

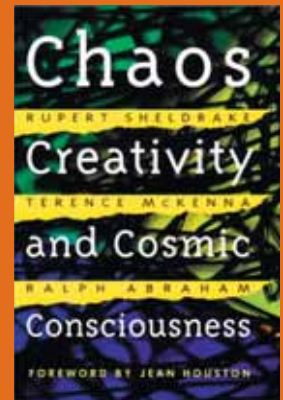
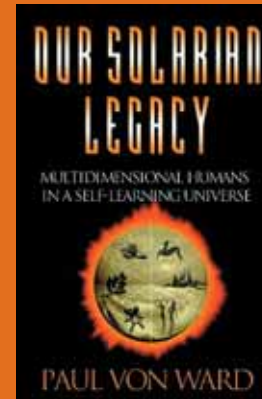
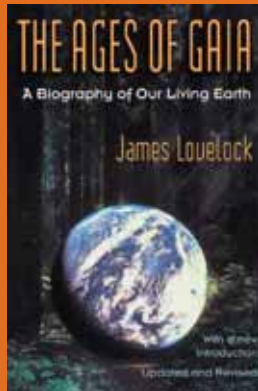
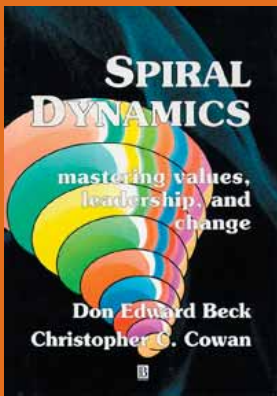
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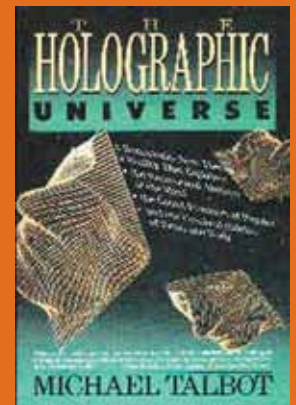
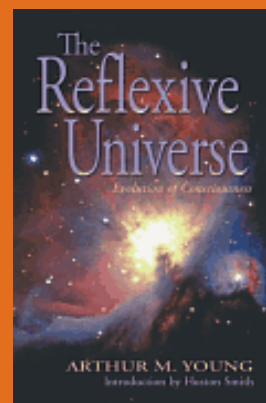
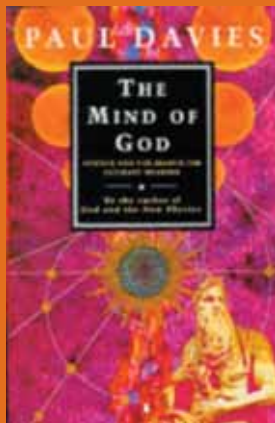
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FOUR TELEOLOGICAL MODES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

— Paul Von Ward

Although it may be the most powerful force in the universe, consciousness is the most amorphous and intangible aspect of human existence. We have a vivid dream that awakens us, thrilling or threatening, but we change position and it eludes us like a puff of cloud. An image or concept grabs our attention, but a friend telephones and we can't recall it. Sometimes we just "know" something, but a few rational thoughts reveal it has no substance or practicality.

How do humans corral and harness such a wild and tempestuous force as consciousness, making it respond to their daily need for interaction with nature and one another? We do so by learning basic assumptions that help us make sense of our reality. We commit them to deep memory banks and act on them without thinking. They move from our active yang mood of consciousness (thinking) to our passive yin mood of consciousness (knowing). They become the "truths" that impose personal order on the data coming through our physical and subtle senses. Such a mechanism is essential to human functioning. Without this core set of assumptions, the psyche would break up from the centrifugal force of internally inconsistent beliefs.

These beliefs, considered "truths," comprise our "worldviews" and cover most questions in life. They serve as the individual's "lens" for interpreting self, other, and external events. The more basic ones deal with the most fundamental of questions: What is the design and purpose of nature? This teleological question requires our assumptions of final causes: Why we think things work as they do. For example:

Yahweh created me. Mind rules. God/Allah decides all. Nature is neutral. Allah/God is just.

In this yin mood of consciousness, human behavior is guided by instinctual survival impulses and by our culturally conditioned assumptions about the nature of nature. These assumptions are largely implicit, outside of routine awareness. It requires great effort for people to even give expression to them. For the vast majority, these assumptions are simply considered to be "the truth." Most individuals and their cultural cohorts feel no need to question them.

