

Process Psychology and the Process of Psychology
Or,
Developing a Psychology of Integration While Leaving Home

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At this stage of my life and my career, I find myself struggling to leave home and strike out on my own. Now in my early 60s, this impulse has come none too soon, or so one would think. My primary home, of course, has been in the State of Process, of which Claremont remains the capital. I also have established citizenship in the State of Psychotherapy, a state that is more blue than anything else. (Its blueness, I believe, is due primarily to depression.) The State of Psychotherapy was founded more than 100 years ago by the pioneers called who called themselves psychoanalysts and who followed the prophet Sigmund Freud. Freud, who was not known for his tolerance of those who disagreed with him, knew the difference between reality and mass opiates such as religion. He also made it clear that sometimes a cigar was just a cigar. Unfortunately, there is no record to let us know what he thought of the parable of the six blind men and the elephant, though we can be reasonably certain that he, like many other prophets, believed he had a thorough grasp of the entire elephant, from trunk to tail. Of course, what he knew would all depend where he put his hand. One of his rejected disciples, Fritz Perls, primary founder of Gestalt Therapy, disdainfully stated nonsense, including Freud's, saying that it was far more than BS and deserved to be called Elephant doo-doo, or ES in its short form.

The city within which I have dwelled for many years is Pastoral Counseling. It is a much smaller city than the others, such as Psychology, Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy, and even Psychiatry. It was founded in the mid-1960s by Claremont's late Howard Clinebell, among others. While the City of Psychiatry is small, it remains supremely powerful overall. With the aid of the rich State of Pharmaceuticals, it has managed to simplify most if not all psychological disorders to their true and exclusively biological and chemical roots. Of course, not every citizen of the City of Psychiatry adheres to this orthodoxy, but this is where the money is found. I digress, or so it would seem.

At the risk of generating more ES, I would like to explain why I have to leave home. Part of it is a deep and unavoidable compulsion to stand on my own, to view and judge the world through my eyes without checking to see if I am "right" according to the various rules of my states or even my city. The rules of the State of Process are exceedingly complex, as many of you know.

To take but a single example, aren't we virtually always subject to the Fallacy of Misplaced Concreteness, whereby we mistake an abstraction for a concrete reality? We

can't function in life without it, yet we are always in danger of the results of making this mistake. That is, human beings virtually never perceive sheer actuality. I don't know how many occasions can dance on the head of a pin and I don't think we will every be able to count them. Hence, we always will be making this error and the outcome of this can be exceedingly tragic. Just view the extremisms that are flashing murderously around the globe today, ranging from religious extremisms to those who lust for global domination. The latter suffer from the extremism characterized by grandiose narcissism, something that seems to be a universal human failing that religious injunctions fail to check. (More on this later.) But the point here is that human beings cannot do anything in life without making this error; hence, if we are determined to live our lives without breaking any of the myriad of rules of the State of Process, we will not be able to do anything.

Anyway, overcoming my constant obsession with determining whether or not my thoughts are valid according to the rules and laws of my different domains requires me to leave home. Even so, as with anyone who has dwelt as long as I have within the latticework of these various spheres of influence, I will forever bear their marks and bear their values. Nonetheless, what I present from this point forward will reflect primarily my own growing convictions. As those of you who are the high priests and priestesses of the State of Process will be able to tell, the process metaphysics underlies virtually everything I have to say. As John Cobb said to me when I finished my dissertation integrating process thought and Gestalt Therapy, "You will never be the same."

In the balance of my talk, I am going to focus on a few select items. These will point to a process psychology as well as what I believe should be the process of psychology. I will comment more on that at the end.

The first and second items amount to an outline of what I consider to be the central task and function of the psyche and, by implication, of both psychology for its study and for psychotherapy, the application of the ideas to the human condition in a variety of formats. This latter includes what happens when things go wrong.

The third item looks at the impact that our modes of perception have on our ability to do therapy while the fourth considers the essential centrality of spirituality for all growth and healing.

