

Dear People - WELCOME - As I stand before you, I most want to establish my footing.

Our related souls may well commix.

So to begin: Years and years back, and as much as my current 84<sup>th</sup> year, I necessarily continue to reckon with why I persist in being drawn to psychotherapy (or at least the therapy that I have been suited to do). My format of psychotherapy is not a procedure that needfully cures - but more, a process of nurturing and connecting with a core of where the person is, and where they either accept the sense of who I am as well as seriously wanted to appear to where I want to go. So it is accepting double - or as Otto Rank (1941) points out, "the shadow (who is) his mysterious double, a spiritual yet real being" (p. 71).

The novelist Lawrence Durrell (1949) entwines with my culture, when he notes that "Psychoanalysis has been in danger of devoting itself only to the tailoring of behavior, too heavily weighted down by the superstructure of clinical terminology, it has been in

danger of thinking in terms of medical entities rather than patients." (p. ix)

For me the process of therapy links to caringly unleashing unrecognized surprises. As Antonio Damasio (1999) notes "the effectiveness of consciousness comes from its unabashed connection to the nonconscious proto-self" (p. 304).

It is in this context that, as James Hillman (2013) notes, "therapy is love ... my desire towards you, and my wanting something with you ... (including) my Pathos (for) that yearning, needing, suffering on your account. ...(along with) creative insights ... wholly revealed, wholly existential" (p 578-579).

And though we are, first of all, forged in the physical dimension of hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, along with miscellaneous vestiges of other salient elements, we are prospectively intended to becoming soul - throughout existence - where life, *as it evolves*, unleashes delights and sorrows, i.e. the ecstasy, mystery, adventure and, yes, the disorientation of what it feels like being-in-the-world. It has been

Binswanger, the Swiss and one of the prime founders of existential-analysis, whose emphasis is that his understanding of such work can hardly be equated to any clinical and psychopathological means (Ruitenbeek 1962).

As Paul Ricoeur (1992) exclaimed "Whole sections of my life are part of the life history of others" (p.161). So it becomes probable that the pains and passions of other souls deeply resonate with ours. It is here, I aver, that personal existence is life expressed through the companionship with variant others.

Here is a typical situation: A very dear patient of mine who practices general medicine, while struggling with the notion that so many whom he treats go through agonizing pain. He is convinced that his own painful sensations are inseparably and inevitably linked with those he treats. "Even when I am going in a seemingly different direction from a mangled patient," he remarked, "I know in my depths that that person depends on my accompanying pain." What remains extraordinary is his inherent ability to remain

teammates with all those he treats. For him, the work of the physician - and the work of all who claim they heal - is a radiant ministry, leading me to agree with what surgeon Richard Selzer (1974) has written, "The doctor listening to the sounds of the body to which the rest of us are deaf ... is more than (a) doctor. He is priest" (p. 36).

Over the years, I have learned that, my own vocation as a healer /// and yes, as a priest, Levite or lama, moves me to an open existence. I tend to see that such a priesthood moves toward a traceable and revered companionship. As a healer and care-giver, the psychotherapist moves to the outpourings of wonder and adventure /// humbly relying on the dissolution of boundary between who I am, and the person who seeks my counsel.

Further, allow me to suggest that I have been and am in my own practice, simply the most experienced patient - the one who integrates those many patients who collectively become twins flowing within my soul.

This perspective is what I see as fostering the humanistic/experiential therapy that I have privately innovated. My own psychoanalyst was Andras Angyal who, I discovered, saw me as both alive within a "biosphere"— specifically noting that I lived as an existent singular somebody AND as a transcending boundless whole.

D. Edwards (1990) helps me consider this existential-phenomenological perspective as offering "a deeper vision of human nature. ... provid(ing) a framework in which client and therapist ... grapple with issues that are ill defined or that emerge from the deeper levels of meaning in the client's world." (p.117,118) So, I, as therapist, rejoice in discerning and examining those I see in psychotherapy as my incredible joint heirs.

