

# Spiritual Psychology

*Psychosynthesis*

Psychology for the Whole Person

Spiritual Psychology

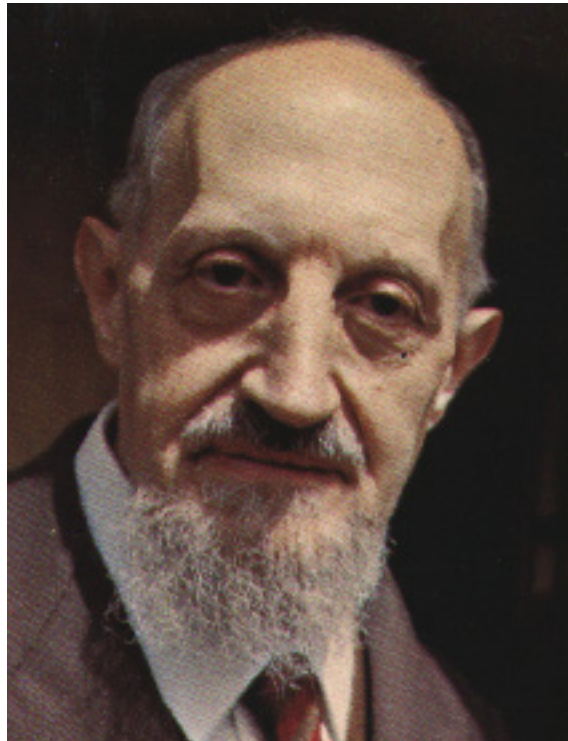
Why a “Spiritual  
Psychology?”

# Why A Spiritual Psychology?

- Because many people want both height and depth.
- Because conventional psychology, with its worthy goal of relieving suffering, does not go far enough.
- Because the “repression” of the spiritual may be at the root of much suffering.
- Because many have caught a glimpse of their higher potential
- Because many who aspire toward the spiritual path still have “baggage” to work out.
- Because it is time, time to put the *Psyche* back into psychology.