The fifth item is a look at one of the most important polarities in the psyche, one that I believe functions as one of the primary engines that drives psychological growth and development. The sixth is a brief look at the relationship between the psyche and the soma, the mind or soul and the body. The seventh item is on memory. That probably will be enough, except, as I said, I do want to conclude with some thoughts about the process of psychology.

1. The Central Task and Function of the Human Psyche

Recently I have come to the conclusion that the primary task and most basic function of the human psyche is to integrate its experience. This process of integration

begins well before birth and continues throughout life. A corollary of this principle is that wholeness is not our natural state but is instead an on-going aim. People are not born whole or perfect and then fragmented. People are born in fragments and continuously work strive to harmonize these fragments. This process defines our development at any given instance and our development throughout life.

This notion is paralleled in our biology as revealed in the study of embryology. Anyone who has had the opportunity to study the exquisite details of the development of a human embryo can testify to the fact that the embryo is created in parts that gradually develop in their functions, both separately and in coordination with other parts, until they can be harmonized sufficiently to allow the baby to be born as a functioning (though incomplete) entity. For example, at roughly two weeks, the fetus becomes divided into three layers. Out of these three layers (endoderm, mesoderm, and ectoderm) come all the various organs and systems of the body. Roughly a week or so later, the rudiments of the heart starts beating, but there is no actual circulation because the blood vessels have not been created. While the development of what becomes the brain and connecting nervous system starts early, there are no measurable brain waves until about seven weeks. Shortly after that, at the next stage of development, the brain becomes connected to its peripheral system and that in turn is connected to the muscles. This results in spontaneous by involuntary movements. At week 24, the auditory and visual systems are activated and the eyes respond to light and the ears to sounds outside the uterus.

Just as we start out biologically fragmented, we also start out psychologically fragmented. Likewise, we have separate psychic features that develop somewhat autonomously and then become increasingly harmonized. I will appeal first (without much elaboration) to the developmental theories of Sigmund Freud (I never said he wasn't brilliant) and Erik Erikson. Each shows a developmental scheme whereby separate processes become developed and eventually harmonized with other processes. The benignly hedonistic Id meets the coldhearted, pleasure destroying Superego, and has to come to terms with the latter's demands. The Ego supposedly mediates between the two, but I do think Perls was correct when he said that the in the topdog-underdog split, the underdog always wins. Score one for the Id. Erikson's complex psycho-bio-social developmental paradigm certainly promotes the idea that each stage of development becomes included in the subsequent stage, integrating core dynamics in ever increasing complexity. The peak crisis at any given age is included and revisited in subsequent stages. The themes of the crises are trust vs. mistrust (0-18 mo.), autonomy vs. shame and doubt (18 mo.-3 yrs.), initiative vs. guilt (3-6) [some, including myself, doubt that guilt forms this early; hence, this is more likely shame], industry (or competence) vs. inferiority (6-12) [another form of shame], identity vs. role confusion (12-18), intimacy vs. isolation (18-30), generativity vs. stagnation (30-50), and wisdom vs. despair (50+).

In addition, I would like to offer a few personal observations from my experience as a grandfather to (so far) two granddaughters. The evening after my first granddaughter, Erin, was born, I was with the family in the recovery room. As I watched Erin, I saw something I did not expect. I had been taught that newborns

cannot really see. But Erin clearly was struggling to attend to the location of the various voices in the room. She just couldn't coordinate her eye movement to direct her vision toward a particular voice because she had no control over her neck or head muscles. I also noticed that Erin was persistent in her efforts. While I did not keep a log, I found that over the next few days and weeks she became quite proficient at this task. At three-and-a-half, she is still persistent! About six months ago, my second granddaughter, Reese, was born. Again, I noticed the same phenomenon shortly after her birth, persistent efforts to get her eyes to orient toward voices, particularly the most familiar of mom and dad. Reese remains enthusiastically persistent!

Of course, the same process continues with basic skills such as rolling over, sitting up, standing, walking, talking, nagging and whining. Watching how a child learns to walk reveals how much effort it takes from so many of the body's systems and how it all has to become amazingly coordinated so that the child can efficiently get up and run away when it is time to change a diaper.