But hardly not just patients in psychotherapy. I want to enlist this close still surviving friend and colleague of 60 years. Stan has reached his mid-90s *and* was one of Carl Rogers first students at the University of Chicago. While attempting to present this

mini-portrait of him, allow me to note that Stanley corresponds to my conception of a twin - and as a sort of stormy twin, he is a bull zeroing in on matadors. And sometime, because we have created a super double figure to coexist as often we have shared both of us. Literally coming thick or thin, I candidly regard myself as a living a solitary soul, and (I emphasize the word 'and') also as equally self-transcending, i.e., "expanding outwards." (Wheelis, 1970. p.115)

My friend Stan is a very elderly figure who more and more blindly expresses frenzy. Stanley's physical gut roars with gases and cramps even as he has lately been disappearing into a world locked into confused memories and strained cognitions.

Over the years in which we've known and shared a deep familiarity, I now (even as I speak to you) bear and bear not the suffering of Stan. His destiny has formed the rubble and wonder of a tapestry that I curiously think about about relating to.

His night attendant is a truly lovely young man, who has most recently moved out of the still Communist,

self-governing Muslim territory known as Mindanao, located in the south of the Philippines. His home territory is where frightful violence remains an everyday occurrence. He, employed as Stan's night attendant, informs me that, as the current situation holds tight, he has adhesively remained yoked to the smell of gun powder.

Now here is what Nimuel has inherited: this new job of tending to Stan often harshly awakens him in the middle of the night. It is at such occasions that Stan forcibly attempts to get dressed -- insisting that he is obligated by a full schedule of patients, who are earmarked to see him in his office in downtown Chicago - that office he once occupied for some 60 years. Now, suddenly yoked with what Stan regularly relives, and what Nimuel knows <sup>AS</sup> ~~to be~~ sadly be far-fetched, he bends over backwards in order to cool Stan down. And in this process, the two do heedlessly enter into a dialogue (yes, into a dialogue).

I was not there, but Evelyn, Stan's wife, relays to me what she hears from the adjoining room. Nimuel,

according to her, understands that Stanley essentially attempts to live with him, even into his past. Nimuel, hexed by his own horrendous violent past, humanely knows of Stanley's <sup>Life</sup> canvas of his sacred commission. Most recently, coming from the back-alleys of Mindanaohe, he grasps the dangers. Right then, Nimuel bonds empathically to Stanley's terrors. These comfortless memories now mysteriously transform into mutually moving terrors.

A healer, whether that healer be a therapist, faithful attendant or close friend, does indeed move toward his respect of joining his patient toward a single mind.

Stan's terrors seemingly have blended into Nimuel's Philippine war zone memories. Stanley, a veteran Army officer, used to, after few shots of burgundy, suddenly proclaim how frightened he was having his troops, and then his patients, as there/here, to throw his sheltering arms around.

In the many, many years we have known each other, I have regularly listened to Stan as he was



concerned about failing some of his therapy clients. As with his soldiers, he ~~feared~~<sup>ALSO</sup> forsaking his patients. At annual workshops of the American Academy of Psychotherapists, Stan and I used to share complex concerns about the possibilities of failing our patients. Still, there were those other proud occasions when we ballyhooed our good fortunes at having triumphed with those we worked with. And now, as I feverishly observe the senility that has taken him, I grasp Stan's haunting fears of not wanting to be defeated.

On a Friday morning, Evelyn telephoned me. She had been uneasy as her Sunday night winds stirred, lamenting about Stan - and crying aloud about the tragedy of his demonic challenges.

For me, as I contrast myself to my twin Stanley, I recall having treated (don't you love that word "treated" ?) the memory of so many patients in their multiple guises.

Similar to Stan, I too am essentially retired from my therapy practice. Though I do continue to work with four quite long-term patients. Yet, as compendious

images of patients clutter down the halls of time, { a  
vision of Florence settles in. And I ask myself, had she  
been a tribulation? Well, and not hiding my life, I  
selectively believe that I might well have saved her life  
and limb. This woman had worked in so very many  
capacities, though she frustratingly described her true  
vocation as "an assistant designer of well-labeled  
children's clothing."

After the manufacturing firm that she'd once  
worked for went stark out-of-business, Florence was  
forced to pick up several tedious jobs in order to  
support herself. Working in dingy neighborhood shops,  
she had also, on several occasions, been hired as a  
cocktail waitress at a local mirrored saloon. These  
mirrors were responsible for her pouring her talents.  
Nevertheless, Florence was terrified of the  
consequences of being thrown out of work.