CHANGING OUR TRUTHS

Because these assumptions derive from cultural practices and beliefs, they are mutable through experience or new learning. We can change these worldviews through a rethinking of specific beliefs. Sometimes this rethinking is stimulated by a powerful subjective experience. The active mood of consciousness tests and considers alternatives (based on new inner or external evidence) to the ingrained worldview. However, such change is not easy and requires several stages of conscious transformation.

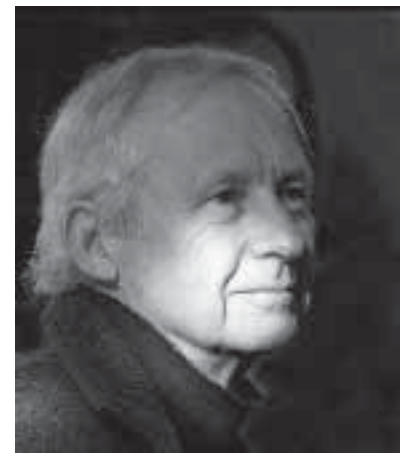
The first is the most simple, yet the most difficult: Recognition that my perception of reality is based on assumptions that may be true or may not be true. If this first step does not stir up strong emotional reactions in the individual, it is likely that one is not yet dealing with worldviews as defined in this article.

The second step requires my identification of the central assumptions I hold. This can be done by reflecting on any event or aspect

of life and asking, "What causes, principles, or forces can I imagine that could result in this outcome?" And then I ask, "Which of these do I believe is the most likely to be correct?" (The self-assessment questionnaire introduced at the end of this article illustrates for the reader how this may be done.) The next step requires that I look for evidence that supports my chosen assumption over alternatives.

When I cannot find evidence that a "nonbeliever" will agree tends to support my assumption, I must conclude that I am taking it on faith. It is this "taking on faith of one's own or one's group's assumptions" as the absolute truth that leads to fragmentation of societal consciousness. In the context of religious and spiritual worldviews, the United States is in effect a "polytheistic" society.

Let me explain. An individual is not usually polytheistic, i.e. "worshipping more than one god." A social unit, however, can call itself polytheistic and provide for the worship of different gods, although not many do. However, this article deals with a situation where a group (a nation or some other collective) assumes everyone worships the same god, although under different names. But an analysis of worldviews may reveal that a nation is actually "polytheistic." That is because people do not directly worship the ineffable source of all



Paul Von Ward

that exists. They worship their own worldview's assumptions about it.

Thus, when fundamental divergences in worldviews exist, where the definitions of their god are mutually incompatible, groups actually believe and behave in a "polytheistic" way. Although they may use the same word—God, their definitions are so widely different that they, for all practical purposes, live under different gods. To the extent that groups believe that their concept of "god," by whatever name, and their "god's word" (as interpreted by them) is the Truth, they set themselves apart from all others with no less certainty than the Babylonians who worshipped Ba'al and the Hebrews who worshipped Yahweh 2,500 years ago. It is no wonder then that the **Quran**, from the newest of the three great supernatural religions, describes polytheism as "the path to Hell."

Because their assumptions are taken on faith, based on a priest/rabbi/imam's inspirations (which are infinite in number) and on varying levels of knowledge, over time the diverging worldviews result in deeper and deeper fragmentation of the species' consciousness. Such diverging realities (caused by worldviews that shape the way people actually experience life) have always increased the potential for political and physical conflicts.

But to understand the depth and complexity, and the threat to human survival, of the current maelstrom of worldviews that socially and politically rend today's world, we must look deeper than labels (the names groups use for their divine beings and give to their religions). Such analysis is necessary to understand the players in the current push for a more theocratic U.S. government.

Given their Deist perspective (belief in a creator or supreme power, but not in the anthropomorphic god of 18th-century religions), it appears likely that America's

Founding Fathers had an intuitive understanding of the competition for power that could arise among competing religious worldviews. They recognized that some groups in a "polytheistic society" (my term) with fundamentally different concepts of reality would want to impose their assumptions on others through the political process. They foresaw a struggle to impose laws that would regulate what had been private matters from one religion's perspective. For this reason, they established secular U.S. institutions with constitutional barriers to prevent the followers of one "god" from dominating the rest of society.