An aside: When I begin to dive into these kinds of details, I eventually stop and try to consider the complexity of all that goes on within the skin of a single human being at one moment, let alone over a lifetime. Not surprisingly, I am soon overwhelmed. Add to that the fact human beings, in keeping with the fundamental nature of reality, are social creations through and through, the complexity grows and grows. I cannot imagine there is a human being alive today who could master the known details of all the internal and interpersonal systems at the various levels of analysis, from the subatomic particles of physics through the molecules of chemistry, the systems of biology and physiology (including physiological psychology), the numerous psychologies of behavior, cognition, and psychodynamics, among many others, as well as the interpersonal dimensions studied in couples, family, and systems therapy, and on to the large scale groupings of social psychology. Obviously this is part of the problem with knowledge today, a flaw that Whitehead pointed out in his essay on the "Aims of Education." We do need those gifted individuals who can tie things together on a broad or macro scale that is consistent with the plethora of details on the micro scale. The patterns that work most consistently for this task, in my experience, are those described in Whitehead's metaphysics.

To return to the theme of fragmentation, it must be said that, though we are fragmented, we do have a kind of unity of experience at any given moment. I say "kind of" because if you carefully monitor your own flow of experience you can see that at least sometimes it will feel like an amalgam of elements that only loosely cohere. But it is, for all practical purposes, a unity. Gestalt Psychology and its distant cousin, Gestalt Therapy, affirm this principle at their core.

So, how do we balance these two themes, fragmentation and unity? Ah, as those with a process background know, this polarity amounts to the contrast between the physical and mental poles of each becoming actual occasion. This means that it is

of the fundamental nature of reality to begin with separate elements and to weave them somehow into a unity.

For human life, this means that some fragmentation into every life must come ... repeatedly. Falling apart is never fun, always distressing. But it is part of the natural order of human life and development. For purposes of therapy, this means that our clients at times must be allowed to fall apart, to leave the session unsettled without being put back together, and we have to suffer the uncertainty of the outcome along with them. This also means that our job, to paraphrase an old theological dictum, is to comfort them when they are afflicted and to afflict them when they are comfortable.

The fundamental constancy and universal nature of this cyclical or dialectical pattern also means that we can "trust the process," as we sometimes tell our clients when they – or we – are feeling insecure.

2. What Happens When Things Go Bad – in Trauma?

My second observation in this context is that this on-going process of integration is diminished or halted when people suffer a serious psychological wound. This is due in part to the nature and intensity of the negative experience carried by the wounded element. The negative experience includes the physical and emotional wounds that were inflicted. The negative experience also includes the ego dystonic features of wounder and woundee. By this, I mean that there are qualities belonging to the person who inflicted the wound that may not fit with how the victim sees this person; and aspects of the victim that may not fit the victim's self-image. In one case, a caring father became a nightmare figure when he was subject to temporal lobe seizures. Which father was real? The raging beast did not fit the child's picture, hence it must have been a very bad dream. Additionally, the self that was the victim, who carries the pain and the memory of this side of father, does not fit well with an ordinary daily life. This leads to the creation of what amounts to a self-fragment that exists largely out of full awareness but that can be triggered by any event that has something in common with the original trauma. As Whitehead makes abundantly clear, the past event, with its integration of emotions, thoughts, sensory input, and more, can be represented to a greater or lesser degree in the present moment. Actually, the word "represented" is misleading. In a very real sense, it is experienced as something that is current, happening right now.

Yet, until there is something new done, this traumatized self-fragment will remain unintegrated. This is why we see and experience ourselves and others repeating the same dramas over and over and over. It is, to use a process category, a contrast that is never created. As I have developed elsewhere, this leads me to believe that facilitating contrasts is one of the most basic aims of psychotherapy. Very briefly, this requires helping a client become conscious and accepting of the portion of the polarity that resides primarily out of awareness; inevitably, this is the wounded self-fragment and the corresponding events associated with the wounding. The next step in this work is to approach the wounded fragment with understanding and, often, with a promise of both attention and protection. Finally, the task becomes to help the client

hold both poles in consciousness, each oriented toward a sympathetic understanding of the heart of the other. Eventually, this leads to the creation of a contrast.