And so she located me through the local priest who  
she never felt she'd could make a "good confession" to.  
Father Riley was convinced that Florence was an  
appropriate soul for me. Happily, he phoned me in order

to say that he felt we would share an agreeable flow of spirits. And valuably, my practice was less than a short stroll from where Florence lived.

More about her background: Because of her Pariah-like outbursts and other screaming episodes, the two emergency room medical staffs would often hospitalize her. Then there were those several times when she was taken into custody by the local police for her physically bumping into one person after another on the street.

After popping her with leading questions, she briskly noted that she had absolutely no clue whatever that adjacent bodies were actually there. Though she said she was necessarily aware of automobiles motoring up-and-down the thoroughfares, it was a month earlier that she had been twirled around and had been seriously bruised by an extra-long limousine. Beyond such a shattering blow, Florence seemed further to be hit hard with an abundance of accidents. Noting a distress signal in her eyes, I was informed of the

numerous times she had been placed in the various wards at Bellevue Hospital.

Florence lived in a tiny rent-controlled studio in a dilapidated apartment building. Notwithstanding the naked truth of her having occupied the walk-up for well over twenty years, there were numerous summer nights that she literally renounced her dwelling -- merely wandered the city streets and fell asleep in an alleyway. She had become what was essentially a street-person. But with the attitude of someone I saw as opposite.

When Florence and I initially met, in spite of her capacity to frequently indulge in sordid circumstances, meeting me was heralded with what she considered initial threads of apprehension.

I recall that, in an early session, she announced that she had begun to break ground as a disembodied head - walking her neighborhood in great fear of frequently, though blindly, colliding into people and opaque objects.

I envisioned her unsettled dilemma of being a disengaged cranium, mushing herself as she floated

along -- tightly shadowing passing people and accidental objects. Often being terror-struck, Florence made an effort to silkily wend her way -- pondering at what point she might simply become a mummified body, without having an unprotected head. This plight had now become the impelling cause of why she consented to get the sort of help that I would hopefully deliver.

Florence dreaded the impossibility of convincing me of her way of being. Among her far-fetched situations, there were meditative scenes beyond her cut and dried matters. She spoke of her time under the membership with the Rosicrucian Order (an esoteric community with assorted roots and practices). It was through her correspondence course that the Rosicrucian cult promoted its ecstatic exercise, which consisted of having its members pose intensely in front of a candle-lit mirror. The room was to be otherwise darkened while the Rosicrucian's disciple was instructed to piercingly stare, as he or she would meditate with a hopefully metamorphosized countenance. After a devouring time, the suppliant would supposedly be initiated into glimpses from his or

her previous incarnations. Could it have been that this very experience led Florence to become an eerily disconnected head?

Now here's my somewhat indiscreet confession: When I initially accepted Florence into my practice, I was still a somewhat young therapist. The notion of my harmoniously connecting myself to my patients had been overshadowed by my supervisor's countertransference preachings. And, it was during the early time that I had taken Florence on, that I had been induced by a psychiatrist friend - (one who regularly ordered mescaline tablets directly from the Swiss Sandoz pharmaceutical firm well before the United States forbade such orders from taking place).

During my very first twelve hour session with mescaline, I became attracted to the mirror in my friend's apartment's bathroom. As I recalled my gazing experience, several fictional characters created by writers such as E.T.A. Hoffman and Oscar Wilde appeared in my awareness, who encouraged me to delve into the creation of wondrous tales.

Yet the Rosicrucian practice of attempting to see more of who one is was exciting. Suddenly, well, about 20 minutes after swallowing the tablet, I found myself staring incredulously into the bathroom mirror. Looking for who I was, I was then no customary me. NOW I was enhanced into being a magnificent matador in a Bull ring - favored with strength and bravery, while starting to be surrounded by three admiring banderilleros.

According to my mind, this luminous predicament suddenly initiated me into a delicate Flamenco movement. Out of the blue, I suddenly grabbed a towel - my costume beamingly enlisted for classic bull fighter's graceful movements - seeing bravery and cunningness light up my face. Just to mention, this experience has somehow remained the basis of a certainty of my own lifetime's continuing bravery and courage. Having this mirrored experience did bring me closer to the thoughts of the many dimensions of Florence.