This problem is not limited to religious worldviews. Scientific theories and philosophical schools are also based on assumptions and beliefs founded on partial evidence, always subject to revision based on experience. When groups holding them consider their worldviews as the Truth, and dismiss other ways of knowing, they are in effect worshipping their own divergent "realities." Until we find a way to transcend the hardened worldviews that now divide the species, we will not be able to "put the Humpty Dumpty (of human consciousness) back together again." To help pierce this defensive shield of superficial labels and symbols, I have constructed a self-assessment tool to differentiate among groups at a teleological level regardless of their nominal religious or spiritual orientation. Its purpose is to provide a basis for dialogue across the barriers of deeply ingrained worldviews.

MOODS AND MODES OF HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS

Above I described the natural yin (knowing) and yang (thinking) moods of human consciousness. They may be called the passive form "assuming" and the active form "thinking," or, respectively, "perceiving" and "projecting." It is through the explicit yang aspect that we can both identify the elements that make up a person's

worldview, and observe how it changes. We can participate in the change process with others.

Worldviews may be assigned to various modes in this schema depending on which type and level of assumptions are included. I have chosen in this article to deal with what I believe are teleological worldviews, or human assumptions that deal with the character and functions of human nature and the universe. In four decades of cross-cultural work on personal, scientific, political, and religious issues as a diplomat, educator, and psychologist, I have dealt with different worldviews in 100 countries. Identifying and understanding their various assumptions about the nature of reality has been essential to cross-cultural communication and cooperation.

My work involved 15 years as a U.S. diplomat, 15 years as CEO of Delphi International, and 10 years as a cross-cultural independent scholar. From this experience, I have developed a tool that I believe can transcend language and cultural barriers. It can place people into various groups on the basis of fundamental beliefs that cut across current religious, educational, and social divides. I have chosen to use four descriptive terms for different modes of thinking that are somewhat self-evident: Material, Supernatural, Mystical, and Integral. (The modes of consciousness they suggest can be understood as actually "living in different worlds" or "different states of reality." As worldviews, they are just that important for understanding one's perceptions and behavior.)

The simple instrument comprises 32 questions with four possible answers to each. (Based on a forced-choice principle, the response closest to the person's own belief must be marked by an X even if it doesn't exactly represent that person's view. During the pilot phase, one may note that no answer represents his or her view. One can also suggest language that would.) Each of the

MODES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

responses falls into one of the four modes labeled above and described below. The scoring system clusters responses into the four modes.

The sample question/answer sets at the end illustrate the concept.

Most of us have some of all four modes of consciousness or worldviews in our makeup. The scoring system is designed to profile the relative strengths of the respective modes (basic paradigms that influence a person's thoughts and actions) in terms of their importance to a person. Each mode reflects a different approach.

I: PHYSICAL: Focuses on a material reality and depends on the five senses and human technology to validate one's beliefs. Subordinates inner experience.

II: SUPERNATURAL: Assumes a separate, divine realm from which a god rules daily events. Favors revelations from accepted translators of the truth.

III: MYSTICAL: Believes unseen and spiritual energies control events. Sees humans as spirits with the ability to directly control their reality through belief.

IV: INTEGRAL: Accepts various ways of gaining knowledge, but subjects them to consensual validation by nonbelievers. Seeks testable connections among all events.

The questionnaire rests on the hypothesis that it covers the central basic areas of beliefs that shape an individual's emotions and physical reactions to most categories of life experiences. With its comprehensive focus on the thinking (yang) level of consciousness, the instrument allows one to infer the underlying (yin) worldviews. These worldviews can be correlated with individual lifestyle categories and group norms. Consequently, data about worldviews can be used to predict choices that may lead to family, community, political, and economic comity or discord.

This concept and instrument is now in the pilot-study phase of development. Interested parties can

participate in the pilot phase, and help shape its outcome by contacting the author at the e-mail address shown below. Feedback on the article, concept, and the instrument/scoring package is welcome.

