he said, can be deadly.

> When leaders operate with a deep, unexamined insecurity about their own identity, they create institutional settings that deprive other people of their identity as a way of dealing with the unexamined fears in the leaders themselves. Here is a simple example. "I am astonished at the number of times I call an office and hear "Dr. Jones's office; this is Nancy speaking." The boss has decreed it be done that way. The leader has a title and a last name; the person who answers the phone has neither. (Palmer, 1994, p. 33)

The denial of death, he said, results in maintaining things such as projects and programs that are no longer alive and may never have been. This fear also involves the anxiety about negative evaluation and public failure. It is only the recognition, exploration, and understanding of the fear that allows one to come to terms with death as a natural and essential part of any cycle.

From the group relations perspective, the process of gently lighting the shadow entails an ongoing attentiveness to the symbolic messages of the collective unconscious matrix in order to explore

pictures in the mind which drive organizational behavior. When the roots of fear, envy, aggression, lethargy, and so on are discovered to be linked with collective pictures in the mind, rather than an unambiguous reality, unconscious energy can be liberated for work. As the mechanisms for the subtle projection of emotions between individuals and groups are clarified, people are able to function with greater awareness and choice. Becoming aware of the unconscious aspects that activate them allows them to more readily recognize it as it happens and to choose whether or not to take the projections in.

From the spiritual perspective, "lighting the shadow" involves looking constantly at the individual and collective illusions that are emerging in the organization with an attitude of attentiveness and non-attachment. The process from the spiritual perspective also entails bringing to experience a non-attached mindfulness, consciousness, and the experience of universal love it embodies. Shadow or darkness is seen as an absence of love and light and thus putting love and light (even in the ability to acknowledge and to look non-judgementally) in that place of darkness necessarily transforms it.

Mind-body perspectives emphasize the ability to breathe into those places of discomfort in order to allow for the energy there to be released and to surface and for the constant renewal of energy to occur in all the deepest darkest places of the body-mind.

The shadow that a collective entity such as an organization develops is integrally linked with its primary task, its members, and its environmental context. In my experience there is an interesting phenomena where shadow aspects of behavior often express a negative compensation of the exclaimed visions and values of an organization. Staffs in organizations that work with conflict resolution and mediation often report enormous tensions and serious communication problems

among themselves. Employees in social welfare organizations often suffer among the most severe working conditions of government employees. Workers in hospitals often complain of unhealthy working conditions with high physical and psychological stress that is not dealt with openly as well as cultures of insufficient sleep and unhealthy food.

In process work with organizations it is often helpful to take the mission statement and values of an organization such as "co-operation", "diversity", "equal opportunity", "innovation", "learning", and so on and to work with members on where, if at all, in the organization one might witness the inverse of the upheld values. Such conversations are often very revealing of the organizational shadow at work. While an organization may pride itself about diversity in its workforce that includes people of different races and genders, the shadow side may be an inability to tolerate a diversity of ideas or a diversity of disciplines. In an organization that prides itself in co-operation because of its team-based organization, one may often discover enormous tension and non-cooperative power play. The need in such an organization for individualism and individual recognition is often denied in favor of team values and thus gets acted out in aggressive sabotaging of teamwork and subtle competition for individual advancement. In organizations that uphold constant learning and change as part of their core values, ambivalence about or even the fear of learning and change is denied and cannot be admitted or explored. Various sophisticated ways are discovered to maintain the status quo and avoid learning that would actually contribute to deep change. Why does this happen?

One can explain these phenomena in terms of the shadow, those aspects of behavior that are considered undesirable and must therefore be disowned. In an organization that upholds the value of diversity, intolerance or difficulty with diversity, for instance, must be expelled. It is considered bad or wrong and cannot be admitted or explored! Any feelings of concern as to the actual advantages or

disadvantages of diversity, are judged as chauvinist and must not be expressed. Ambivalence and concern about diversity is repressed and necessarily acts itself out in the shadow. For all sorts of "very rational reasons", every time a person of color is hired, they leave within a period of a few months. Or, as mentioned, the fear aspect of the ambivalence around diversity may be expressed in a very homogenous professional orientation or belief system.

The three different perspectives suggest that becoming what we would like to be as individuals or organizations is not done through processes of upholding positive values and denying negative attitudes and feelings. The essential process is one of learning about what is, as it is, in all its complexity. It is a process of looking, seeing, facing, and acknowledging from a non-judgemental stance those parts that do not superficially coincide with our ideal picture of the self or the organization with which one identifies. Developing the ability to surface material from a non-judgemental observer perspective is in itself liberating. From an observer perspective, one is not identified with the thought but can view it more objectively. When something is seen or felt as it is, without fear, in its illusory, dynamic qualities, it is more likely that the illusion can be released or transformed.

If an organization wishes to improve its ability to work with diversity, it will need to explore the conscious and unconscious acceptable and unacceptable attitudes and feelings toward diversity. It will need to look at the concerns about bringing in people of different colors, skills, backgrounds, genders, ages, and what the pictures in the mind are about that. In a recent consultation with a woman who considers herself very liberal and works with organizations on issues of diversity, she described a sense of shock when she found herself making a prejudicial statement. Recognizing the

implicit prejudice in her statement allowed her to discover much about her own work and that of the organization she works with in relation to the difficulty in integrating those considered "other."

The group relations approach encourages a constant learning about what is going on beyond the manifest. In the case of diversity, for instance, it would encourage looking beyond the stated intent in order to identify deeply rooted assumptions that interfere in its full implementation. A situation where a series of people of color who joined an organization left shortly afterwards would be considered an expression of the ambivalence in the collective matrix rather than a series of understandable coincidences.

The spiritual approach provides a deep philosophy of diversity within the overall context of unity. In other words, it offers an evolutionary perspective of how things are when the illusions of separateness are removed. Everything is connected, but each part has a unique and complementary purpose within the whole. There is recognition that the process of overcoming fear of otherness is fraught with challenge, pain, and growth opportunity. The spiritual perspective would thus encourage an organizational process whereby the pictures/illusions in the mind in relation to diversity and separateness are looked at. Fears, boundaries, and concepts held in relation to diversity need to be surfaced in order to be transformed and released. This type of exploration would be done within the context of a deep understanding of interconnectedness and the transcendent function of love.

The mind-body approach might emphasize the integrative function at all levels of the organization. It would pay careful attention to symptoms and sensations in different areas of the organizational mind/body to discover where integrative energy is blocked. It might also advocate a proactive

approach of practice to strengthen the integrative organs in the whole organizational entity and open the energetic channels to and from these organs.

The following quote on virtue by Krishnamurti implies how "virtuous" mission statements and values are not sufficient in themselves. These values need to be practiced, and developed from within by recognizing, owning and transforming their shadow aspects. He brings in the role of working with fear on the one hand and love on the other in order to be able to learn in the here and now. Transformation is an ongoing process of liberation from judgements, assumptions and boundaries. The description of virtue reflects the focus in all three approaches of looking in the here and now, through direct experience at what is, as it is, and thereby releasing the illusive pictures in the mind based on past experience and regrets as well as future worries or expectations.

> Virtue is not the becoming of what is not; virtue is the understanding of what is and therefore the freedom of what is.... Reality can be found only in understanding what is; and to understand what is, there must be freedom, freedom from the fear of what is.
>
> To understand that process there must be the intention to know what is, to follow every thought, feeling and action; and to understand what is is extremely difficult, because what is is never still, never static, it is always in movement. The what is is what you are, not what you would like to be; it is not the ideal, because the ideal is fictitious, but it is actually what you are doing, thinking and feeling from moment to moment. What is is the actual, and to understand the actual requires awareness, a very alert, swift mind. But if we begin to condemn what is, if we begin to blame or resist it, then we shall not understand its movement. (Krishnamurti,1954, p. 45)
>
> Transformation is not an end, a result. Transformation is not a result. Result implies residue, a cause and an effect. Where there is causation, there is bound to be effect. The effect is merely the result of your desire to be transformed. When you desire to be transformed, you are still thinking in terms of becoming. That which is becoming can never know that which is being. Truth is being from moment to moment and happiness that continues is not happiness. Happiness is that state of being which is timeless. That timeless state can come only when there is a tremendous discontent –

> not the discontent that has found a channel through which it escapes but the discontent that has no outlet, that has no escape, that is no longer seeking fulfillment. Only then, in that state of supreme discontent, can reality come into being. That reality is not to be bought, to be sold, to be repeated; it cannot be taught in books. It has to be found from moment to moment, in the smile, in the tear, under the dead leaf, in the vagrant thoughts, in the fullness of love.
>
> Love is not different from truth. Love is that state in which the thought process, as time has completely ceased. (p. 287)

It is this state of intention to look, see and, learn in a non-judgemental and non-attached way that allows the shadow to emerge, to be surfaced to the light so that it can be integrated, transformed, and utilized in all its potential. The same energy that wishes to defend against a perceived threat of diversity can be recognized as a derivative of the deep need for preservation of the self. When the concept of self can be explored and transformed, the energy of fear can be released and used to strengthen and expand the sense of "self" in new ways.

On Pain

Your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding.

Even as the stone of the fruit must break, that its heart may stand in the sun, so must you know pain.

And could you keep your heart in wonder at the daily miracles of your life, your pain would not seem less wondrous than your joy;

And you would accept the seasons of your heart, even as you have always accepted the seasons that pass over your fields.

And you would watch with serenity through the winters of your grief.

Much of your pain is self-chosen.

It is the bitter potion by which the physician within you heals your sick self.

Therefore trust the physician, and drink his remedy in silence and tranquility:

For his hand, though heavy and hard, is guided by the tender hand of the Unseen.

And the cup he brings, though it burn your lips, has been fashioned of the clay which the Potter has moistened with His own sacred tears. (Khalil Gibran, 1980, p. 50)

In the stress of modern-day living, people tend to pay attention to their health when physical symptoms become chronic and excessively painful. Even then, they will generally seek quick fixes to remove pain and return to the same stressful situations and habits that caused the symptoms in the first place. The medical system and pharmaceutical companies cater to this trend of potions and lotions to relieve pain, and pills and ointments to cover the wear and tear of daily life. The system in the most cynical sense can be seen as an economic one created by and feeding off the fear of death. Similarly, organizational pain, is often denied and infections and disease fester beneath the surface. All three perspectives emphasize the importance of going into the pain in order to heal it and to use it as a growth opportunity.

The group relations perspective with its psychoanalytic base uses the experience of pain for growth. By deeply exploring areas of pain, the organization is able to gradually understand the internal patterns and images that create it and learn how to release and transform them. As mentioned before, the question which guides this process relates to the individual and collective pictures in the mind which are causing the pain or preventing a desired situation from being achieved. Fears related to survival, failure, rejection, mortality, and impotence are some of the deeper ones that drive

organizational life. Anxieties are translated into what David Gutmann called "hyperlife,"[2] a frenetic form of existence where there is little space for contemplation.

In the frenetic existence, pain is avoided through constant busyness and goal-oriented achievement. The pain is dulled, but so is the joy, and it is difficult in this state to function in a whole and aware way. The sense is one of people in the organization constantly being propelled forward but often of little identification with the what, how, and why of that which is being done. In this state of dulled awareness, individuals and departments often take up their roles in ways that are driven by automatic repetition of past experiences. In order to get out of these repetitive cycles, one needs to look at what is driving the system, but it is often considered too frightening (generally described as "useless" or a "waste of time") to touch the pain. The fantasy is that people may be hurt if the underlying feelings emerge. The fear could be that the pain would be so overwhelming that the individual or group will no longer be able to function. These fears propel endless cycles of repetitive and self-fulfilling behavior. It is only when the emotions and feelings can be fully brought to awareness that these cycles can be broken and behavior can be chosen with greater awareness. Among other things, the process of healing pain involves exploring unstated fantasies. It also entails studying the way in which different individuals and groups are being activated by each other in dysfunctional informal roles in relation to the primary task.