Florence did, in fact, become an unwavering presence in a continuing Tuesday night group. As a long-term patient there, she interestingly began to weigh-in

as my essential co-therapist. This was all Florence's idea. And with my concurrence taking place, she briskly discerned some of what she was convinced, applied to her. As she gave herself to her idea of a coadjutor to me, thankfully through my supervisor's wisdom, I became aware of what mattered to her.

To my amazement, soon into her entering therapy, Florence began skipping both individual and group sessions. Early on, in phoning me to cancel, she let me know that the time had come in which she probably might kill herself. Mystification began to suddenly draw the curtain. As I now see it, my appeal to the Muses of my canvas who continue to be responsible for my creativity informed me of a need to take on a specific set of actions - and to act as fast as I could in bringing these actions on.

First off, I recall that my self-communing insisted that Florence continued to be a much needed presence. Fearful of her being lost, I realized that I well might be stuck. So it was that I frantically searched for the local cop who knew her. No immediate luck. Feeling lost



in a swirl, I began to wrestle with other possibilities. Then fortunately I recalled her thundering forth about a certain bar she might well be frequenting on an almost daily basis. I deliberately seemed to be turning my thoughts as to how I might speak to her in a public place. I was fearful that our disrespectful public reunion might possibly be bittersweet.

Nevertheless, off I flew from my office and straightaway to that one dingy saloon across the street from her address. I recalled her mentioning having been there the previous Saturday. I well understood that visiting it could well have been dismaying. So it was that I decided to first find my way to the weathered building with her home address. Not being able to open the door that would gain entrance to a tenant, I harshly rang the outside apartment bell that bore her name. There was absolutely no answer. So I next decided to ring another bell which fortunately did ring back, allowing the door to be released.

Immediately, I scattered up the five flights - quickly and fearfully passing by the bearded squat-figured man on the fourth floor who I buzzed - allowing him to

understand my mission of having to quickly pass him. As I landed on the top floor, I found myself jarringly knocking on Florence's door. No answer! Grievously, I felt myself, therefore, lost in a gulf of silence. After at least a half hour of knocking and still waiting, I was now about to dejectedly leave. Fantasizing that I could be crumbling, I indefatigably heard a restive stirring - yet, though still bound to the castaway, I was sick at heart that there was still no voice. Suddenly my dauntless muses began to insist that I change tactics. Knocking once more, I decided to vacate such insistence - just as an amiable procedure managed to uncoil from the trap-door of my unconscious.

Redeeming a crimped folded paper, I wrote a confidential note that made it known that I sensed that she probably needed some extra money to help feed her. In addition, I stuck several five dollar bills worded something like "Hey Florence, realize that you probably are once again deadlocked financially." So preserving my bold front, I put another note under her door with my note continuing: "You can hold on to the bills until you see me at our next scheduled individual

session." Confidently, as I was taking off, I yelled out to her that I had slipped the needed restorative value underneath her door. And I roughly, abruptly departed.

Having raced back to my office in order to see my next patient, I had a spare minute to find a phonebooth and urgently phoned up my answering service. Rosalie, my favorite telephone answering service operator (there were no telephone answering machines at that point in history), had explained that Florence had called and screamed out that she hadn't beckoned me to dole her out dirty money. And damn it, she was now forced to grudgingly pay back the exorbitant cash that I had "meanly" dispensed to her.

Just to note, the fee that covered Florence's therapy sessions, was to be paid for by a local remedial charity. When she angrily reached my office, she quickly and disgustedly dropped the paper money on my lap. Following this reckless hurtling of the money, she ragingly seized the opportunity to continually glare at me.

My later whispering comfort, rested in my having relayed this warlike pageant to my then revered supervisor, Dr. Silvano Arieti. Arieti, a creative psychoanalytic overlooker, as well as a former president of New York's William Alanson White Institute and author of many volumes including a fine book on creativity was actually quick to congratulate me on my resourcefulness -- inspiration and heroism. Arieti reassured me that going to her apartment building had been a remarkable choice.

And though Florence would soon enough flee from my presence and practice, she shamefacedly resumed her group therapy. As her sole way of moving ahead, Florence decided that she would play the devil with a hoof and a tail. This abrupt determination was hers as a means of raking me over the coals - to such an extent, that the group counted her as an excessive presence. Yet this adaptation determined her undivided attention in getting a rapid job as a clerk in a neighborhood store. So it was, that, in less than a month, she pulled up her stakes and promptly left the group.