SOME OF THE QUESTIONS FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE TESTING THE FOUR MODES OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND WORLDVIEW

6. Soulmates or life partners are probably:
 - A. Joined first in heaven.
 - B. Through mutual self-definition.
 - C. Created by hormones and chemistry.
 - D. Made by prebirth agreement.
 - E. No answer closely represents my view. I would say _____.
7. The state of my health results from:
 - A. A combination of several factors.
 - B. My attitudes and belief in myself.
 - C. Mine and my family's divine destiny.
 - D. Genes interacting with the environment.
 - E. No answer closely represents my view. I would say _____.
8. I see life on Earth as:
 - A. A product of physical evolution.
 - B. Learning lessons on the soul's journey.
 - C. Doing the Lord God's work.
 - D. Consciousness incarnate in matter.
 - E. No answer closely represents my view. I would say _____.
9. As a human, my role on the Earth is:
 - A. To learn how nature works.
 - B. To prove my faithfulness to God/Allah.
 - C. To test my soul's progress.
 - D. To participate in Earth's development.
 - E. No answer closely represents my view. I would say _____.
10. Government policies should:
 - A. Serve the highest purpose.
 - B. Reflect God's plan for humanity.
 - C. Represent agreed-upon goals.
 - D. Be the will of the majority.
 - E. No answer closely represents my view. I would say _____.
15. Tragedies occur in life:
 - A. By accident or confusion of intentions.
 - B. To remind people of God's power.
 - C. As a result of the physical laws of nature.
 - D. Due to our inner need for course corrections.
 - E. No answer closely represents my view. I would say _____.
17. What is the relationship between God/Allah and Nature?
 - A. God personally rules nature.
 - B. God exists in nature.
 - C. Nature and God are one.
 - D. Nature has no God.
 - E. No answer even closely represents my view. I would say _____.
21. I engage in prayer to:
 - A. Link with the Universal Mind.
 - B. Help me feel better psychologically.
 - C. Communicate to God or the Trinity.
 - D. Energize or direct my intentions.
 - E. No answer closely represents my view. I would say _____.
22. Emotional suffering comes from:
 - A. Natural causes.
 - B. Perceptions of events.
 - C. Human sins.
 - D. Human attachments.
 - E. No answer closely represents my view. I would say _____.
23. The divine or eternal realm is:
 - A. Within natural human reach.
 - B. Potentially knowable by humans.
 - C. A projection of human hopes.
 - D. Beyond human understanding.
 - E. No answer closely represents my view. I would say _____.
24. Humans are born:
 - A. Potentially good or bad.
 - B. Morally good.
 - C. Ethically neutral.
 - D. Sinners or fallen beings.
 - E. No answer closely represents my view. I would say _____.
26. Before conception humans are:
 - A. Transcendent beings of energy.
 - B. Divine souls in waiting.
 - C. Nonexistent.
 - D. Potential life forms.
 - E. No answer closely represents my view. I would say _____.
27. The timing of my physical death:
 - A. Is the choice of my soul.
 - B. Is in God's plan for my life.
 - C. May involve various dimensions.
 - D. Comes from natural or human causes.
 - E. No answer closely represents my view. I would say _____.
29. Truth is best learned through:
 - A. Scientific experimentation.
 - B. Meditation and inner channels.
 - C. Comparing different ways of knowing.
 - D. Revelations from God or his angels.
 - E. No answer closely represents my view. I would say _____.
31. The implicit goal of most human actions is to:
 - A. Resolve inner and conflicting impulses.
 - B. Achieve an immediate positive impact in the world.
 - C. Achieve personal unification with God.
 - D. Contribute to long-term peace and health.
 - E. No answer closely represents my view. I would say _____.

PAUL VON WARD, now an interdisciplinary cosmologist, is the author of GODS, GENES, & CONSCIOUSNESS and OUR SOLARIAN LEGACY among other books and articles. www.vonward.com, paul@vonward.com



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A BICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE ON WORLDVIEWS

— Ilham Al-Sarraf

Editors' Note: We asked the writer, an Iraqi-born scholar who received her Ph.D. in clinical psychology in the United States, to share her professional bicultural observations as she witnessed the Iraqi society's transformations during her many humanitarian journeys there, and to comment on the changes in worldviews in Iraq occurring because of the political unrest there.

Rooted in its Islamic history, Iraqi culture and education stress absolutes, generally calling for a monolithic society believing in the one God: Allah. However, there are fundamental differences between Shiaa and Sunni interpretations of the **Quran**, based on politics involving the followers of the Prophet Mohammed 1400 years ago. The Shiaa considered themselves the followers of the teaching of the prophet and his descendents "or his household lineage—who were the 12 Imams." The Shiaa had to go underground due to persecution by the Sunni rulers of that time. The Sunnis had four schools of thought, from four scholars who interpreted and taught the **Quran** according to their own knowledge.