The spiritual perspective also encourages going into the pain as a source of self-knowledge and growth. Jack Kornfield (1993) described how very often what nourishes our spirit most is what brings us face-to-face with our greatest limitations and difficulties. In a Tibetan tradition, he said

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[2] Term used by David Guttman at the conference "Authority, Leadership and Transformation", sponsored by the International Forum for Social Innovation, Dourdan, 2000

that difficulties are considered of such great value that the following Tibetan prayer recited before each step of practice actually asks for them.

> Grant that I may be given appropriate difficulties and sufferings on this journey so that my heart may be truly awakened and my practice of liberation and universal compassion may be truly fulfilled. (Kornfield, 1993, p. 73)
>
> As we follow a genuine path of practice, our sufferings may seem to increase because we no longer hide from them or from ourselves. When we do not follow the old habits of fantasy and escape, we are left facing the actual problems and contradictions of our life.
>
> A genuine spiritual path does not avoid difficulties or mistakes but leads us to the art of making mistakes wakefully, bringing them to the transformative power of our heart. When we set out to love, to awaken, to become free, we are inevitably confronted with our own limitations. As we look into ourselves we see more clearly our unexamined conflicts and fears, our frailties and confusion. To witness this can be difficult. Lama Trungpa Rinpoche described spiritual progress from the ego's point of view as "one insult after another." (p.72)

Kornfield looked at different ways one can deal with pain and difficulty.

> Often we see only two choices for dealing with our problems. One is to suppress them and deny them, to try to fill our lives with only light, beauty, and ideal feelings. In the long run we find that this does not work, for what we suppress with one hand or one part of our body cries out from another. If we suppress thoughts in the mind, we get ulcers, and if we clench problems in our body, our mind later becomes agitated or rigid, filled with unfaced fear. Our second strategy is the opposite, to let all our reactions out, freely venting our feelings about each situation. This too, becomes a problem, for if we act out every feeling that arises, all our dislikes, opinions, and agitations, our habitual reactions grow until they become tiresome, painful, confusing, contradictory, difficult, and finally overwhelming.
>
> What is left? The third alternative is the power of our wakeful attentive heart. We can face these forces, these difficulties, and include them in our meditation to further our spiritual life. (p. 77)

Avraham Greenbaum told the story of King Hezekiah of Judah who fell mortally ill, and after deep prayer and introspection God performed a miracle and he was healed.

> The midrash throws light on the meaning of Hezekiah's illness. "Rabbi Levi said: Hezekiah mused, 'It isn't good for people to enjoy constant good health until the day they die. This way they'll never think of repentance. But if they fall sick and then recover, they'll come to repent their sins.' God said to Hezekiah, "This is a good idea. And I'll start with you!" (Bereshit Rabbah 65:9) Hezekiah saw that illness can have a positive side if it prompts us to examine ourselves. What have we been doing with our lives? How have we been using our bodies? What is our true purpose in this world? How can we attain it? (Greenbaum, 1995, p. 18)

> The story goes that Hezekiah put away the "Book of Remedies" which supposedly contained the accumulated wisdom of the Jewish People, thought to have been composed by King Solomon, Hezekiah's ancestor. Because the remedies were so effective he believed that the book turned sickness and healing into nothing but a mechanical process. "While the remedies it contained might alleviate their bodily ailments, the very effectiveness of these physical cures allowed those who used them to avoid confronting the underlying spiritual flaws to which their bodily ailments pointed. (p. 19)

Taking a spiritual view of pain in organizations involves first of all the willingness to acknowledge and confront rather than avoid or plaster over those areas that are conflictual and painful. The pain needs to be explored from the perspective of the spiritual growth opportunities that they provide. Problems from interpersonal tensions to wages and best strategy all offer opportunities to explore areas of fears, motivations, and intentions. What kind of illusions and attachments to boundaries and concepts are causing the pain? In what way is the organization straying from its purpose? What transcendent insights lie beyond the apparent dilemmas of hiring, firing, buying, selling, rewarding, motivating, rebuking, initiating, and terminating? In each area there are opportunities for discovering the painful way in which we attribute meanings to our own and other's actions and for connecting to

the deeper principles of transience, interconnectedness, and love, core to the development of consciousness.

At a conference I attended years ago, someone presented an exercise for reducing pain. He invited participants to scan their bodies and identify any area of discomfort. Having identified the area, he said that these sensations are not static and suggested that we enter into a state of relaxation where we just observe the pain, following its every little pulse and movement without judgement and without expectation. We should just breathe and observe the pain. We did this for a few minutes, and thereafter people shared their experience. Quite a few participants said that as they followed the pain, the sensation seemed to change and move and finally eased up significantly and even on occasion disappeared.

Homeopathic medicines are known to initially intensify the symptoms before clearing them. It is as if they invite whatever is happening beneath the surface to fully emerge and be expressed. This is opposite to the desire to try to find postures or medicines that avoid pain or immediately bring down fevers.

> This practice of immediately going for a drug to relieve a symptom reflects a widespread attitude that symptoms are inconvenient, useless threats to our ability to live life the way we want to live it and that they should be suppressed or eliminated whenever possible. The problem with this attitude is that what we call symptoms are often the body's way of telling us that something is out of balance. They are feedback about disregulation. If we ignore these messages or, worse, suppress them, it may only lead to more severe symptoms and more serious problems later on. What is worse is that the person doing this is not learning how to listen to and trust his or her body. (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p. 277)

Kabat-Zinn emphasized that pain and other symptoms are important messengers of the unconscious. Following this analogy my own conception of the process is that as messengers, the symptoms need to be welcomed and understood. They need to be given loving and interested attention without being sent away immediately in frustration and fear. If, for example, I have a backache and I am angry or frightened of it, I may try to ignore it by holding my body in such a way that it avoids the pain. The most instinctive reaction to pain is to hold one's breath, as if that will stop the feeling. The opposite is true. The body tenses, and the experience may even be more painful. Women before childbirth are taught how to breathe through the pain in order to ease the experience. Stress reduction programs and meditation programs teach breathing techniques not only to use with physical pain but in any stressful or painful situation. The ability to breathe with or through the pain maintains the energetic channels to that area open and avoids crystallization of the symptom.

What does this imply on the organizational level? Perhaps it evokes the need to pay "loving" attention to the painful symptoms. Not to judge them or fear them but to learn how to "air" them or breathe into and surface the dissonances and discomforts that exist rather than hiding them. At a recent merger between two organizations, one of the negotiating CEOs tended to underplay some of the concerns of his employees, fearing they would dampen the otherwise very positive atmosphere

in the talks with the other party. Encouraged by the facilitator to air the concerns, he discovered that the other party was more than willing to take those concerns into consideration and even gave him ideas on how they could be alleviated. Should he have continued to underplay and even hide the concerns, it is likely they would have grown beneath the surface and activated suspicion on the side of the other party and instilling tension and distrust into the process.

On love

> *When you love you should not say, "God is in my heart," but rather, "I am in the heart of God." And think not you can direct the course of love, for love if it finds you worthy, directs your course. (Khalil Gibran, 1980, p. 9)*

> *Where love is, there is transformation. Without love, revolution has no meaning, for then revolution is merely destruction, decay, a greater and greater ever-mounting misery. Where there is love, there is revolution, because love is transformation from moment to moment. (Krishnamurti, 1954, p. 288)*

To summarize a chapter with a section on love is no doubt suspect in an academic dissertation on organizational development. Love may be a suitable subject for the self-help shelves, but in the indexes of literature in the field of organization, the word "love" is conspicuous in its absence. Discomfort with the word can be understood in terms of the general context of the scientific paradigm that, over the past few hundred years, has split man from nature, spirituality from reality, mind from body, head from heart, and "work" role from the fullness of the person engaging in it. The rise of industrialization, capitalism, and technology intensified these splits as the possibilities for greater control over life, nature, human beings, and material goods have become increasingly enticing.

It is possible to identify what seem to be two parallel movements counteracting one another. The economic and political forces of capitalism continue to extract heavy tolls, among them the serious violation of the earth's resources and ecological well-being, the use of power to reinforce existing stratification and discrimination within and between cultures and countries, and the continuing rise in poverty and unemployment. The chasms between the haves and the have-nots fuel anger, violence, and despair. Stress and illness from work pressure, occupational hazards, and societies increasing alienation from a sense of meaning beyond material acquisition are but some of the symptoms of contemporary malaise. The vividness of these ubiquitous phenomena screaming out of television screens and appearing in one's own backyard have also brought about powerful ecological and human rights movements and a renewed search for meaning and humane and spiritual values. While much of the economy and politics of the world today is still embedded in a patriarchal Cartesian and mechanistic view, the systemic, organismic, and holistic approach that emerged over the last few decades is gaining momentum. Unfortunately, these are often experienced as mutually exclusive and even hostile to each other. The presentation of these theories as polarized only serves to reinforce the conflict and power struggle between those representing the two stands. Emphasis on employee well-being, for instance, may be seen as inconsistent with an emphasis on profitability and competition, and ecological considerations may be seen as jeopardizing availability of low-cost raw materials and waste disposal procedures. Much recent organizational theory centers on reconciling organizational success, productivity, and profitability with value-driven principles and procedures. This dissertation argues that a systemic understanding which integrates psychological, spiritual, and mind-body awareness can provide a helpful framework for reconciling both in theory and practice some of these apparently contradictory motivations and ambitions.

But even in recent holistic, value-driven system theory about global connections and community building, the word love is out of bounds. It is as if the only way to convince vibrant organizations of the need to look out for the world they live in is through rational arguments that prove scientifically and economically the interconnectedness of global community and our natural environment. None of the "touchy-feely love stuff" should be allowed to sift in! That is relegated to what still remains split off -- the emotional, spiritual, physical experience which does not have a place in the busy world of intense acquisition.

So, what is the fear of love in the organizational world? Perhaps, if not only the word but also the emotion seeps in, it may challenge the competitive and insatiable foundations on which the economy is based. If one loves people in an organization, how will one be able to carry out all sorts of financially based decisions that affect their lives? If one loves nature, how will one be able to carry out all sorts of purchases and policies that ultimately disregard and even destroy that which is loved?

Spiritual tradition, also exiled from organizational life, has love at its core. Love is the essence of consciousness, integral to the experience of the divine cosmic realm. In many traditions it is the ultimate existential truth. In spiritual terms it emerges and exists in that place where a person is beyond the illusions of separation - at one with all of God's creation.

As mentioned earlier, much of disease and dysfunction emerges in places that are split off. The shadow can be seen as those places within and outside of oneself that have been split off from the whole, where love or light cannot or has not yet touched.

Dean Ornish said:

> I am coming to believe that anything that promotes isolation leads to chronic stress and, in turn, may lead to illnesses like heart disease. Anything that promotes a sense of intimacy, community and connection can be healing. Most of us have had moments when we felt as if we were part of something larger than ourselves. Some describe this in a religious context as "God," and others in a more secular context as "consciousness." On one level, of course, we are separate: you're you, and I'm me but on another level we are part of something larger. (Ornish, in Moyers, 1993, p.105)

Attention needs to be paid in organizations to that which is isolated, split off, and rejected as unfitting, undesirable, or bad. As unappealing as they may seem, it is those split-off parts where love and energy cannot flow. It is revealing to look at where the sense of community is damaged. What parts or processes are excluded? What illusions lie behind the exclusions? How can these parts be befriended and reintegrated? It is not only in the workplace that love has been excluded, perverted, or commercialized and become one of the rarest of commodities but in many other aspects of society including in many cases the couple and family units.