Roberto Assagioli, MD

1888 - 1974

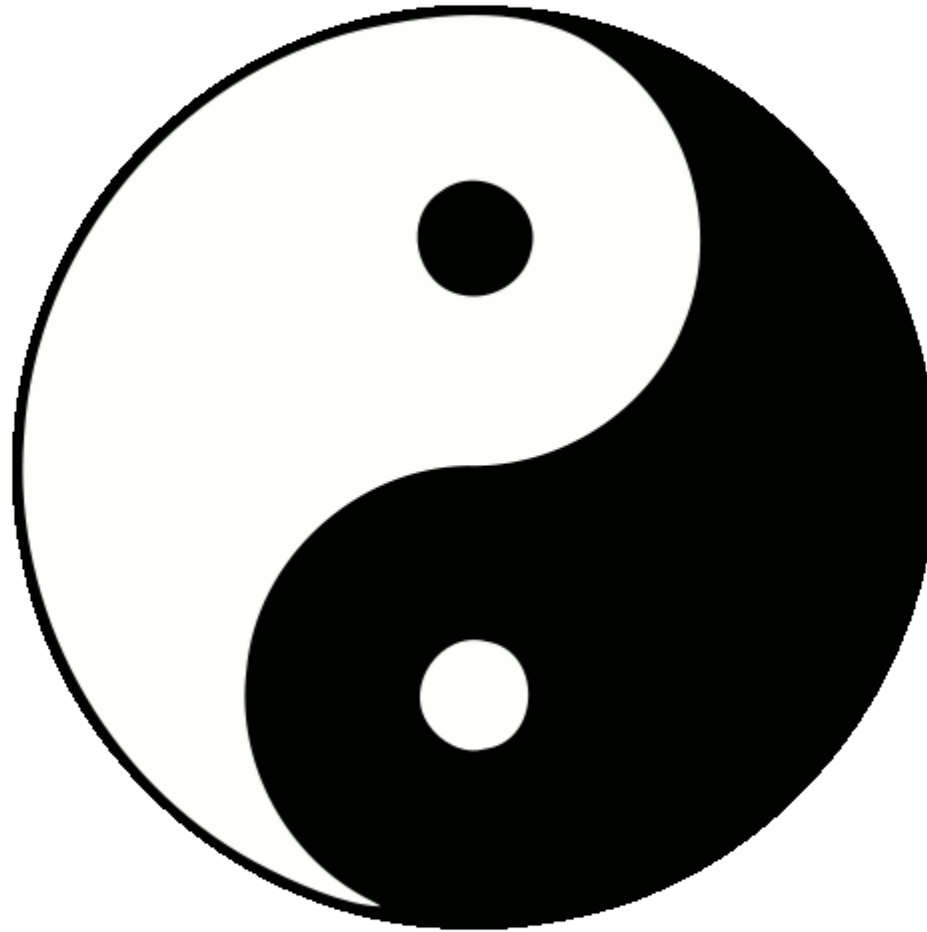


# Brief History of Assagioli

- Lived entire life in Florence Italy
- Italian Jewish Heritage
- Early Student of Freud (until he was seen as a critic of Freud)
- Parents were Rosicrucian, Cabbalist, and Theosophist
- Wrote in his doctoral dissertation “Freud has built a house with a basement and first floor, I wish to add a second story with sun a sun roof to let in the light.”
- With Jung, founded “Transpersonal Psychology”

# His Life's Work

## An East-West Psychology



# Psychosynthesis

- East.... Meditative, contemplative, reflective, inward, intuitive, right brained, ancient traditions respected and included
- West.... Active, inclusive of any modern psychological technique
- Psycho-spiritual
- Growth Oriented, not restricted to pathology

# Basic Ideas of Psychosynthesis

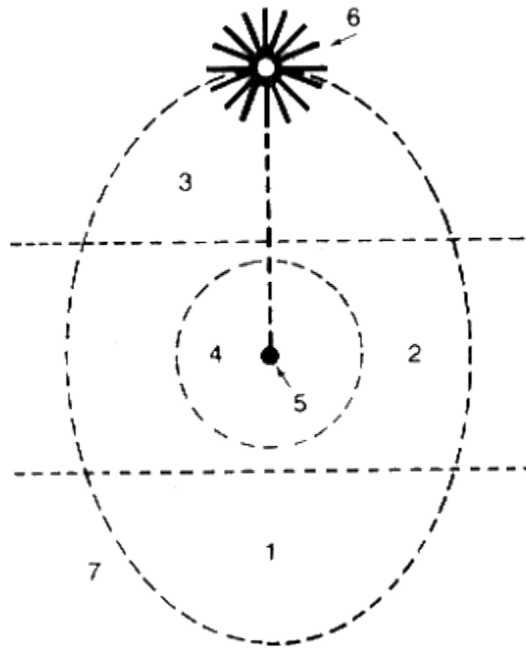
- Modern Psychology in its understanding of the role of the unconscious mind (including unconscious determinism); the existence of complexes, the importance of Behavior and Behaviorism; the important role played by early developmental experiences; all have truth and help to understand the person and how to help them.



# Modern Psychology is not the whole story

- All that modern psychology deals with tends to describe only the lower and most outer aspect of the person.
- The Human Being is a Spiritual Being at the Core. We are the Soul and have an existence beyond the physical.
- In accepting both the findings of modern psychology and teaching of the ancients, Assagioli pointed toward the Synthesis of East and West, Science and Deep Spirituality.

# The “Egg Diagram”



1. The Lower Unconscious
2. The Middle Unconscious
3. The Higher Unconscious, or Superconscious
4. The Field of Consciousness
5. The Conscious Self, or “I”
6. The Transpersonal Self
7. The Collective Unconscious

# Two Stages of Psychosynthesis

## 1. Personality Integration or Personal Synthesis

Characterized by work on the complexes and unfinished business from earlier life stages. Uses any of the techniques that seem to work or be beneficial from any psychology!

## 2. Soul Infusion or Integration of the Personality with the Soul or Higher Self. Spiritual Development.

# Frequently Used Techniques

Sub-personality work.

Our personality has, in fact, many sub-personalities or different, often conflicting, aspects. Sometimes these aspects can be very troublesome and sabotage our efforts at success and happiness.

A little exercise to illustrate this.

# Establish an Observer

The idea of the “Witness” or the “Observing Self” is a concept and practice found in the Yogas but also recognized by Freud as the “Observing Ego.”

Assagioli picked up this practice stating that we are controlled by everything with which we are “identified with” or “attached to.”

Magically, if we can observe some aspect of ourselves with detachment then we can change that aspect or somewhat control it. (Dis-identification exercise).

# The Observer and Subpersonality

## Work go hand-in-hand

The idea of aspects of personality and observing them is now part of our daily language (largely do the work of Psychosynthesis).

We regularly hear people say “There is a part of me that wants ..... But another part says.....”

Psychosynthesis work sets up a dialogue with the different aspects of self to try to find a way of balance and integration of these, often conflicting, parts.

# Use of Imagery and Visualization

Psychosynthesis has been using guided imagery and visualization techniques since the 1930's, long before it gained recognition in the USA.