There were several differences between the two groups, involving the interpretations of the **Quran**. There are two models of interpretation, literal and philosophical. The Sunnis took certain texts literally; for example, "God has eyes over his worshippers." No questions were allowed. The Shiaa philosophically interpreted the **Quran** in an esoteric manner, instead of God literally having eyes, they stated metaphorically that "God is overseeing his worshippers."

Another difference involved the issue of human destiny: Is life predetermined, or do we have choices? Shiaa believe that human beings have "choices in life," as the authors of our lives. We make choices and face the consequences (but, Allah ultimately judges, and his will prevails). In this worldview, Allah gives believers choices, but cautions them about going astray. The Sunni worldview believes that humans are "predetermined" by the will of Allah from birth and that "one's destiny is written on one's forehead the day you

are born." Kismet!

The Shiaa believe in Ijtihad/Jihad as a struggle to learn more about their faith in a proactive manner, finding the truth first in the **Quran** (in the Hadith or "the sayings of Muhammad"), then, in case of conflict, with the guidance of an Islamic scholar (called Almargaah Ayatallah Imam, the source of knowledge). The Sunnis rely only on the literal **Quran** and the Hadith for guidance.

The teachings of Islam are reinforced with fear and prohibitions (Haram); one dares not question instructions given by the family, school, or society. Most of the Iraqi schools' teachings were from the Sunni ideology. The oppressed Shiaa feared having their own schools, confining their teachings to their homes and places of worship.

Both groups believe the purpose of humans is to be the guardians of Earth, where they are tested on their endurance and acceptance. Joy and happiness belong to the devil. ("It is better to walk behind those who make you cry than those who make you laugh.") Both teach that the rewards of the hereafter are our real existence; the Earth life is nothing but a casing of the true kernel. Heaven is promised to those who follow Islam and its teaching with full obedience.

Both groups believe in total and categorical obedience to the faith, no questions allowed. Believers submit to the will of Allah; the Arabic word **Inshaa-Allah** is never far from one's lips. To be called a nonbeliever is the worst condemnation a person has to endure in society; it is worse than God's condemnation! Social pressure, created by rigid norms, controls the population. This structure provides safety and security in a plural-collective enmeshment. (An Arabic proverb states "In a plural way of living, suffering becomes a celebration.") Thus, there is uniformity in practice that few would dare to violate.

Transcending the differences between Shiaa and Sunni, a uniformity and obedience to concepts are created by the popular culture. These cultural norms surpass religious guidance. Tribal traditions and customs are reinforced by

selected **Quran** verses that cannot be ques-

tioned. You can imagine how this contrasts with the U.S., where one feels free to listen to others' views, where the world is not universally presented as black or white, right or wrong. This foundational worldview with its faith has organized and structured Iraqi society for decades, giving a sense of safety to believers although it provided for few, if any, personal choices.

However, the last forty years of oppression and struggle to survive has forced Iraqis through many transitions that have reshaped their lives, beliefs, values, faith, and consciousness, at both emotional and cognitive levels. Circumstances beyond their control (or so it seems to them) have caused deep transformations.

DIVIDED CONSCIOUSNESS

From 1967 on, submission to the ruthless dictator Saddam Hussein, who ruled with an iron fist and intimidation, caused the people of Iraq to completely lose their sense of trust in anyone, often even in their own children. A splitting of the personality went beyond private and public personas. Different subpersonalities were created to deal with family members, close friends, coworkers, neighbors, and authority figures. Everyone needed to be constantly vigilant. The inability to exercise any freedom—to feel, to think, to talk, to express any discontent—meant loss of human rights and adherence to blind obedience. Iraqis perceived they had no choices.

From 1991, submission to severe economic sanctions meant denial of essential materials for everyday living. It degraded, humiliated, and marginalized them below subhuman. They began to plead, beg, and bargain with their dictator, the Superpower, and the United Nations about their suffering, but each of the three pointed to the others. Eventually reality sets in: No one in



Ilham Al-Sarraf

BICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

the world cares. Learned helplessness, depression, and apathy eventually lead to dissociation and, in many cases, undiagnosed psychosis. Control of their own destiny is out of their reach again.

During the period from 1994 to 1996, the only option seemed to be submission to the will of Allah ("He will not give us more than what we can handle"). The attitude became one of "this must be our destiny."