Bernie Siegel (1986), a surgeon, was one of the first of a number of pioneer physicians who dared to speak out in the scientific medical community on the healing power of love in physical illness. What will happen when we dare to bring love back into the workplace? Not as slogans, but in the spiritual and most fully human, sense of compassion, intimacy, and community?

CHAPTER SIX

A Framework for Working with the Mental, Physical, Emotional and Spiritual Aspects of Organizational Well-Being.

In order to foster awareness of the different elements of organizational well-being it is important to enrich the repertoire of language and concepts used and to provide possible maps for the process. In this chapter I offer an initial framework for thinking about markers of well-being and dysfunction in organizations. In line with the thrust of this dissertation,I suggest a framework which identifies aspects of well-being and dysfunction evident in the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual processes and the interaction and synergy between them. As mentioned, the boundaries between these processes are illusions like any other boundaries that exist in the mind and are only valid in as much as they serve the conceptual function. The purpose of the schema is to allow these manifestations of well-being to receive more attention in the daily life of organizations. As more and more aspects become articulated, the ability to work with those areas is enriched. Developing the schema will be helpful until the metaphors and language lose their dynamic quality and become empty and no longer relevant within the emerging consciousness of society as it evolves.

To promote awareness in an organization it is also essential to be able to ask meaningful questions and to have vocabulary and integrative approach for discovering possible answers. I present an example of the type of questions that can be used to work with organizational well-being within the holistic approach suggested here.

Mental processes

Well-being

Healthy mental processes on the organizational level would be evident in creativity and generativity of task-enhancing ideas in the organization and in the effective flow of information within the system and between the system and its environment. When the organization recognizes concepts as not having absolute validity but as pictures in the mind that are supposed to serve a task, it will be more able to transform predominant existing paradigms and mind-sets with changing circumstances. A well organization will have a highly developed ability to sift, import, and creatively transform and integrate new knowledge and ideas into the system, adapting new models and theories to its unique character and needs rather than applying them formulaically.

Flow of information within the system can be seen as similar to the flow of information within the human body. Air and blood carry information to the whole system. Different organs need differentiated mechanisms to sift, sort, transform, and transmit messages in order to function optimally. Similarly, in an organization, vital information needs to flow to all parts of the organization. Not all parts of the organization need all the information and certainly not all in the same format. As the information enters the different subsystems or departments, it is processed and flows through them in altered form. Identifying, sifting, sorting, transforming, and transmitting information involves a great deal of skill, judgement, and awareness to enable maximum relevance to each organ and minimum distortion in these processes.

Information in the organization has many different forms. There is, for instance, harder information that can often be defined in descriptive statements and figures. This information may, for instance, be

related directly to the general technology of the organization or to the functioning of the organization in relation to its technology. It may also involve areas of policy, productivity, budget, employees, and updates about developments, creative ideas and decisions and so on. There is also soft information, for instance, information about the modes of working, the relations within the organization and between the organization and its environment, and the conscious and unconscious behaviors, attitudes, and emotions that exist within it.

The flow of information from inside the organization to its environment in a well organization will also reflect its dynamic quality. The information contributed to the environment will be coherent, accurate, and relevant and in some cases even novel and inspirational to those on the outside who are impacted by it.

Dysfunction

Dysfunction in the mental processes of an organization would be evident in a lack of the relevant creativity and generativity of ideas in the organization and in processes that block and sabotage the emergence of new ideas. It might also be evident in stagnation within particular sets of ideas and mental models. There might be problems with information flow and management such as the concentration and over control of information in different parts of the organization that obstructs the task; difficulty accessing needed information; too little, too much, or inappropriate information reaching different parts of the organization. Other symptoms of dysfunction may be indiscriminate or undifferentiated decision-making procedures that are not functionally determined. Often, these dysfunctional processes are reflected in a culture of misunderstandings and ongoing conflict between individuals and subsystems within the organization.

Emotional Processes

Well-being

Emotional processes indicating organizational well-being would be evident in predominant feelings among members of satisfaction, joy, high energy, enthusiasm, curiosity, fulfillment, confidence, belonging and community, desire, generosity, harmony with the environment, involvement, security, excitement, passion, and commitment to the task and role. These would be the predominant feelings, however, in any human system, especially in work organizations, emotional life is highly complex and evokes the full gamut of feelings and images including competition, envy, fear, rage, stress, anxiety, sadness, dependence, aggression and hatred. The existence of the latter feelings does not necessarily indicate dysfunction. Rather, well-being in the system would be evident in the ability to become aware of and acknowledge these feelings, to cope with them and transform them so that they do not fester beneath the surface until they become chronic and destructive.

Emotional well-being would thus be evident in a system which promotes confidence in the ability to identify, express, address, and manage in a satisfactory way inevitable painful feelings and conflictual situations. Managing these feelings and situations would mean finding ways to tap energy invested in the conflict and pain and transform it into energy which promotes work on the primary task of the organization in a manner congruent with and enhancing of the well-being of the individuals and the system.

The emotional processes of the system as a whole affect and are affected by the emotional life of the individuals. As discussed in the section on the group relations approach, the emotional processes in

the system as a whole are linked to the conscious and unconscious myths, images, symbols and assumptions that exist in the institution. The pictures that members hold in their minds of the organization and the people within it determine to a great extent emotional valencies. The question here is to what extent the "organization in the mind" of the group supports or sabotages the well-being of the members.

Emotional wellness may also be evident in cultivating philosophies and practices that develop the capacity for love, intimacy, and community in the organization.

Dysfunction

Dysfunction or disease in the emotional processes would be evident in predominant and ongoing feelings such as frustration, lethargy, stress, anger, pain, aggression, envy, lack of involvement, disharmony with the environment, low self-esteem, fear and alienation. In situations of competitive organizations where fear for one's position is high, these feelings are often covert. Dysfunction may be evident in mistakes, systemic misunderstandings, chronic lateness, difficulty in making decisions, dysfunctional staff turnover, chronic and sporadically erupting conflicts, scapegoating, accidents and absenteeism, cliques, rumors, covert lobbying, and subtle and unconscious sabotaging of the work.

The Physical Processes

Well-being

Physical processes in an organization are manifested in the aesthetics, hygiene, and maintenance of the physical structures. The physical processes also relate to the areas of productivity and profitability

and the ability of the organization to realize/materialize the values, aspirations, and creative energy within the organization. It is also evident in valuing the roles and tasks in the organization that are more physical in nature such as certain administrative tasks, maintenance, delivery and so on. Physical processes are also linked with physical health of the individuals within the organization. This is not to say that individuals in the organization are all physically healthy. The question is in what way the organization contributes to or impairs the physical well-being of the individuals in the organization. Sometimes there are periods of stress and intense physical overload that may build a person's stamina, but other times there may be ongoing pressures that lead to acute or chronic problems. Well-being in the physical processes may be reflected in philosophies and practices that encourage physical health, such as cafeterias with healthy menus and ergonomically suitable work environments.

The architecture, physical lay out, furniture, decoration, use of space, flow of air, light and subtle energy all have a powerful impact on the physical and emotional experience of the people within the organization. In a healthy organization, these aspects will be carefully tended to.

Dysfunction

Dysfunction or disease would be manifested in organizational processes that cause undue chronic stress and physical symptoms in the members. It would be reflected in the neglect and low maintenance of the organizational structure. There might be chronic problems related to the productivity and profitability of the organization and in difficulties in materializing the values, aspirations, and creative energy within it. Examples are ongoing problems with flawed products, delivery and servicing, cash flow, time management, and financial commitments. Dysfunctional physical processes may be reflected in a neglect of the practical and physical needs of organizational members such as insurance, work benefits, healthy food, clean facilities and so on. It may also be

reflected in a devaluation of those tasks and roles in the organization that are more physical as opposed to mental, intellectual, or creative in nature. These physical symptoms as mentioned earlier can be seen as symbolic messengers of mindsets, images, and dynamics in the organization as a whole.

Spiritual Processes

Well-being

Spiritual well-being of an organization will be manifested in processes that reflect a deep understanding of the interdependence of all human and non-human entities. It will be manifest in a sense of unique purpose of the organization to develop itself as well as serve the larger system of which it is an integral part.

Spiritual processes are accompanied by the recognition that spiritual well-being entails an evolutionary path toward increasing alignment with one's essential purpose and that the journey often involves encountering and transcending dilemma, conflict, and pain. The dynamic is one of ongoing learning and growth through greater and greater alignment of inside (the core potential/essential purpose) and outside (the core qualities and purpose of the larger system or environment). Challenges are seen as an expression of internal imbalance, and spiritual growth involves finding and recovering internal balance or centeredness in face of these challenges.

Spiritual well-being can thus be seen as a commitment to constant spiritual growth and an ability to work with awareness, mindfulness, and carefulness in taking up the dynamic issues and challenges which constantly confront organizations. Spiritual development entails working at discovering and

expressing essential purpose, transcending dualistic prisms, fragmented paradigms, and habitual modes of engaging with reality in order to find new ways of creatively actualizing core potentialities.

Another aspect of spiritual well-being is evident in the ability within the organization to recognize the illusory nature of everyday perception, to transform paradigms, and let go of attachments to mindsets that do not serve the essential purpose. The spiritually well organization will be less likely to reify operating frameworks and boundaries, recognizing them as concepts born in the mind which do not reflect an external reality.

Because the spiritual dimension contains within it a deep understanding of holism, the other dimensions are implicit within it. Spiritual well-being would thus be related to well-being on the other dimensions as well and to the synergy and flow between them.

Dysfunction

Dysfunction in the spiritual processes is evident in entrapment in dualistic, everyday perception. It is particularly evident in predominant attitudes and behavior that deny interdependence of individuals and systems and their environments and behavior. It can be seen, for instance, in dichotomous attitudes and approaches based on win-lose or either/or frameworks. Typical is the view of a choice between profitability and environmentally sound choices, or between aggressive competition and getting lost in the race, self-interest versus community involvement. To the extent that this is conscious, the motivating world-view is one that sees the promotion of interests of one individual or system as antithetical or conflicting with those of another.

Spiritual dysfunction is also evident in a lack of a sense of meaning in work and lack of connectedness with the larger community. In this case, dilemma, conflict and pain are often experienced as disempowering and need to be conquered or avoided rather than confronted and transcended.

The Relationship Between the Different Processes

The boundaries implied between the working terms "mental," "emotional," "physical," and "spiritual" are somewhat arbitrary and reflect only one level of reality. As much as these processes can be defined as separate they are all interconnected and in a sense aspects of one process which cannot be broken up into "real" fragments. The spiritual perspective can be seen as a meta-perspective, as it essentially embodies the holistic or interconnected view. Spiritual disease or dysfunction can thus be seen as manifested in dysfunction and disease in any or all of the other dimensions or in the relations between them.