Until this is accomplished, persons are hobbled in their ability to integrate their experience as fully as might be desired. This is because any new experience they encounter that bears some similarity to the original trauma will ignite a fairly predictable range of responses, all of which keep them from integration. Additionally, the original self-fragment may also have been a key dynamic for integration. For example, suppose an inquisitive child (what child is not?) is doing some exploring of body or environment when a horrified adult attacks the child? If this happens enough, or even once if the attack has extraordinarily power, the child will inhibit his or her inquisitive impulses. This obviously will impair the child from future efforts to explore and integrate novel features of his or her world.

By way of conclusion of this section, I have come to the realization that there are many people who have some form of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). In fact, there are times when I think that PTSD is the underlying condition for most of our Axis I and Axis II diagnostic categories.

3. The Role of the Divine in Growth and Healing

The third point I want to cover is a look at the role of the Divine in our growth and healing. The first fact that needs to be mentioned is that our most constant (and largely unconscious experience) is of God's unconditional love and God's lures for positive change. Of these two experiences of God's direct connection with our lives, the first – the unqualified, absolute love – is not only constant but unchanging. This quality may contribute to our difficulty in knowing this on a conscious level. This outcome has at least two implications: First, is our need to be reminded of this; second is our on-going hunger for this to be embodied in the world's response to us. We don't feel loved and we want others to tell us we are beloved.

By contrast, God's sensitive lures for our positive change can vary from moment to moment, making it perhaps a bit easier for us to become conscious of this experience of God. However, these sacred lures for change can easily get lost in the inner noise of other demands on our energy, other tugs in other, less sacred directions. To complicate this further, each unintegrated self-fragment has its own lure, its own unique need for fulfillment. The direction these lures take can be in opposite or competing directions. Fortunately, there are other, more inclusive lures from God that can guide us to bridge these differences. That is, the wounded self-fragment may be outraged and need some form of justice to be restored. In the most primitive form, this might amount to making someone else suffer: "Now you know how I feel!" This definitely is an improvement on feeling one is a helpless victim. On the other hand, the adult self may know that to seek revenge or retribution ultimately will make things worse; this also is the result quite possibly of one of the sacred initial aims. So, there is an unresolved tension between these two perspectives. Along comes an initial aim from God that opens the door to the needs of both; this is what I mean by a more

inclusive lure. In reality, it may take a great deal of repeated effort to achieve this integration, this contrast.

A comment on sacred aims: Without reservation, I adhere to the process assumption that the initial aim for a becoming occasion, if fully realized, would maximally benefit both the occasion itself and all that will be influenced by this event in the future. I also make the assumption that when people grow and mature, their reigning or dominant occasions (which constitute the psyche) in general become broader, richer, and therefore more inclusive in perspective. This means that we become increasingly concerned with others, for example, fulfilling God's aim of benefiting the common good of all. However, when we harbor a wounded self-fragment, its own aim most likely will be quite limited. Hence, when a wounded self-fragment is in the seat of power in the psyche, all hell can break loose – even though the motivations may be rooted in the sacred. This doesn't sound pleasant, and is not an excuse for awful acts, but the simple step taken by victims, known as identification with the aggressor in psychoanalysis, is better for the individual in the immediate future than simply remaining a victim. However, in an even slightly larger perspective, this can be seen as potentially damaging to the future of this individual; and in an even more inclusive perspective, it is not healthy for anyone else to be the recipient of this kind of aggression. Hence, God's overall aim would be to transform the impulse to abuse others in lieu of being further abused.

4. The Role of Perception in Growth and Healing

The next topic to be explored briefly is the importance of perception in facilitating the growth and healing that is psychotherapy's mandate. Whitehead's genius, among other things, was to recognize that there was more to reality than meets the eye and a mode of perception that could handle the unseen quite well. Whereas vision correlates with the mode of presentational immediacy – the world as it is immediately presented out there and separate – there is a more basic mode called causal efficacy. It is through this mode that we feel the world in our guts, feel our connection to others. It also is through this mode that some of the most important tasks of therapy are managed, ranging from therapists' connections to clients to the augmentation of the power of the sacred in healing.