I correctly assumed that Florence could now confidently claim her head as it successfully became

linked to the rest of her body. She did defiantly continue to see me for several individual sessions.

It was fascinating for me to have suddenly heard now about Florence's 40 year old son who she had given up for adoption immediately after he was born. His adoptive mother told him who <sup>Florence</sup> she was, and over the past five years, he tirelessly had sought her out. Florence reported his existence to me. What electrified me was her relating his arrival in her life - along with the account of having been physically seduced by him.

The primary reason that Florence decided to quit the group was her having commenced an oddish tryst with her son Mel. She would have been in her mid 60s at the time.

Among the reasons that Florence's livid image remains close to me is her bewildering affair with her son. A friend of hers, whom she met in the therapy group, and with whom she kept extensive contact, informed me that her son continued "to be with her." In my many years, I have never known, beyond her, of an insistent adultery affair. Yet, it may happen that some souls search and perhaps esoterically mingle with parent and/or offspring. I find myself challenged by

affairs that may literally storm against the dominating cultural myths. Yet hearing those clarions of cultural defiance may well be heard within the practice of psychotherapy.

Stanley suddenly comes to my mind. I think of how I recall Lao-tzu has put it -

"He who knows does not speak."

So it is Stanley whom I need to be with.

I face these senior years buttressed by Florence and Henry; Josie and Miranda; Marco and Diane - and on and on. I have admitted at a convention workshop of the Society of Humanistic Psychology that I have, in my advanced years, been speaking to many who have died. This activity may be an admonishing angel to those who are much younger. Yet, I have learned that the range of many ages provide changeable characteristics.

As an old and largely retired psychologist, I have discovered that various ages bring on a wide variety of what we each envision. Practicing psychotherapy need

never be stagnating over the years - even as the web of human existence does indeed change as therapists age.

This grand ocean of existence has among its inhabitants different tunes as time moves on. Martin Buber (1964, p. 142), a man whose hand I shook after a lecture he delivered oh so many years ago, noted that those of us who practice psychotherapy over many years (as the soul develops) reckon various tensions that represent both being and becoming. To contemplate the evolving years of practicing psychotherapy is to comprehend how we are permutated into various perspectives. I have thankfully come to reckon with the necessity of honoring these complexities.

Once again, I visualize Stanley - Yes, wide-awake at three in the morning, and ready to rush on in order that he see and be seen by his still fermenting vision of his lost and found patients. As you hear me, I ask that you try to contemplate the sacredness of memories and

images of years and years of patients. And with this said, where will anyone's psychotherapy practice and memories have at least a 180 degree movement?

Thanks to the radical experience of shifting intersubjectivities, psychotherapists evolve and develop. With maturation, there come calls for determining one's transformative visions. The years of practicing therapy beyond one's physical strength and endurance tend to bring about unique stabilities and reliabilities.

As therapists live into the years, // meanings and fulfillments play out unique dimensions. We therapists journey through many life cycles - each having a radical impact on our practices. And so too, a therapist's memories may well outmaneuver earlier and equally effective interactions.

I certainly do not necessarily grasp what has happened to the many of those I once saw in therapy. Nonetheless, since witnessing Stan's fate, I have poignantly continued to commune with those who may or may not necessarily be alive.



Looking back to Stanley's retinue, I am clearly excited by striking sur/realities that have timely evolved my own vision. I relate to challenges that evoke memories of Florence (and thousands of others) that continue to sharpen.

Some may, as I recall them, remain victims// others temperamentally vengeful// coarse, unwise and/or radiantly alluring/// ---- Then I suddenly continue to be provocatively challenged by those who have been sexually molested by an uncle or sibling.

- So it is that I ponder about the contrasts between my humanistic/existential psychotherapy and my sometimes falling into popular cognitive-behavioral approaches. Cognitive-behavioral therapy holds that sanity is contradicted by misleading thoughts and aims at recruiting rationality in order to repair maladaptive thinking and conduct. Such approaches are a broad group of techniques with similarities including Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy, Cognitive Therapy, and Dialectic Behavior Therapy.