Spiritual disease also manifests in the isolation of the different processes from each other so that they too may be seen as mutually conflicting or contradictory. For instance, emphasis on physical well-being without taking into account emotional, mental, or spiritual processes can lead to a culture that overvalues good looks and external signs of health, status symbols of wealth and power in their own right, where envy, greed and anxiety abound. An emphasis on the mental creativity and intellect in an organization without taking into account the emotional aspects may, for instance, lead to covert competition around issues of ownership of ideas. This, in turn, is likely to bring about a withholding culture that does not encourage creativity generated from fertilization of ideas among different people. Spiritual dysfunction can thus be evident in the overemphasis of one process over the others without understanding the integral interdependence of the different processes.

In working with an organization, it is useful to explore which of these processes are emphasized and which are background or neglected. Written materials, protocols from meetings, and discussions about the state of the organization can be looked at in terms of processes that are part of the repertoire of everyday discussion and those that are conspicuous in their absence. Each organization will require a unique balance of these processes. The learning edge of one organization may be to learn more about and integrate more the emotional processes, whereas for another it may be reintegrating the physical processes. The model serves to raise awareness of where these learning edges may lie and provide initial questions for thinking about their significance

Process questions

Mental Processes

What are the overt and covert predominant belief systems, paradigms, policies, and modes of working that drive the organization? Are they distributed among the different functions in ways that serve the task? When and how did they develop? In what way, if at all, have they changed over the years and how?

What relevant models/information exist in the external environment? In what ways can they be helpful for thinking about the work within the organization?

What enhancement of the existing paradigms has emerged or can emerge from within the organization?

In what areas have there been changes in thinking and working and why, and in what areas has there been continuity and why? In what ways do the continuity and/or the changes serve or obstruct the primary task?

What are the mechanisms within the organization for identifying and encouraging new and improved ways of thinking about the work and the organizational behavior, and how can they be enhanced?

What information in the organization is relevant to whom, and what are the structures and processes for relaying this information?

What access do different parts of the organization have to different pieces of information, and how appropriate or functional is this access?

In what way is information processed and transformed (metabolized) as it is being transmitted, and in what ways does this enhance or distort the information in its service of the task?

What kind of information in the organization is generally recorded and saved, and what kind of information is lost and how does this affect the work?

What kinds of information in the organization are concentrated where and why?

What are the predominant attitudes toward the different kinds of information in the organization and which are encouraged and given special attention and which ignored?

What does the way in which information is used within the system indicate about the unconscious dynamics and the pictures in the mind driving organizational behavior?

Where are the dysfunctional obstructions to the flow of communication, and how can they be unblocked?

Emotional Processes

What are the predominant feelings within the organization?

What are the pictures in the mind which people carry about the organization and the relations between the people within it, and what emotions do they generate?

In what way do these pictures and the emotional derivatives affect the well-being of the members of the organization?

What can be understood about the behavior in the organization by understanding the unconscious emotional life of the members?

What kind of archetypal familial and political relations are unconsciously being played out within the organization?

In what way do stories about the founding acts of the organization and its history impact the fantasies, emotional experience, and behavior of the members?

What are the mechanisms used to foster awareness of organizational relations and dynamics?

What are the predominant overt and covert conflicts, tensions, and dilemmas in the organization, and how are these dealt with?

What are the prevalent anxieties in the organization and what are the mechanisms used to cope with the anxieties?

Physical Processes

In what ways does the work in the organization and the organizational culture, policies, and dynamics influence the physical health of the workers?

How do the employment policies address the needs for physical health and material security of the workers?

In what ways does the design and maintenance of the physical structures of the organization enhance or obstruct the work?

What are the overt and covert attitudes toward the physical tasks and those who carry them out in the organization?

What is the state of those activities in the organization that relate to the physical processes such as productivity, profitability, delivery, quality control, service, and so on?

In what ways does the organization encourage and enable or obstruct the materialization of the values, aspirations, and creative energies in the organization?

What are the predominant somatic experiences of people in the organization, and what can that reveal about the organizational dynamics?

Spiritual Processes

In what ways can one understand the essential purpose of the organization?

In what ways are the essential purposes of the individuals in the organization aligned with the essential purpose of the organization itself?

In what ways does the organization explore, express, and enact its purpose, core potentialities and interconnectedness with and service of the environment (not necessarily using this particular terminology)?

How does the organization conceive of and deal with, transform and transcend challenges, conflicts and other lessons that carry potential for growth and learning?

In what ways are simultaneous perspectives of separateness and unity maintained in the organization?

In what ways are organizational frameworks and boundaries recognized as illusions created in the mind?

In what ways is the organization willing and able to let go of attachments to the past, to physical objects, worldviews, emotions, attitudes, and values when they no longer serve the essential purpose?

The Relationship Between the Different Processes

In what ways do the "mental," "physical," "emotional," and "spiritual" processes interact with and influence each other?

Which processes in the organization are emphasized and which less attended to, and how does this affect the well-being of the organization?

What are the pictures that emerge from the different subsystems, and what does this reveal about the conscious and unconscious dynamics of the organization and possible splits and imbalances among them?

In what ways can those processes that have been less developed reveal important opportunities for spiritual development and integration for the organization?

The Relationship of the Organization to the Environment

What are the overt and covert ways in which the organization impacts its human and non-human environment via its policies, products, culture, interactions with suppliers, customers, stakeholders and employees and their families and so on?

In what ways are the organization impacted by the environment, and how do these affect the well-being of the organization and the ability of the organization to fulfil its essential purpose?

Some of these questions may seem novel, while others are familiar. While the questions draw attention to different aspects of organizational well-being and dysfunction, the answers need to be understood within the context of the relevant areas of expertise as well as the overriding integration of

the three disciplines described above. Knowledge management, for instance, is a science within itself, but whether or not it is effectively applied and integrated into an organization will depend largely on the dynamics within the organization. The group relations approach may focus on possible unconscious processes that influence the manner in which knowledge management is implemented and adopted and try to identify those that impede its optimal functioning. It will look, for instance, at the way in which anxieties, assumptions, and issues around change, power, and control of information and unconscious ideas of who needs to know what and why impact the work on knowledge management. It will look to possible unconscious and symbolic aspects of behavior to try to understand the way in which it is conceived and experienced in the system, and in what way it is fostering or impeding the appropriate flow of information. What, for instance, does it mean that certain information was "accidentally deleted" or "accidentally" got stuck in one part of the organization? What could it mean that certain information was changed before it was passed on? What does it mean that the procedures of the knowledge management itself are occupying so much energy that little energy is available for actually dealing with the content?

The spiritual perspective directs the questions to the way in which the knowledge management serves the ability of the individuals in the organization and the organization as a whole to execute their work in a way that is meaningful and that gives expression to their unique potential and special purpose. In what way, for instance, is required knowledge available to a member of the organization who has a unique talent for and desire to develop new applications for a product, or to another member who has particular skills for packaging ideas, even if he is not in the marketing department? In what way do recurrent problems in the transfer of information reveal fears about insufficient resources, rivalry, and enmity and reflect a need to face these fears and work through them in order to cultivate a sense of community and interconnectedness?

The mind/body perspective offers questions that tap into other aspects of experience. Problems with knowledge management may, for instance, be somatized into the absence of members of the organization who hold key information and hence hold up the work. It may also be somatized indirectly in ongoing computer problems or loss of or confusion about information that was being transferred from one department to another. This perspective will look to the manifest phenomena for clues about what is going on and take a proactive or maintenance-oriented stance in looking for subtle symptoms and building up the information management muscles in the organization. Similar to the group relations model, questions about these symptoms would address the systemic unconscious meaning. Where are the energy blocks in the flow of information, and what can be inferred from them? What kind of behavioral processes can develop this function through practice? What needs to be understood from it, and how can that contribute to the healing? How is the specific aspect of the informational function that is not working optimally related to the other functions, and what is going on in that interaction?

The questions are designed to provide a conceptual framework for thinking about well-being and for furthering the exploration of ideas, issues and processes presented within the context of this dissertation. They also can serve as a catalyst for dialogue and open avenues for learning and intervention. It is helpful to use these questions separately for different subsystems/departments in the organization as well as for the organization as a whole. Answers which emerge from different departments may reveal important information about the dynamics of the organization and various organizational splits and imbalances.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Summary

This chapter sets out to integrate some of the ideas outlined in the earlier chapters. As mentioned, the purpose of the dissertation is to provide a new, timely, and evocative framework for thinking about organizational well-being. The suggestion is that existing knowledge in the fields of group relations, spiritual traditions, and mind/body disciplines together provide a powerful starting point for imaginative work toward this goal. The growing ranks of literature on health, soul, and meaning in the workplace reveal essential questions that are emerging from the organizational shadow. It is helpful but insufficient to provide enticing, lofty, value-driven, formulaic steps for how to promote health, and vitality in the workplace. To do so effectively involves understanding those individual and systemic processes that promote and obstruct the actualization of the intention. One needs to understand not only what should or could be done, but why the obvious is often so hard to implement. What are the unconscious pulls and paradoxes that reinforce existing splits and symptoms? Self and organizational development involves providing frameworks of knowledge and practice and ongoing processes through which self and group development can progressively grow in a profound and integrated way. Those who have embarked on intentional processes of self or team development will have encountered the intricacies, dilemmas, desires, resistances, conflicts, progressions, and regressions involved.

The choice and combination of the group relations field, spiritual traditions, and mind-body disciplines is not coincidental. All provide comprehensive (and complementary) process-oriented approaches that work toward developing self-awareness and system awareness and towards enhancing the way the individual, team, and organization takes up role within the larger system of which they are part. In The Act of Creation (1964), Koestler places analogy and synthesis at the heart of creative discovery. He showed, for instance, how the interlocking of two previously unrelated skills or matrices of thought was seen to constitute the basic pattern of numerous scientific discoveries. He also emphasized the role of ripeness in this process and argued that:

> The statistical probablility for a relevant discovery to be made is the greater the more firmly established and well exercised each of the still separate skills, or thought-matrices are. This explains a puzzling but recurrent phenomenon in the history of science: that the same discovery is made, more or less at the same time, by two or more people; and it may also help to explain the independent development of the same techniques and similar styles of art in different cultures. ... the more ripe a situation is for the discovery of a new synthesis, the less need there is for the helping hand of chance. (Koestler, 1964 p. 109)

Within the context of organizational development today, discussed in chapter 1, I suggest that the time is ripe for a new approach that synthesizes ideas from these three fields. In the West, the flourishing of the psychology of the unconscious, new approaches to spirituality and alternative medicine and mind-body disciplines seems to indicate that these realms embody important emergent information that resonates with contemporary society and provides clues for current needs and malaise. Group relations is already developed as an organizational discipline, spiritual concepts are already working themselves into organizational thinking and awareness of mind-body health, and vitality is evident in a variety of mind/body programs in organizations. Until now, the integration of these concepts has been minimal in mainstream work, and little has been done in the direction of

understanding the importance of their integration and complementarity. None of these stands alone, but together they can address the interplay of emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual processes in organizations and the links between them. In navigating the complex societal messages about the nature of success, it can be an exceptionally difficult process to find how one can authentically take up meaningful roles in the different institutions in which one works and lives.

The Holistic Approach: Complementarity and Synthesis of the Three Traditions

The following is a brief and non-exhaustive summary of some of the ways synthesizing the three perspectives can shed a more holistic light on some of the issues related to organizational well-being.

Systemic Understanding of Organizations

A holistic approach will pay attention to the symbolic representations of the system unconscious and the way in which these manifest in the subtle energy field, behavior, and somatic symptoms of members as well as in other non-human aspects of the environment. Such an approach will work with the idea of the illusive nature of organizational boundaries and the way in which these boundaries in the mind enhance or jeopardize the sense of interconnectedness with the larger context. Taking into account the importance of community, interconnectedness and collective thought, collective ritual, and practice that enhances a sense of connectedness and service to the larger system will be cultivated.