In the mode of causal efficacy, we feel others as a part of our own subjective experience. Since we are subjectivity at any given instance of the present, our experience of others literally becomes a part of who we are at that moment – and vice versa. Freud referred to this process as projective identification, whereby a client sets up an experience in us. The masochist invites our punishment, for example. The depressed client can flood us with hopelessness, the anxious client with anxiety. I would submit that any therapist worth his or her salt has to pay attention to what a client is inducing in him or her. Likewise, therapists must take into account their own attitudes toward a client. If a therapist is arrogant and disdainful, this impacts negatively a client's efforts at self-esteem, for example.

It also is via the mode of causal efficacy that we incorporate the sacred, including the uniquely relevant initial aim. Lifting this experience to consciousness (where consciousness is the integration of the two pure modes) changes the nature of our conscious experience. Likewise, changing the nature of our conscious experience can facilitate our becoming conscious of the sacred. As causal efficacy is characterized by a more receptive, relaxed, meditative state, anything we do to increase that mode of consciousness in our clients and in ourselves can be helpful in setting the stage to enlarge upon the efficacy of the divine aim. Consciousness of our process helps us better focus on what is most important, realize when we have lost focus, and generally to enlarge upon the experience so that the sacred aim can be realized more fully.

To this end, I have taken in recent years to introducing clients to Thich Nhat Hahn's form of Mindfulness Meditation. His book, *Peace is Every Step*, is brief and easy to assimilate.

5. The Contrast Between Abject Shame and Grandiose Narcissism.

The tension between shame and narcissism is, I believe, one of the primary engines of psychic growth and development. This is an enormous topic, deserving of much more time and attention than we have now. For now, I simply want to make some brief observations.

In our world, and in the State of Psychotherapy, we hear a lot about narcissism and far less, relatively speaking, about shame. Not that shame is totally ignored, by any means, but nowhere near what it deserves. Narcissism, in addition, is cast primarily as a negative personality trait or state.

From my own observations, shame (and the fear of shame) is one of the most potent forces in our psyche. A little shame can go a long ways. More than a little can be crippling. Shame is the experience of being found wanting in the eyes of others. It is a defect of the self and one that appears to be irreparable. Excess shame can effectively lockup the process of integration, causing a person to spend much of life ducking and hiding instead of growing and change.

Narcissism strictly defined is self-love. As such, it is neither good nor bad. When we feel good about ourselves, we are more lively, less depressed, often more productive and even potentially more giving to others. Healthy self-esteem, in other words, is one of the goals of psychotherapy and one of the measures of success. Additionally, when we are feeling expansive and emboldened to try great new adventures – furthering the Creative Advance of the universe in some small fashion – certainly we are likely being more than a bit grandiose.

Obviously, shame can temper grandiose narcissism, just as narcissism can temper shame. The problems for growth and develop occur when an individual finds himself or herself consistently on one side or the other of this polarity.

When people are stuck on the narcissistic side, they are phobic of shame and work extraordinarily hard at pointing the shame away from themselves and toward

others (their children, their spouses, their co-workers, their subordinates, and so on). Clinically, this amounts to the narcissistic personality disorder.

When people are stuck on the shame side, they find it extremely difficult to feel good about themselves, even though down deep they sense that this is not an accurate measure. This creates a highly unstable form of status quo with constantly shifting degrees of shame and rage being experienced and expressed. This often is the result of serious childhood abuse, physical, emotional, and particularly sexual. "I'm no good and I have the wounds to prove it. If I were good, I wouldn't have been treated this way." Or, as one woman said repeatedly, "If I hadn't been born, then none of this would have happened." That is, by being born, she caused the abuse to happen.

All of this, by the way, fits the picture of the borderline personality disorder. As you may guess, I see these two disorders as inherently related, despite what appears to be the dominant view of two separate and unrelated disorders.