Imagery work unlocks the profound wisdom and energy of the “further reaches of the mind” both the lower aspects and the higher aspects of mind. It often brings in a wisdom and intelligence we did not know we possessed.

(guided imagery examples).

# Left and Right Brain





# Right Brain Doorway

The use of visualization, imagery and symbols has the capacity to open a doorway between the “objective” or outer mind and the “subjective” or inner, deep, spiritual, mind.

The language of the subjective mind is that of imagery and symbol.

This mind is accessed most easily through dreams and visualization (the waking dream).

The waking dream allows dialogue with this aspect of ourselves and full memory of the dialogue.

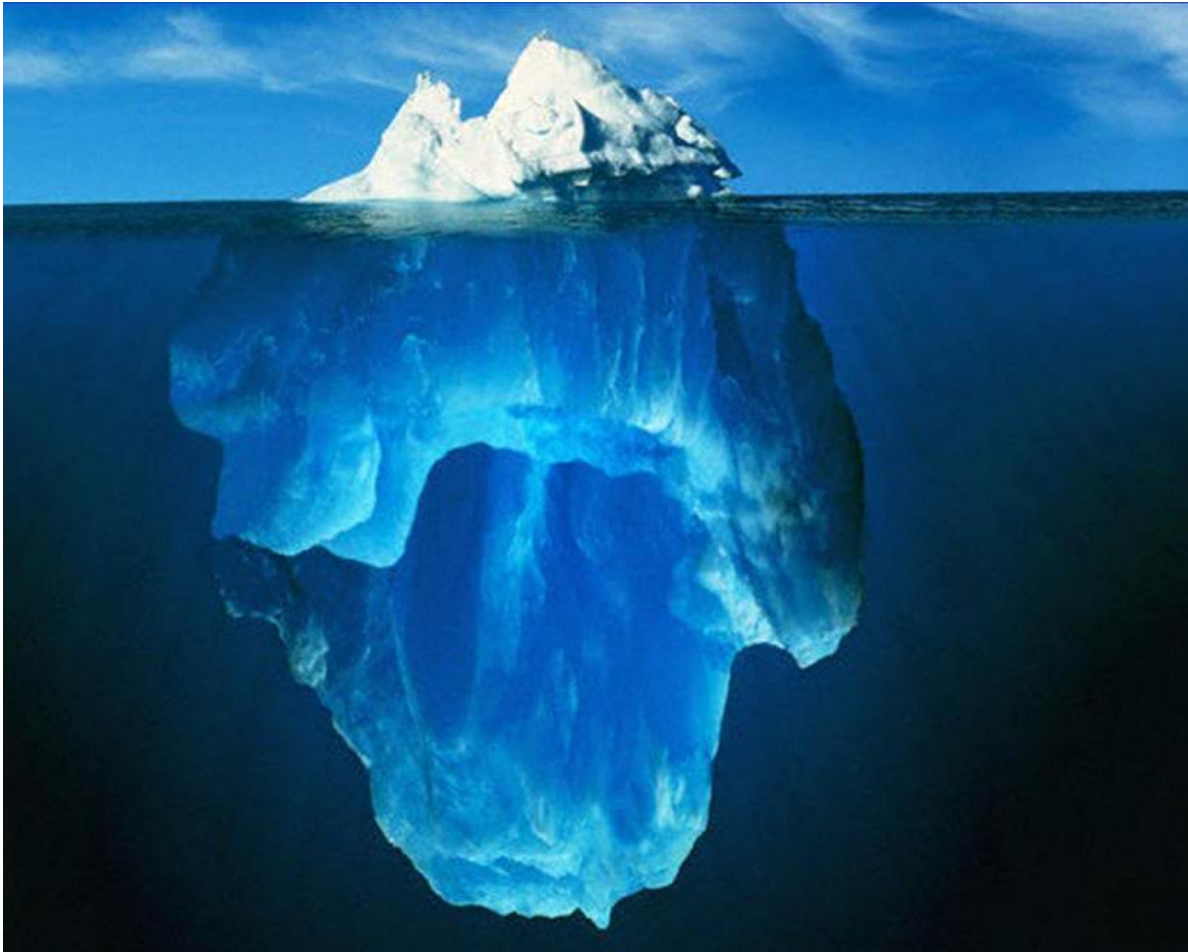
# Inner/Subjective Doorway



# Moving Out (or in) From/To Center



# From Visible to Invisible From Objective to Subjective



# Dream Work

- The “royal road to the unconscious” said Freud
- The easiest way for most people to move inward into the unconscious and “subjective aspect”
- Start with a dream journal
- Ask for help in dreams. Pay attention to what comes in the dream
- (Dream examples)