Yet existential/humanistic therapies refer to the appreciation and profound esteem of personal

experience. It draws on and includes numerous approaches originated by William James, Jung, Angyal, Rogers, Tielhard de Chardin, Hillman, David Bakan, Buber, Marie Nelson, <sup>Ab</sup>Maslow, <sup>AB</sup>May, <sup>Eric</sup>Erickson, <sup>the 2</sup>Perls, <sup>Tom Greening</sup> Moreno, Whitaker, Frankl, Gordon Allport, Satir, - and certainly those who qualitatively convey within my network of sensitive strings such as Kirk Schneider, Edward Mendelowitz, Stan Krippner and <sup>the</sup> many others -

Each tends to look at several appealing approaches, yet all converge on a deep appreciation of being and becoming. The centrality of this therapy, in the sense that I embark on it, deals with ways of reverently beholding being and becoming. It reverences experience and respects responsibility and aesthetics in both client and practitioner. My own practice of reverencing dates back to my early days in clinical psychology (Stern, 1965). I have discerned that it is not just enough to remove what psychology and psychiatry see as symptoms and disease, because the terminology itself is uncalled-for.

I have - at several times in history beginning in the mid 1950s - fused together humanistic and existential therapy approaches. The humanistic dimension has been in valued flows. Each grew out of a distinct historical tradition. Various wars and protestations, beatnik and hippie culture, notions of inconsistent sexual distinctions, the discovery and wonders regarding psycho drugs, movements including women's and gay people's wonders and causes, popular music, radical changing ways of psychological/psychiatric diagnosis and on and on.

And, as I reach into my mid-80s, my soul persists in venerating "and consecrate(ing) the individual" (Stern, 1983, p.5). Being part of humanistic psychology - first through Roger's Americana psychology, later Theodor Reik's neo Freudian appeals, Victor Frankl on life purpose, Albert Ellis' logical nuts and bolts approach. Then some various avenues of pastoral counseling and therapy -- Carl Whitaker and John Warkentin and perhaps Al Mahrer's Experiential therapies -- these followed by European humanistic/existential applications and Rollo May's

popularity through a pathway through Paul Tillich and later an European existential movement --- and even later Giorgi's research methodology; Hillman's Jungian refreshing themes and now, moving into current time: folks like Kirk Schneider, Robert Stolorow, Edward Mendelowitz and on and on ...

Reflecting on my own history, the presence of mirror techniques remains fascinating; my own kernels regarding psychotheology; awe and trembling; boredom and frightful stages; remorseful and vulgar patients; and on and on. I have moved through many areas of sexual awareness - believing that any and all potentials may be part of a person, depending on the cultural foundations.

Since my foundations in clinical psychology, I see my approaches as increasingly poetic and transcendental. As I reflected back in 1964 that "seeing one's self in the mirror tends to be something of a mystery" (1964, p. 216) Mystery remains a continuing riddle that is constantly solved as newer portraits are encountered.

Finally - and I hope this can lead to your wonders - there have become two major methods of psychotherapy. Currently, the elimination of say, commonly focused traumatic therapy, stress, grief and loss, family conflict, breathing problems, insomnia, aging and memory and on and on.

My own interest has moved from "healing" of nuisance and pest problems to life's personal aesthetics, urgencies and solemnity. I am less interested in cure and much more in embryonic profoundtity, unusual awareness, traces of soul, discoveries of peaks and valleys, the art of fantasies and voyages, glowing with imagination. ... Not mere recovery, but linking one's wounds to regeneration. My work involves possible reanimation, poetic dreams, becoming a crusader, absolution, proceeding in unguarded moments, penetrating vision, have a wave of inspiration, travel by-paths and crooked ways, take lips in the dark, taste one's own words, and on and on -

So, let's move into a discussion - an exchange of your ideas with my own perpetual curiosity having our imagination's fired. But let us beckon what therapy means as "problem solving" in contrast with my humanistic/existential school that contacts something

of Carl Rogers (1955) who launches his self "into the therapeutic relationship having a hypothesis, or a faith, that my liking, my confidence, and my understanding of the other person's inner world will lead to a significant process of becoming. ... I am not consciously responding in a planful or analytic way, but simply in an unreflective way to the other individual, my reaction being based, but not consciously, on my total organismic sensitivity to this other person. I live the relationship on this basis." (p.158, 159)

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