Clinically, I am not sure which is more difficult to treat. While people with a narcissistic disorder tend to avoid therapy unless their world falls apart, people with borderline disorders tend to fight off change even while they often stay in therapy. Regardless, the two poles need to be accessed in a series of healing contrasts, shame tempering narcissism and narcissism tempering shame. In brief, the long-term outcome are adults who feel good about themselves yet know and accept their limits. This allows them to become increasingly open to others and to caring for others in the development of the compassionate self. I see the emergence and development of the compassionate self as the aim of growth and healing.

My conviction is that this polarity of shame and narcissism is universal, that it transcends cultural, ethnic, and racial boundaries. For anything that is universal, there must be both a place for this in the process metaphysics as well as something that furthers the Creative Advance. For one thing, as I just mentioned, I believe this leads to the rise of a compassionate person. By definition, a compassionate person is one who cares about the common good in the broadest possible sense, a clear process idea. Further, this person would also be open to the incredible diversity of the world (not just people), thereby fulfilling the sacred aim of intensity of experience.

One final note on the state of the world today from the perspective of this section: Object Relations psychology talks about the desire of the infant to merge with the perceived "omnipotent object," typically mother. This is a grandiose gesture that undoes the pain of the inherent shame in being a small, dependent, powerless infant. This is a theme that can be carried forward into adult life and, in my view, is with a vengeance when it comes to God and religion, as well as possessions and power. This translates to the reality that we have an extraordinarily large number of psychologically and spiritually immature people in positions of power here and around the world, making this current era one of the most dangerous I have seen in my still-short lifetime. On a personal note, I only hope that people with a more highly developed psyche, who can genuinely care for others as well as themselves, can rise to positions of leadership.

6. The Relationship Between the Psyche and the Soma

I have long lived with the understanding that the psyche, represented by the reigning occasion in the body, as well as the entire “serially ordered” society of such events, is ontologically of the same nature as those events that comprise the body but nonetheless is a separate entity in its own right. However, in the State of Psychotherapy, and even in the City of Pastoral Counseling, these distinctions are not at all clear. In fact, the psyche or “mind” (as is the preferred term in my state) is equated with the portion of the body referred to as the brain. Hence, we are to be totally explained by the electrical-chemical events of the brain. For Big Pharma, this means big money, of course. But it is incredibly distorting. The most extreme example I have seen was in a recent flyer, announcing a CE workshop entitled “The Addicted Brain.” I am glad to know that I personally bear no responsibility for my addiction. Just my lousy, flawed brain. What bad luck. Here, take my brain and cure me, doc. Send it back when it is working correctly.

As I have been saying for years, I suspect that if one tied up a person and ran a speeding car at him or her, barely missing, three or four times a day for a few years that this person’s brain chemistry would be radically altered compared with the start. (This compares, by the way, with the pattern of chaotic, unpredictable abuse that can occur in an alcoholic family.) It certainly could not be said that the brain chemistry caused the car to do what it did. So the only other solution is to assume that Descartes was actually correct – unless one wants to assume that there is such a phenomenon as a psyche.

Obviously, the psyche and the brain are intimately related. Changing one changes the other. Further, the psyche is ultimately dependent upon the brain for its incredible functions of learning and memory, distinct sensation and perception. When the brain becomes diminished, one clearly sees deterioration of the functioning of the psyche, devolving in organization and precision. The brain is the organ that permits the complexity of our experience to be organized.

For the best single treatment of this and related topics, I will refer you to the immodestly titled book by David Ray Griffin, *Unsnarling the World Knot*. It is an excellent book that should be read by virtually everyone who studies and practices psychology and psychotherapy.

7. What is Memory Anyway?

A few years ago, I attended a forum on memory that included a clinical psychologist in private practice and an experimental psychologist on the faculty of a university. This forum was prompted in part by the debate about recovered memories vs. false memories. I was startled when the experimental psychologist said flatly that no one has any memories before the age of four. From her answer to my question about what she meant by a memory, I got the impression that she had not given this problem much thought; it was treated as a common sense matter. Either you

remembered something (accurately or not) or you didn't. My own thinking has led me to consider that what we mean by memory is usually something that has a visual quality to it. We see something in our mind, something that has some distinction to it. This also may extend to a sound and even to a smell or touch. Additionally, there usually (though not always) is a sense as to where and when this event took place. In fact, if we can't locate it in time and space, we often pause in telling a story to try to remember where and when something happened.