# Other Psychosynthesis Techniques

- Journal keeping
- Drawing
- Psychodrama
- Gestalt Work
- Active Meditation
- Invocative Words
- Working with Qualities

# Working with Qualities

Assagioli often referred to Soul Qualities or Desired Qualities

Soul Qualities include:

Love

Will

Compassion

Understanding

Intuition

# Developing Qualities

1. Think about the desired quality
2. Write about it or draw it
3. Describe someone who has the quality
4. Vividly imagine yourself in possession of the quality- what would that feel and be like?
5. Attempt daily practice of the quality.
6. Do a nightly review each evening to look at the day in terms of the demonstration of the desired quality. We become that which we deeply aspire to become.





**Edith Stauffer**

My Guide, a model of Will in Action, and an object lesson in developing a quality.

# Love, Will, and Intelligence

People tend to be dominated by:

**Love** - the heart, compassion, emotion and sensitivity

**Will** - drive, need to achieve, power to remove and push through obstacles and overcome

**Intelligent Activity** – the capacity to actively plan, organize, construct mental schemes and models of things

# Conscious Balance and Choice

Psychosynthesis tries to identify the basic type and then attempts to bring in balance if necessary.

Example:

The **Love Type** may need to develop **Will** to be less vulnerable and more effective.

The **Will Type** may need to develop emotional sensitivity so as to learn to love and be loved

# Three Levels of Satisfaction

**Happiness** – the goal for most people’s lives

It is the arrangement of life events to bring about the desired end. Problem, it is fleeting and never seems to last for long.

**Joy** – the constant state of Soul. “Joy is the surest sign of the presence of the Soul” – Assagioli

**Bliss** – the condition of the Spirit beyond all material limitations.

# Repression of the Sublime

Assagioli used the term “the Repression of the Sublime” to describe an unhappy and neurotic state that is the result of failure to recognize and admit the spiritual aspect in ourselves and others.

# Love and Beauty

- Our society has much neglected the need for the development of the capacity for expression of Love and Beauty.
- Love is a basic Soul Quality. When unfolded it enables the person to Love and Accept the people they encounter and find the Good in all people. It is a “Namaste” the salute of the divine in the other.

# The Spirit Must Push Through



# Role of Beauty

In the end beauty is nothing less than the Soul, the Spirit, expressing through some form. It is a great spiritual opening when the underlying beauty begins to find a place in your consciousness.



# Beauty is Everywhere

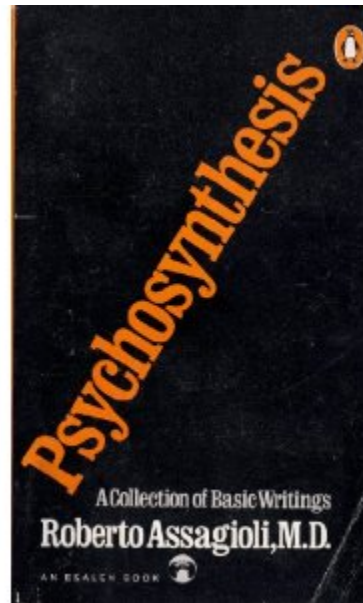


You want  
to live in the  
beauty, but  
in reality  
everything  
is *Beautiful*

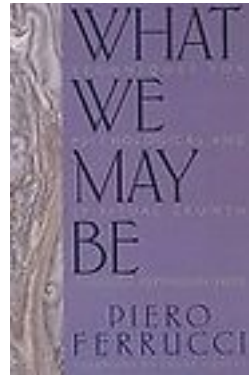
# Signs of Spiritual Awakening

- Powerful symbolic dreams
- The sense of another reality close at hand
- Synchronicity
- Increased pre-cognitive experiences
- Restless dissatisfaction (can look like depression).
- Sometimes “spiritual emergency”
- Sometimes a sense of the unreality of the outer life
- Powerful spontaneous feelings of love, connection, joy and gratitude
- A sense that you know and recognize everyone around you
- A feeling that “everything will be all right”
- Increased desire for solitude and slowing things down

# Places to Start - Assagioli



# Piero Ferrucci



# Piero Ferrucci

## BEAUTY and the SOUL



THE EXTRAORDINARY POWER  
OF EVERYDAY BEAUTY  
TO HEAL YOUR LIFE

PIERO FERRUCCI  
bestselling author of *The Power of Kindness*

# Bibliography and Suggestions

- See handouts for Bibliography and Suggestions