Task:

A holistic approach will look at the system in terms of the way in which it defines and furthers its tasks. The definition of primary task will be used as a heuristic. It will be defined in dynamic terms which give expression to the core potentialities of the system within the context of service to the

specific environment in which it exists. When relevant, such an approach will work towards the alignment of the normative, phenomenal, existential task and what has been defined in terms of "essential purpose". In doing so, the approach will look at the different functions related to the primary task and the way the energies of these functions flows throughout the system and between the system and the environment.

Role

The holistic approach will address the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual processes involved in the way in which the individual, group, and organization take up their role in relation to the primary task. It will also work toward surfacing those unconscious individual and collective pictures in the mind and dynamics that influence the way roles are taken up. Processes of discovering/ rediscovering alignment, intention, and fulfilment in role will be explored by addressing ambivalence, conflict, fear, dilemma, and dissonance as well as desire, pleasure, and satisfaction on the individual and collective levels.

Emotions

In the holistic approach, emotions in the system are considered not only of the individual but of the system and are often seen as located unconsciously by the system in certain people and manifested also in the subtle energy field of the organization. A synthetic approach will work towards revealing the unconscious dynamics, pictures, and projections in the system that are the source of emotions. Such an approach will encourage exploring and acknowledging emotions as they are, together with their physical and energetic manifestations, without judgement but, rather, by using awareness as a tool for transformation so that they do not unconsciously drive the behavior in the system. While working to surface and work with emotions of conflict, pain, envy, fear and so on, emotions of

compassion and love will also consciously be cultivated. Interventions may also be on the subtle energy level by using principles of feng shui, light, sound, color, smell, herbal mixtures and so on. Anxiety in the system that jeopardizes the work will be addressed by articulating its roots in pictures in the mind and working toward identifying and transforming counterproductive mechanisms used to cope with it. Holistic life and workstyle practices that nurture mind, body, and spirit will be encouraged to cope with anxiety and stress.

Symptoms

A holistic approach looks at symptoms as expressions of disease and dysfunction in the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual processes in the organization (see model outlined above) and in the interaction between them. Symptoms are considered to be important messengers of unconscious dynamics in the organization which provide opportunities for learning and growth. Symptoms of dysfunction and pain may be evident in behavior, productions and aspects of the environment (often of a symbolic nature) which reveal obstructions in the work on the primary task, as well as in painful or negative emotional states and destructive and alienating actions. This approach also attends to the physical aspect of symptoms both on the individual level and collective levels as well as in material aspects of the organization such as poor maintenance, problems with cash flow, delivery, quality of products, behavior such as chronic lateness and so on.

Healing and Health

A synthetic approach to healing and maintaining health in organizations will invest in constantly bringing to awareness attachments to concepts, unconscious dynamics, physical sensations, and blocks in the energetic field which are impeding the work of the system. It will develop practices to enhance the sense of purpose and connectedness of individuals to the system and of the system to the

larger environment. It will also develop practices to tap into the rich wells of the system unconscious in order to maximize creativity and actualization of individuals in the system and the system as a whole. Practices will also be developed to nurture the body/mind of the individuals in the system and to enhance the subtle mind/body of the organization. It will draw selectively on a wide range of methods from different traditions ranging from group relations workshops to yoga, meditation, role analysis, collective work with dreams, sensations (e.g. "Body, Soul, and Role" workshops), archetypes, and active imagination (Jung) in order to tap into the creative potential of the unconscious of the matrix and foster processes of refining self and group actualization.

A New Way of Working

While integrating these traditions is not the only way to frame a holistic approach to organizational well-being my suggestion is that at this point in time it can be a very effective one. Isolating any of the traditions and not attending to their interdependence reinforces societal splits described in previous chapters. The intention of this dissertation is therefore to stimulate theory and practice and possibly even the development of a new holistic discipline. To present a full-fledged theory or practice would be both premature and presumptuous. The intention is rather to open a conceptual ground for contemplation, reflection, imagination, poetry, and play -- a space where the reader is invited to adopt a metaphoric stance, look for possible similarities, and discover new conceptual and theoretical meanings in often familiar ideas.

The depth and breadth of the three traditions were only briefly alluded to. To draw on them fully and avoid shallow analogies and instant recipes requires deep familiarity with the theory and practice in each. The emphasis on the use of concepts from these disciplines as metaphors rather than

approximations of reality and on the adoption of a metaphoric stance is a methodology that directs attention toward the ongoing search for meaning rather than for ultimate discoveries of specific answers. To maintain the process as one of ongoing poetic and practical resonance, exploration, learning, and transformation, it is important to maintain the freshness of the metaphoric imagination together with an application-oriented inventiveness. This conceptual playground is only the first, but essential step toward the evolution of a new approach. Such an approach will necessitate developing expertise in the different fields and researching their application separately and together in organizational settings.

The Gestalt of Body, Soul and Role:

The title "Body, Soul and Role" reflects the intention to study the relation of these three aspects in everyday working life and through increasing awareness provide directions for enhancing and maintaining well-being.

At the recent conference "Le Corps, L'esprit et le Role" held in Belgium[1] a new event, the Dialogue Event was created to allow for exploring individual and collective contemporary unconscious images and myths that drive the interrelationship of body, soul, and role. For the event, participants were randomly divided into three groups: one group was given the role of "Body," another "Role," and the other "Soul." The aim of the event was to provide an imaginative space for exploring conscious and unconscious aspects of the interrelatedness between "Body", "Soul" and "Role" in the experience of

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[1] The international conference directed by David Gutmann, "Le Corps, L'esprit et le Role" held in Belgium in November 2000.

individuals and groups in daily life in institutions. Costumes borrowed from a local theater group were available for dressing up.

The event was divided into five sessions. During the first hour of the event, each group met separately to prepare for the dialogue with the other groups. The next three sessions were each divided into three parts. The first 30 minutes of each of these sessions entailed a meeting – a dialogue using different modes of expression between two of the three groups while the third observed. During the next 10 minutes, the observing group was invited to enter into the dialogue and express what they were feeling having observed the dialogue. The next 20 minutes each group again met separately to discuss what had transpired and prepare for the next dialogue. After the three sessions of dialogue, a plenary with all the groups and the consultants was held to reflect on the learning from the whole event.

The event was extraordinarily rich with what became a dramatic engagement. The dialogue allowed the members to unconsciously surface some of the underlying patterns in which they related as individuals and collectives to the three aspects. Each dialogue had a very different energy and dynamic.

During the first dialogue which occurred between "Body" and "Soul", there was little talking and what came across was a poignant and often nonverbal tension and almost mutually enticing but somewhat dangerous relationship between "body" and "soul" with recurring themes of the life and death. One participant from the soul group refused initially to stay within the circle and seemed to leave the arena where body and soul were engaged. One of the members of the body group enacted this by going to lie down next to the "soul" member who had left the group, and reflected the apparent

decision to "leave the body". Immediately other members, one from the soul group and another from the body group came to resuscitate the body that was lying down as if saving it from the temptation of death. The somewhat mutually enticing but dangerous relationship between body and soul was reflected in many ways including a spontaneous interchange of a sensual bullfight between a member of the soul group who took up the role of the bull once again, enticed by the red cloth held up by a member of the 'body' group. Some of the invitations from the other group met with a response others with rejection, but the engagements that occurred were relatively short lived. There was a general sense of waiting, expectancy and some passivity interrupted by the few interactions that spontaneously occurred generally characterised by an invitation of one group to a member of the other which was either taken up or rejected. One interpretation could be that role is an essential mediator between body and soul, both needing role to provide the meaning and channel of expression it provides. The meeting of body and soul enacted here lacked sustained meaning and substance that role can provide, hence the seductive, short-lived relationships that occurred between the two subsystems colored by an element of danger. Perhaps the soul can only find meaning and purpose in the body when it can express itself through a role in the widest sense of the term – otherwise it will feel entirely constricted and "wilt" in matter without meaning. The body, on the other hand, also needs the role to express its inner code and vitality, otherwise it too can decay.

The meeting, on the other hand, between the soul and role group had a very different quality. This dialogue was characterized by a very lively and often humorous interchange. There were a few interactions where the role group asked the souls what kind of souls they were in order to try to organize for them an appropriate role. Most interactions, however, were characterized by members in the role group very actively and often "seductively" marketing roles which they had chosen (such as cleaning woman, pharoah, ski instructor, preacher etc) to the souls who were inundated with many

attractive offers. The collective picture in the mind that seemed to emerge was one of souls being tempted into and then fitted into predetermined prescribed roles and given very little space to determine or mould the role according to their needs, desires, or unique qualities. Perhaps a not inaccurate caricature of aspects of today's job market? Without the presence of the body group, the interactions were very verbal, enthusiastic, and fleeting with an airy and non-grounded quality. The souls did not seem to actually take on any of the roles offered, and the interaction appeared to continue throughout on the hypothetical level of opportunities and incomplete negotiations. It was as if the absence of the body did not allow for the materialization or of the embodiment of the souls or the roles in any concrete or ongoing way.

The dialogue between the body and role group was also very revealing. In this case, the role group once again were active. The interaction was characterized by a very directive, in many ways authoritarian, even military relationship of "Role" ordering "Body" what to do. Each member of the role group chose a member of the body group, and for the first part of the session spent time giving precise instructions which the body was supposed to carry out, often to the body's feigned exhaustion. The quality of the movement and interaction was highly mechanical. When the groups decided to create the scene of an orchestra, each body was assigned a role – a person who stood by them and activated them from behind (trumpeter, pianist, conductor, etc.). The result was a short burst of music and then a decision to rest from the effort by enacting a picnic. The short mechanical and effortful interactions interspersed with resting seemed to reflect the interaction of body and role without soul. It was as if without soul, body in role lacks emotion, inspiration, and the possibility of sustained meaning and evolution.

This short vignette from the event reveals only a very small part of what transpired. The enactment provided members with an opportunity to look at the collective unconscious assumptions that emerged as well as the particular ways in which they as individuals took up roles in relation to these assumptions. One insight that emerged was of the hidden hierarchy in the mind of body, soul, and role with body being at the bottom of the hierarchy, ordered around as a machine or even as a slave by role. This provided some of the members with the opportunity to look at the way in which they negate or deny the wisdom of their bodies in their roles.

Members were able to begin to conceive of different qualities of dialogue between the three aspects. By surfacing the inverse or shadow side of the interaction which occurred in the dialogue many insights became available for work. For instance, rather than the body being enslaved to role, a role that not only informs but also is informed by the wisdom of the body may transform itself in interesting ways. The picture of role dominating soul in the interaction allowed members to explore the way in which they as individuals do not give full expression to their own soul and try to fit them into preconceptions of the roles they take up. One of the insights that emerged was that if the soul could become less reactive to role and more active and directive in the dialogue, and in doing so inspire and transform existing roles moulding them to be more in alignment with the soul's unique character. Another was that the soul can even create non-existing roles rather than being trapped into those society offers.

The dialogue or lack of it between body and soul seemed to reflect a picture in the mind of separateness of the two. The inverse opened a space for thinking about the way in which body and soul are integral to each other, and how actually body can be thought of as the means through which to access the wisdom of the soul and the vessel in which the imprint of the soul is embedded and through

which it can be expressed. This innate wisdom and intuition of the soul held in the body needs to be accessed, so that the roles can be most meaningfully and holistically taken up.