The problem with the experimental psychologist's conviction is that I have had clients recall events under the age of two. In one case, the memory of being locked in a basement around two was exceptionally traumatic. It occurred around Halloween. Because she had been bad, she was told she had to go to the basement and couldn't move or else the witch would get her. The first time this memory surfaced I had absolutely no idea of what was going on other than the fact that my client had completely regressed, was dissociated to the point of catatonia stayed that way for much of the session. This particular client's memories of her long history of trauma were consistent through her early 20s. Why would I assume that her memory could not be trusted before an arbitrary age such as four?

Other experiences with clients have taught me that there is no such thing as a fully repressed memory. In one case, a client used to make doodles on her drawings over many years. One day, however, these doodles took on an horrific quality when one of them was enlarged into a full picture. It was the searing image associated with a room where she had been cruelly tortured. A close examination of the prior doodles revealed that they were all tiny replications of the same image.

Finally, looking at our experience from a process perspective, it is clear that at each moment, we integrate sensory input from our five senses, as well as our kinesthetic experience, our emotions, our intellectual thoughts, previous memories, and the sacred aim. As Whitehead has noted, any one of these elements – which he called prehensions – can objectify or represent the entire past occasion. The single most important element, and the one that exists when nothing else seems to be present, is emotion. Emotions seem to be timeless. If I am angry or afraid or happy, it is all right now. However, if something has triggered a largely (but not completely) repressed (negatively prehended) event, what most often shows up is the emotion from that past event. Hence, someone who has what are now being called attachment issues will react with fear, for example, when threatened with separation, for the separation represents abandonment and potential death. No small matter, but one that does not fit the here and now at all.

8. Concluding Comments

Certainly a lot of what I have covered above points to a process psychology and, by extension, a process psychotherapy; perhaps more of the latter than the former, reflecting my activities for the past 30 years. There is one additional comment I would like to make. Despite my somewhat "tongue-in-cheek" introduction, I do affirm without qualification the power of Whitehead's vision. Every time I enter into a dialogue with

his thought, I am energized with new insights or a greater depth of understanding of what I had previously learned.

Finally, I want to make explicit some of my thoughts about what should be the process of psychology (and psychotherapy).

Psychology will remain incomplete without a grasp of the unity of mind, body, and spirit. As Griffin points out in *Unsnarling the World Knot*, human beings do not function as though they have no freedom of choice for thought and action. To frame this in the positive: We all behave as though we have some degree of freedom of choice which means implicitly that novelty is a force to be reckoned with; we and the rest of the world cannot be explained by our histories alone. In fact, we are our histories plus grace, if we understand grace to include the introduction of novelty. Plus, there simply is the ineffable mystery of our subjectivity wherein we make the final choice at every instance of our lives.

Closely related to this is the importance of spirituality for all of psychology. Our spirituality, which I am defining as our connection with God's consequent and primordial natures (love and lure), is a FACT of our experience, whether we are conscious of this or not. This fact is not a matter of religious dogma; dogma, quite frankly, often can interfere with our spirituality (though for some, of course, it can facilitate spiritual awareness). I call this the General Theory of Spirituality, something ostensibly not bound by or otherwise conditioned by any particular religion.

For psychotherapy, this fact becomes particularly important since change in the form of what Cobb and others call Creative Transformation is, I strongly believe, our ultimate goal. Psychotherapy is in the business of facilitating Creative Transformation and the more we understand about how to focus our attention on the initial aim, the more complete this process will be. Inevitably, this involves a deeper understanding and utilization of the perceptual mode of causal efficacy; and related to that, a fuller appreciation of the reality of internal relations.

Finally, I have come to the conclusion that the aim of human life is the development of the compassionate adult. I believe that this is affirmed as well in many of the world's great religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. A fully compassionate adult is open to self, other, and God with both understanding and action. Somehow, this must become a part of the process of psychology and psychotherapy, not as a demand or a rule, but as a goal that produces the most peace and joy, both within and among people and the natural world.

Thank you.