Artificially separating the three aspects for the purpose of the dialogue allowed for an imaginative and playful almost dreamlike space for learning both on the individual and collective level. Such events provide insight into collective patterns of behavior and processes in contemporary society that promote or obstruct a holistic approach to well-being in individual and collective roles.

Role is not a standard function or bureaucratic title that a person or group takes up in a formulaic way. The title of the dissertation, Body, Soul, and Role, underscores the fullness of experience of individuals, groups, and organizations in taking up working roles in the larger systems of which they are part. The assumption is that the more individuals and subsystems take up roles in integrated, aligned, and "whole" ways, the health of the system as a whole will be enhanced. (The term integrated refers to the integration of the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual aspects as well as the reintegration of those parts of the self or of society that have artificially been split off). Healing these splits is a central part of humanistic and psychoanalytic psychology with individuals, and authors such as Thompson (1980) describe these phenomena on the societal level as well.

In the earlier chapters I have discussed role within the context of the system perspective, in particular the way in which the role of the individual or subsystem impacts and is impacted by the informational field of the system of which it is part. The way in which individual and collective conscious and unconscious pictures in the mind of self, other, the work, and the institution influence the way role is taken up was addressed. I suggested that a role can be taken up more fully in relation to more integrated and aligned conceptualizations of task at the different levels of the institution. The

cultivation of awareness of the multiple aspects of experience was put forward as key to enhancing organizational well-being. The following section hypothetically develops a situation described to me recently by a surgeon. It illustrates the way a holistic approach can begin to broach the issue of individual, department, and organizational roles.

The surgeon described the waning of his passion for his work in the particular department. The department was becoming increasingly caught up in bureaucratic procedures, and the rivalry in the department was jeopardizing the ability to communicate effectively around the patients' needs. He was able to identify many dysfunctional aspects of the system. Doctors, for instance, would often not call on others for their expertise for fear it might influence their own position, nurses feeling undervalued used their power in ways that subtly undermined the work, and administrators used political and economic criteria for decisions which negatively impacted the health of clients. He felt, however, helpless in being able to do anything to change the system. This type of exponential cycle of alienation from self, task, and team is a common phenomenon.

A first step is to be able to acknowledge the difficulties. Often, even this stage in organizations is not easy, as there is often a tendency to deny difficulties in order to maintain a sense of order, control, and competence. Once the first step of acknowledgement has been achieved, there may be a desire to find behavioral solutions. The nurses and doctors, for instance, can be given clearer rules for work which require specific behavior. A committee of inquiry can be set up to look at the criteria for administrative decisions. While these medicines may have the desired effect, it may also be that they push the roots of the disease further underground only to erupt later in other more acute and chronic symptoms. Creation of new norms and rules of behavior may solve some of the problems but may also arouse further resentment and passive resistance toward the institution who works through rules

rather than discussion and dialogue. New ways of showing discontent and opposition will be discovered, and as long as the frustration exists it is likely that the work will continue to be jeopardized.

A variety of approaches exist to deal more deeply with the underlying dynamics. I will use this vignette to demonstrate some of the possibilities inherent in the integrative approach proposed here. The three basic requirements would be:

A professional/professionals trained in the integrative discipline.

The creation of an ongoing space for learning and development – a space for cultivating awareness in all senses of the term discussed in chapter 5.

The willingness to acknowledge, explore, and heal the roots of the symptoms rather than avoiding them or plastering them over.

If we develop the example further, we can imagine that on taking a closer look at different markers of well-being in the surgical department, one may notice, for instance, that staff tends to appear pale, tense, irritable, and tired. Their eating habits are irregular, often rushing a quick cake and coffee in between surgeries. Much time in between surgery is filled with paperwork, and there is little interaction among staff. The working environment is somewhat spartan with minimal investment in decoration. While the department is known for its expertise and professionalism, there is an undercurrent of concern that patients are not getting the full benefit of professional attention due to the internal rivalries, impaired teamwork, and conditions imposed by administration regarding special procedures. The emotional climate is tense. The surgeon describes it as characterized by loneliness, rivalry, distrust, and power play where mutual help is more of a power transaction than a natural part of teamwork. The dedication to the work itself keeps him there, but if a job at another hospital became

available he would probably consider it. He believes there is a general sense of undervaluation of the work – manifested both in the salaries as well as in the quality of interpersonal relationships. Some of the nurses, he said, also express a sense of feeling unappreciated by doctors.

One of the surgeons has just returned from an extended period abroad with knowledge about new procedures. This has aroused much ambivalence. There is an interest to learn and adopt the new techniques; however, there is also some resistance that he believes is due to envy, a fear of change, and a threat to the sense of competence and expertise. It is as if there is an attitude of "if we are the experts how can we learn from anyone else." On occasion, in incidents where the new techniques may have been optimal, decisions were nevertheless made to use other familiar procedures. There are grand rounds in the hospital for presenting new information, but there are no comprehensive or clear procedures for integrating new knowledge into the whole system. The hospital regulations demand doctors to publish in order to gain professional advancement. This puts enormous pressure on them to invest in research often at the expense of patient and team hours and of professional development in more clinically directed ways. As a result, the surgeon said, that much of the pleasure and satisfaction to be derived from the work with patients is diminished. In order to advance himself professionally, he is putting energy into areas of limited interest for him but not of passion. He feels it is hard to maintain his original vision of his role of surgeon and his deeper sense of connection to the profession. The moments of greatest satisfaction, he said, are those when he is able to use his inventiveness, skill, and training to find unusual solutions to complicated surgical situations, and when he is able to have quality time and deeper human encounters with patients. Both of these situations are becoming rarer as more of his energy is invested in routine procedures which others less qualified could as easily do, and his overall mood within the departmental context is often too tense and frustrated for the quality of interaction he knows he is capable of. He imagines that much of this is common to the others on

the team. Somehow the work seems less fulfilling; the sense of service and community integral to the profession is obscured behind layers of technical, interpersonal, and political screens.

This vignette describes some of the markers of dysfunction in the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual processes in the department. A deeper look would inevitably surface more, as would the different perspectives of others in the team and those in administration.

The holistic approach does not advocate a specific intervention for change. It brings a framework of assumptions about health vitality in organizations. Among these are:

1. Awareness is key to organizational health and vitality.
2. Organizational health can be promoted by attending to the way in which mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual processes and the interactions between them impact how individuals and groups take up their roles in relation to the task and the way in which the task is conceived.
3. An integrative approach drawing on concepts from group relations, spiritual, and mind/body traditions can offer directions for working toward improved health in the organization.

In the same way that a holistic medical practitioner or therapist can draw on an eclectic knowledge base and practice to decide what approach best suits a particular client, so the organizational professional refines the art of working creatively with the uniqueness of any situation. The thrust in this case would probably be to find ways of helping the team discover/rediscover personal and collective meaning in their work as medical professionals within the particular departmental context. It would also be to help them nurture and care for their own well-being so that they can bring themselves more fully and energetically to the task. The work will also involve looking at the way in which the department is unconsciously taking up its role in the larger system. The process involves

very sensitive and rich work that takes into account the anxieties, defenses, resistances as well as the desires, potentials, and capacities. While it is impossible to describe the intricate workings of such an intervention, it is possible to lay out some of the questions and tools that may be used.

The practitioner will need to create appropriate spaces to work on the issues. A central guiding question would be: What do the above symptoms indicate about the pictures in the mind of those within and outside of the department and the way these pictures drive behavior? (The surgical ward may, for instance, be perceived as an elite commando unit, the peak of the medical hierarchy for the brainiest of all, the only place of real medicine as it is constantly confronting the cutting edge of life and death, the profession of ultimate sacrifice of self for others in terms of years of study and "no hours are one's own", the most financially remunerative department, the leaders in science and technology, place for rational, razor-edge decisions, etc.). By acknowledging less conscious pictures in the mind and their origins and evolution, the practitioner needs to guide the members at looking at how these pictures impact the way in which they take up their roles. As these pictures emerge, they can look at how these contribute in some ways but limit in others the parts of themselves that staff members bring to their job. As a member of an elite commando unit or an exceptionally brainy super achiever, where is there place for doubt, human warmth, intimacy, insecurity, ambiguity, anxiety and so on? The group can also explore the way these images are reinforced by the other departments and even by society. Given all these pressures and expectations, it is likely that they may need to acknowledge and work through the way in which they have colluded with these assumptions, what the assumptions serve, and what the fears and fantasies are about reintegrating other parts of themselves in their work and allowing new pictures to emerge.

The integrative approach will allow them to more fully explore the range of the unconscious dynamics. The mind/body prism may, for instance, look to discover what is going on with the physical symptoms of the staff, the stress, exhaustion, headaches, and so on, and what that is saying about the system. It will also look to the actual work efficacy and difficulties and the maintenance of the environment to reveal the underlying dynamics. The headaches, in some ways, may symbolically indicate excessive "brain" work, an overvaluation of the mind, and a neglect of physical and emotional aspects of their being. The lack of sleep and nutritious food may feed into the picture of self-sacrifice. The spartan environment also may reflect a generalized assumption of precision, clarity, self-sacrifice, and denial or dismissal of the luxuries of emotional and physical comfort. Emotional assumptions can be addressed through discussion, consultation, multi-disciplinary workshops, and so on which, in turn, can elicit changes on the physical dimension, and interventions on the physical level can also have an impact on the emotional. Creating a warmer and more comforting environment with plants, comfortable furniture, and soft music can elicit a different emotional climate. Providing opportunities for regular and healthy meals can also impact the health and mood of the team as well as encourage more informal interactions around meal times. All of these interventions have an impact, but the impact is stronger when the different elements are addressed together.

The group relations prism may surface, for example, anxieties and fantasies of omnipotence and impotence in the face of life-and-death issues and work toward helping staff deal more comfortably and fully with emotional complexity, ambiguity, and imperfection. (This is obviously only one of many possible dynamics that may emerge). The spiritual prism may highlight how perceived isolation in task, fears about limited resources (money, position, and recognition,) and even issues around mortality have alienated staff from the deeper meaning in their work and from the potential for their unique expression of service within the larger system. A process of looking at what each person can

and wishes to bring to the system and how it fits in with the purpose of the department and the organization as a whole can be undertaken. Such a process does not involve stating lofty ideals but going deeply into the desires, potentialities, and meaning that people attribute to their work and discovering those assumptions that block this from manifesting. Confronting the reasons why things are not what is desired generally reveals important opportunities for growth by transcending apparent dilemmas and conflicts that stem from what Buddhists call "ordinary view". A doctor may, for instance, discover that his preoccupation with research and paperwork is a defense against confronting the pain of the individuals with whom he works. His spiritual and psychological growth opportunities may involve going deeply into himself to encounter his fears of pain, human suffering and intimacy. As he works through these issues more deeply, he may develop his ability to bring some of his insights and understandings to his work with clients and support them in new ways. In doing so he may redefine his primary task as a surgeon in a more integrative way. His primary task may now embrace also the purpose of providing emotional and spiritual support and wisdom to the client that accompanies and enhances the technical expertise he provides. On the other hand, the surgeon may discover that his real passion is in the research process, as it is there that he can most profoundly express his gifts and contribute new knowledge. Supportive exploration in this regard may allow him to acknowledge to himself that the work with clients is of less interest and puts pressure on him. He has forced himself to continue to work with clients because of a whole set of internal and external expectations. The acknowledgement of this feeling can have a liberating effect that may allow him to redefine his purpose and focus more fully and with less guilt and ambivalence on the research.

The task of providing optimal medical attention to clients can mean many things to many people. Redefining and refining one's own definition of task and adding to it different dimensions of meaning and growth opportunities fosters alignment and decreases unconscious ambivalence that jeopardizes

work. The process is geared to enable people to come to take on their roles in a way that is more aligned with their inner needs and potential and less with the host of self and other expectations internalized over the years. It is essentially an ongoing and dynamic one that involves confronting habitual assumptions, desires, and fears. The work with the individuals is done within the context of the redefinition of the primary tasks of the department and the role and task of the hospital as a whole.

The work with individuals on their role in relation to their specific tasks is intertwined with their team role that, in turn, interweaves with how the department takes up its departmental role in relation to the task and role assumption of the hospital. The way in which the doctors, nurses, and administrative staff in the surgery department take up their role is influenced by the way they are seen by others in the hospitals and the feelings and images projected into them. In the above example the effectiveness of the intervention will be enhanced by working separately and collectively with the larger hospital system in particular with the administration and by encouraging similar processes of multi-dimensional diagnosis and intervention. As the hospital administration works with the different dimensions that they as individuals bring to their roles as well as the collective role of the hospital within the community context, the dynamics in the hospital as a whole will gradually change.

The above vignette developed hypothetically begins to show the integrative nature of such an approach. From the example, one is able to infer something about the complementarity of the prisms on the diagnostic and interventional levels. It is important, however, to emphasize once again that even the boundaries between the three prisms worked with throughout the dissertation are theoretical and artificial and serve only to highlight different emphases. Many mind/body traditions, for example, have incorporated spiritual understandings. Spiritual practices often work with the body and breathing, and group relations like some of the mind body disciplines work symbolically with

symptoms to discover and transform underlying processes. The approach does not advocate one-time interventions but the integration of ongoing processes of cultivating awareness in order to work toward optimum well-being.

Some of the interventions appear to be directed more at the system through work with the individual while others affect the individual through working with the system as a whole. It is important to maintain both levels and the interface between them in mind. It is assumed that when a part of the system changes it necessarily impacts the system, and when the system changes it necessarily impacts the individual. The multi-level work needs to be done with sensitivity to the context. Revealing system dynamics may help an individual clarify how he or she is influenced by them in the way he or she takes up a role. System interventions of restructuring, setting up team discussion sessions, changing the physical environment, and so on naturally affects the experience of the individual.

A colleague, the manager of a consultation firm, described how he had recently discovered the power of his own personal change on the system in which he works. He has recently been working on his own spiritual development through practices of meditation and mindfulness. He has been looking into the way his issues with fear, anger, envy, and competition prevent him from coming to the work with a sense of love, compassion, and community he believes is vital to his own and the organization's health and vitality. Gradually, he began to sense that he has become less judgemental with his staff, more compassionate, and more able to relate to them as whole people rather than just workers who often did not fulfil their tasks as he would have liked them to. His increasing acceptance of himself allowed him to accept their imperfections, and he sensed he was radiating a different energy in his interactions. He expressed amazement at the results. The work of the staff seemed to improve, and they expressed much greater involvement in the task and even voluntarily stayed extra hours when

needed -- something they had refused to do until then. His surprise came from the fact that he had not tried to change them or the system but had focused on his own personal change and suddenly he discovered the system transforming itself around him. I shared with him the following story of the rainmaker.

> There was a drought in a village in China. They sent for a rainmaker who was known to live in the farthest corner of the country, far away. Of course that would be so, because we never trust a prophet who lives in our region; he has to come from far away. So he arrived, and he found the village in a miserable state. The cattle were dying, the vegetation was dying, the people were affected. The people crowded around him and were very curious what he would do. He said, "Well, just give me a little hut and leave me alone for a few days." So he went into this little hut and people were wondering and wondering, the first day, the second day. On the third day it started pouring rain and he came out. They asked him, "What did you do?" "Oh," he said, "that is very simple. I didn't do anything." "But look," they said, "now it rains. What happened?" And he explained, "I come from an area that is in Tao, in balance. We have rain, we have sunshine. Nothing is out of order. I come into your area and find that it is chaotic. The rhythm of life is disturbed, so when I come into it I, too, am disturbed. The whole thing affects me and I am immediately out of order. So what can I do? I want a little hut to be by myself, to meditate, to set myself straight. And then, when I am able to get myself in order, everything around is set right. We are now in Tao, and since the rain was missing, now it rains. (Jung, quoted in Chodorow, 1997, p. 20)

In working with human systems in a social science field it is impossible to articulate what actually happens. The work towards the holistic approach outlined here is constantly on those illusive and elusive boundaries between individual and system and within and between the three approaches used. It involves sensitively and skilfully managing the tensions between ones own views and belief systems and those of the clients and between the intuition and personal qualities one brings to the work and the theoretical models and traditions involved. Ultimately it is the ineffable, personal and group spark combined with art, knowledge, practice, and self-awareness brought to the role of

integrating these approaches that will determine its effectiveness and resonance with those with whom one works.

Summary

The implications of a holistic approach touch every aspect of organizational life, from day-to-day work practice to one-time interventions with a specific purpose. Whether an organization is defining its vision, planning strategy, or designing a new building, the assumption is that these actions will be more effective if the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual processes are addressed from an integrative approach inspired by group relations, spiritual, and mind-body disciplines.

As is evident in the discussions, shorthand phrases used to describe key aspects of the approach run the risk of sounding like instant remedies or empty stock phrases. Developing practices for "mindfulness practices" or "bringing unconscious system dynamics to consciousness," however, involves a deep understanding of the disciplines and traditions worked with throughout the dissertation. As mentioned before, "cultivating love" or "understanding interconnectedness" is far more than an intellectual grasp or banner holding of these concepts. It involves exploring the depths of the individual and collective psyche and facing those places of fear, anger, hatred, judgementalism and envy within. It is primarily by acknowledging, befriending, and understanding the roots of those emotions that one can move with intention through fear to love. The interdisciplinary approach provides the tools for doing this, by providing group relations based opportunities for learning, spiritually guided exploration of the predominant paradigms, or a variety of well thought-through combinations for the specific situation. Tapping into the creative wells of the system unconscious whether by incorporating dream work in the organization or work with images, metaphor, art

materials, or body work, involves highly trained professionals in these fields. The process is a lifelong one with infinite challenges and opportunities for growth. Similarly, other shorthand concepts in the table such as "working with the subtle body or energetic field of an organization" or "working with active imagination" are not simple recipes but enfold in them whole disciplines and spheres of knowledge and practice.

Professionals who practice group relations work have extensive theoretical and practical experience in working with the unconscious dynamics of systems. Their expertise involves a deep grounding in individual and group psychology and organizational dynamics. They also have personal experience as members in group relations conferences, where they learn about the conscious and unconscious processes in organizational systems as well as the way in which they themselves take up roles in relation to these processes. The kind of spiritual work with organizations described above requires professionals trained in organizational development who have also steeped themselves in spiritual practice, achieved a deep sense of their own purpose, and are able to integrate spiritual understanding with the very practical dilemmas and conflicts that face organizations. The mind/body work with organizations entails knowledge and experience with basic theory and practice of a variety of mind/body disciplines and an ability to conceptualize and work with parallels in organizational life. It may also entail experience of working with the subtle energetic level not only with individuals but also in groups and in physical structures.

The holistic approach attends to all these processes and requires extensive personal knowledge and practice in these areas as well as an ability to conceive of their complementarity and synthesis. The integration of the three areas of expertise is far more than the sum of the different parts, and the required professionals will need to be trained in all three traditions as well as in the way these can be

integrated in organizational work. What emerges is the need for a new discipline that provides opportunities for experiential and theoretical learning and practice in all these areas, and that works towards a synthesis of the three approaches to further the holistic theory and practice of organizational well-being.

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APPENDIX

The Tradition and Development of the "Body, Soul and Role" Conference

The conference "Body Soul and Role" is inspired primarily by the Tavistock- type group relations conferences. The group relations conferences were initiated in 1957 by the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations. They provide an opportunity for members to learn about human behavior in systems. The conference is set up as a temporary learning institution in which there are roles of staff and members. Staff takes on two roles in the conference -- the role of shared management as well as the role of consultant to the different events. There is a director of the conference and sometimes an associate director as well as administrators.

The conferences are generally residential and usually last between one to two weeks. The traditional theme of the conferences is "Leadership and Authority in Systems". The designs and themes of the conferences vary and have been developed over the course of the last 40 or so years both in Leicester where the conferences originated as well as by other institutions in many different parts of the world. While the conference theme and design varies widely, today the following description of a typical conference on "Leadership and Authority in Systems" illustrates some of the central premises and methodologies. The aim of the conferences, as the name suggests, has been to provide members with an opportunity to learn about conscious and unconscious behavior relating to leadership and authority in systems. Participants are able to study in the "here and now" of the conference institution the behavior in the system as it occurs as well as the way in which they take up roles within the different events of the conference.

Different conference events are designed to provide opportunities for different learning experiences. Each day is divided into about four to eight sessions of one to one-and-a-half hours each depending on the particular conference tradition. There are two types of events:

Here and now events: where the primary task is to study the behavior in the system as it unfolds. These events are the small study event, the large study event, and the institutional events.

Reflection events: Reflection events provide participants to reflect on different aspects of their experience in the conference. Reflection events include the opening and closing plenaries of the conference, the Role Application event and the plenaries of the Institutional event.

The role of the consultant in the events is to use her/his own experience in the event to promote work on the primary task. They do not take on the role of teacher, facilitator, or leader, and this often causes some confusion and frustration on the part of the members. But the way in which they take up the role of consultant is designed to provide members with an opportunity to learn about the fantasies about leadership and about different aspects of formal and personal authority.

By studying the way in which projections occur on a systemic level, members are able to learn also about the way in which they are activated to take up roles by the system and similarly, project onto and activate others. This learning is designed to provide opportunities for insight and awareness and thus increased flexibility and choice within one's role.

The small study group: The small study group usually of 10-12 members (with one consultant) provides members with an opportunity to learn about behavior in systems where the possibility of face-to-face encounters exists. These processes can be seen as parallel to the family group, social groups, and working teams. The members can learn about the way group processes occur in systems

of this size and the way they take up roles within such systems. These groups are generally held once or twice a day.

The large study group: The large study group in which all the members participate is also held once or twice a day for most of the conference. Three to four consultants work with the large group. The seating arrangements are traditionally in a spiral form so that members are seated an extending circular way, with people in front of them and behind them so that usually they cannot see or at least have face-to-face contact with many other members. These groups evoke the dynamics of a crowd or an anonymous large organization and sometimes even societal dynamics.

The institutional event that occurs over the space of a few days has two parts:

The inter-system event: Participants are invited to divide into groups and to study the relationships and relatedness within and between systems. Relatedness to other groups refers to the way in which members hold or imagine the other groups in their minds. This event provides the opportunity for members to examine the way in which groups are formed and the behavior which occurs within and between groups, in particular the way in which fantasies and myths about other groups emerge and the way in which different individuals and groups take up roles in relation to each other and to the system as a whole.

The second part of **the institutional event** focuses on learning about the relationship and relatedness which occurs between members and management. In this event the members are again invited to divide themselves into groups. The management of the conference -- the director, associate director, administrators, and sometimes one or two other staff members -- take on the role of active management and manage the event in public (open to observation). Other staff members work with the groups as consultants when the groups request consultation. Members are given an opportunity, in the "here and now" of the conference, to explore the way in which individuals and subsystems relate

to management and especially the way in which myths and fantasies about management determine behavior in institutional settings.

The role analysis group: These groups of 5 - 7 members and one consultant are held mainly towards the end of the conference. They provide members with an opportunity to explore the way in which they took up roles within the different events of the conference and the way in which the learning from the conference can be applied to the way in which they take up roles in the institutions of which they are members back home.

These conferences provide powerful opportunities for learning about the way unconscious processes determine behavior on the individual and also on the systems level. The somewhat laboratory like environment may, however, tend to provide somewhat skewed pictures of such processes. The fact that the work of the group is not a concrete task about an objective issue, but rather, learning about the experience in the here and now, tends to intensify experiences in a way which one may not directly encounter outside of the conference setting. The experience of these unconscious processes and the resulting behavior is often very dramatic. However, much of what occurs is all too familiar and recognizable from institutional settings, and thus significant learning can take place

One of the limitations which exists is the focus on speech as the primary behavior for exploration and communication and the fact that most events are held with people sitting in fixed positions. In 1994, we initiated the introduction of use of art materials in a conference, "Dialogue, Leadership and Transformation: Towards the Creation of Master-Peaces" directed by David Gutmann and organized by and for Besod Siach, the Israeli Association for the Promotion of Dialogue in Israel. In a working paper I explained the rationale for the art materials as follows:

The conventional conference structure centers around speech and non-verbal behavior as the most used vehicles of action and learning. The present model incorporates activity with art materials as an additional medium for expression, exploration, creation and transformation.

The activity with art materials introduced in this conference expands the framework's parallel to that of a working institution. The activity involves the active use of personal and external resources, including material resources, in the processes of creating tangible products. The art materials are materials of activity, creativity, and productivity. During the activity with the materials, the system enacts metaphorically its struggles with its creative drives and inhibitions.

Like speech, the work with art materials and its symbolic visual imagery is both an arena of action as well as a medium for exploration. The primary and unfamiliar nature of the visual symbolic images that is less given to rational censoring than the verbal medium often provides a window into the unconscious.

With verbal exploration, the events are generally sequential. The processes involved in the physical activity with the materials bring to the fore a wide range of simultaneous verbal and non-verbal behavior as modes of expression typical of the complexity of action and interaction within an institutional setting. The dynamics of style, form, rhythm and impact of movement and activity in time and space are made available for reflection --both in the process of the activity as well as in the product. The product then captures in permanent form different levels of conscious and unconscious material.

The verbal mode of input is not necessarily the dominant mode in all individuals. Individuals in an organizational setting have different styles of functioning and can express leadership and authority and can innovate in a variety of ways. The activity with materials provides an opportunity for manifesting a wider spectrum of modes of input and expression.

The work with the art materials therefore offers additional dimensions for exploration of verbal and non-verbal behavior and conscious and unconscious feelings, fantasies, and wishes relevant to the issues being explored. The verbal, the non-verbal and the visual symbolic are made available, and parallels and discrepancies between the three may be investigated. [1]

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[1] Taken from an unpublished working paper by Shelley Ostroff and David Gutmann on the conference Dialogue, Leadership and Transformation: Towards the Creation of Master-Peaces

Since then, art materials have been used in a number of conferences, in particular in a joint venture with the Bristol Business School (Britain), the Grubb Institute (London) and the International Forum for Social Innovation. Together we created a conference called "Imagining Europe"[2] which provided opportunities to study the way that individuals, groups and even nations hold Europe in the mind and the way in which this determines behavior.

I became aware of other limitations of the traditional conference structure and design that led to the development of the idea of "Body, Soul and Role" conference. In particular, the group relations conferences focus on providing learning about the realm of myths, fantasies, emotions and attitudes that determine conscious and unconscious behavior. This learning did not fully take into account in a holistic way the lived experience of the individual within the system. Both in the thematic emphasis as well as in the process of sitting and talking, the way in which the inividual's body acts, reacts and holds knowledge in relation to the system was not fully addressed. The spiritual dimension was also not highlighted. The conference "Body, Soul and Role" is designed to extend the learning of the conferences so that opportunities for learning in a more holistic way about the lived experience in organizations can be provided. The following is some of the text from the brochure of the "Body, Soul and Role" Conference in Israel, Belgium, Ireland and India. While the text provides only a brief sketch without the full rationale or philosophy behind the methodology or a detailed description of the implementation , it nevertheless indicates some of the ways in which the concepts and events of the traditional conferences have been transformed to open new spaces and methodologies of learning.

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[2] Imagining Europe: An Exploratory Conference using Art Materials, 6-8 September, 1996, Bristol Business School, International Forum for Social Innovation, The Grubb Institute

The primary task of the conference is to learn about health and vitality within the conference taken as an institutional system.

This conference will provide an opportunity to explore in a holistic way the lived experience within organizations. How does the inter-dependence and inter-connectedness of individuals within a system manifest itself in the psychosomatic experiences of the individuals within the system?

We speak of the "group mind" and of the "collective unconscious". Is there something which can be considered a "collective psyche-soma"? On the metaphoric and symbolic level what would the experience of the "system psyche-soma" feel like and what can exploring this dimension add to our understanding of organizational life? Are there links between the psychosomatic experiences of individuals within the organization? What are the implications of such links and their symbolic messages? In what way is the "psyche-soma" of the organization as a whole manifested? Are there links between different functions in the organization to different body functions and if so what do these links indicate? In what ways does vital energy flow through the organization and in what ways is it obstructed? How can these obstructions be healed? What are the sources of energy within the institution, and how can they be tapped into?

Participants will be able to explore concepts such as health and dis-ease, balance and imbalance, growth and degeneration, vitality and decay, and the implications of these concepts for the "body" and "soul" of the individuals within the institution and for the "body" and "soul" of the institution as a whole. Participants will also be able to study the significance of their own and others' behaviours and "pychosomatic" symptoms which occur within the conference to the interelatedness of the "body" of the individuals and the "body" of the organization.

Adults generally spend an average of over forty percent of their waking life in their working environment, and often much more. The culture of the organization cannot but have an impact on the way of life, the attitudes and the physical, emotional, psychic and spiritual states of the individuals within the organization, and indirectly on their families and societal environments. The organization as a whole also has an impact on its environment through its products, communications, clientele, suppliers and behavior in relation to ecological issues.

The conference will provide a variety of opportunities, using different modes of exploration and expression, to learn about the way in which one lives within an organization, influences it and is influenced by it on conscious and unconscious levels, as well as the way in which the organization lives within its environment. Participants will be able to study the processes which promote or

obstruct creativity and self/system actualization, and the relation of these to the general well being and vitality of the individuals within an organization and the organization as a whole.

In addition, participants will be able to explore the way in which they take up roles within the system on the physical, emotional, psychic, political and spiritual dimensions, and perhaps to discover new and more satisfying ways of involving different parts of themselves within the system, and different parts of the system within themselves. Such learning may provide new understandings of organizational life and contribute to the transformation of the institutions to which the participants belong.

This conference draws on the group relations and institutional transformation conferences that provide opportunities for exploring the matrix of mental and emotional life within institutional systems. Participants are able to explore conscious and unconscious processes and behaviors within and between systems and the way in which individuals and groups take up roles within the conference system as an institution. The conferences are based on the premise that when a human system is created in the mind of its members, a dynamic and largely unconscious matrix of relatedness within and between the subsystems emerges. Learning in such conferences has focused on exploring the ideational and emotional aspects of the collective experience and the way these influence behavior. This approach reinforces to an extent the conceptual split between mind and body. The conference "Body, Soul and Role" looks to extend the conference exploration to the realm of the interrelatedness of mind, body and spirit in institutional life.

Staff fill two roles. First they act collectively as management of the conference, which includes the administration of the conference. Secondly, staff members intervene as consultants during the events. In this role, they offer their own perception and experience of events as they occur during the session in order to encourage learning about the relations between body, soul and role in the working life of the institution.

Some of the Events which have been used in the conferences are:

Meditation: This time provide participants with an opportunity for meditation.

Plenaries: The plenaries provide opportunities for members and staff to reflect together on their experiences in the conference.

SSM: The Social Sensing Matrix provide participants with an opportunity to study the way in which images and sensations from their dreams, reveries and physical experiences reverberate with the state of the system.

ISE: The Institutional Sculpting Event will provide members with an opportunity for exploring the relations between members and staff, part of which constitutes the management of the ISE. Participants will have the opportunity to divide into sub-systems and to create forms and images (using themselves, props and other materials), so that they can explore and depict ways in which they perceive the "body" and "soul" of their own subsystem and the relationship of their sub-system with management and with the institutional system as a whole.

The Dialogue Event: Provides participants with an opportunity to explore the dynamic interaction of body, soul and role in the mind. The members divide randomly into three groups for the event -- a body group, a soul group and a role group. During the event the groups will engage in verbal and non-verbal dialogues.

R 'n R: The Rock 'n Role Event will provide participants with an opportunity to explore the behaviours, sensations, movements and interactions which occur within the system beyond the realm of words as they happen. Words will not be used in this session so that other modes of experience, will become more available for exploration, expression and communication. During this event the role of consultant will be suspended.

ARTE: The Application and Role Transformation Event will provide participants with an opportunity to explore ways in which they took up roles and interacted within the system and perhaps to discover new and transformative modes of interaction which will enhance their own well being and self actualization and influence the institutions of which they are members back home.

In October 2000 an independent workshop by the same name was held in Dublin, Ireland. In November 2000 an international conference Le Corps, L'esprit et le Role was held in Belgium, sponsored by the 'Commissariat General a la Protection du Travail du Ministere Federal de l'emploi

et du Travail with the help of IFSI. In February2001, a workshop was held in Karjat, India, sponsored by ISABS. The conference is evolving over time with each new experience.

Following the interest in the Body, Soul and Role conference a new conference was held in Israel in May 2000, called "Gaia and Group Relatedness: A Workshop on Nature and Creation at Work" which was supported by Oganim, Israel and convened by myself and Gouranga Chattopadhyay. The Gaia conference is intended to further extend the opportunities for learning about Body, Soul and Role to include the way in which collective relatedness to internal and external nature impacts the way in which individuals, groups and organizations take up their roles. The following is a brief text from the brochure for Gaia and Group Relatedness workshop intended to be a pilot experience on which future conferences will be based.

Gaia and Group Relatedness: A workshop on Nature and Creation at Work

The primary task of this workshop is to learn about Nature and Creation at Work within the workshop taken as a collective system.

This workshop will provide members with an opportunity to explore the way in which individuals and groups experience nature and creation at work. The workshop is based on the assumption that conscious and unconscious individual and collective myths, attitudes, emotions and values in relation to nature and "that which is natural" impact individual, group and organizational behavior.

This workshop is an extension of the conference "Body, Soul and Role: An International Pilot Conference on Health and Vitality in Organizations" sponsored by IFSI (France) and Tmurot (Israel) which took place in Israel last year. The conference "Body, Soul and Role" included an opportunity for exploring the notion of inter-relatedness of "mind", "body" and "spirit" in organizations. The workshop "Gaia and Group Relatedness" extends this further to learning about the experience of "mind", "body", "spirit" and "nature" in institutional life. It offers a space for learning about the different systems in the mind, and the links between the way in which individuals and groups take up their roles "naturally" and between the larger environmental system.

> Perhaps it will offer new ways of thinking about Ecology of Work and at Work, and will hopefully be the springboard for a larger pilot conference on the subject.

The evolution of these conferences reflects one way of implementing the intention to provide possibilities for learning in a holistic way about the different processes referred to throughout the dissertation.