This dreadful living must be a punishment from up above for how bad we have been. Even Allah forsakes us." The continuous bombings from the air were defiantly perceived as Allah's wrath. The abyss was so deep during the middle 1990s that all one saw was the walking dead, on automatic and literally "pre-determined by a higher power." They waited for external help; from within came only self-blame and anger at their failure to overcome the atrocities and injustice.

From 1997 to 2000, the youth began to express their frustrations by personalizing religion. A private religion was something that no one could take away from them. Their worship moved from being toward an external power to recognition of some autonomy, exercised from within. Trepidation and fear of retaliation by the dictator or the West were kept at bay. Creativity in their behaviors, with traditions and norms no longer keeping them from expressing their discontent against social stratification, prohibitions, and the rigid interpretations of the **Quran**, began shaping a new consciousness. What used to be "shameful, humiliating, and dishonoring behaviors" no longer held the same internal prohibition. A sense of internal control of their destiny begot an attitude of a triumph over victimization!

By 2000, this sense of an underground freedom began to roll back boundaries. The ability to bring in income, to earn, and to participate in society restored their shattered dignity and pride. There was a revival of life, living for the day, being carefree, enjoying hedonism, and being deaf to the world around them. They began to overcome their misery. With joy came a feeling that "I am the one responsible, I have nothing to lose." With this attitude, they challenged the "we-collective cultural practices."

But by 2004, the war, terrorism, and

internal conflicts had reversed the progression; regression arrived with plummeting speed. At first, the news of being liberated/invaded hit hard the newly freed Iraqi population. Fear, joy, and terror were the emotions when the coalition marched into Baghdad. Ridding the population of Saddam was a dream come true, but what followed was the nightmare they all feared. Self-determination was again taken away, replaced by the occupation of the Superpower. Their behaviors regressed to old familiar patterns of a power outside themselves. Material promises failed to materialize. A government to represent their needs became torn by violence, foreign terrorists, internal terrorists, invasion by a foreign power, open borders, no laws, no army or police, and no legislative body with the power to execute or implement. With a temporary central government, Iraqis saw themselves as powerless again.

Standing by and observing others determining their future ignited anger kept at bay for a long time. Releasing the pent-up rage resulted in the attitude "we have nothing to lose." Having tasted the freedom of self-motivation

and being co-creators of their destiny only for a short period makes civil war inevitable, proving the Darwinian theory of survival of the fittest.

The current breakdown of cultural and societal systems causes chaos in cognitive and emotional levels of the Iraqi consciousness. People trampled upon and then their unsuccessfully attempting to be proactive and to participate in creating their own destiny led to a psychotic breakdown. Historically, unable to tolerate differences among themselves, the Shiaa, the Sunni, the Kurds, the Childanian, and many minorities who for a long time were muffled and intolerant of one another's differences must today expand their worldviews to incorporate differences and a higher level of consciousness if the society is to survive.

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IRVIN YALOM: Live Case Consultation

Psychotherapy.net, 2005, DVD, 90 min., \$125.

THE GIFT OF THERAPY: A Conversation with Irvin Yalom, MD

INTERVIEWED BY RANDALL C. WYATT
Psychotherapy.net, 2002, DVD, 63 min., \$95.

Reviewed by Bob Edelstein

Over the last half century, Irvin Yalom, M.D., has been one of the pioneers and leaders in developing both the existential psychotherapy movement and the group psychotherapy movement. He has authored numerous books and articles, both nonfiction and fiction, including *The New York Times* bestseller *Love's Executioner and Other Tales of Psychotherapy*. In my opinion, he has written the main sourcebooks for both group psychotherapy, *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy*, and existential psychotherapy, *Existential Psychotherapy*.

Irvin Yalom: Live Case Consultation demonstrates him providing group case consultation for three therapists with varying levels of experience. The therapists present the following cases: 1. "Sue," a fifty-year-old divorced woman, struggling to find meaning in her life after a failed marriage and an empty nest; 2. "Paul," an artist with work inhibition, yearning for more in his life; 3. "Jeffrey," a group and individual therapy patient, seeking help to control angry outbursts in his marriage.

Each case consultation runs about thirty minutes. In the first case consultation on "Sue," Yalom continually engages the presenting therapist by asking relevant questions such as: Why are you presenting this particular client today? What issues do you want to look at? These questions both facilitate

the therapist discovering their own motivations, thoughts, and feelings more clearly, and model what a therapist might ask their client.

Yalom continually encourages the therapist to focus on what happens between therapist and patient. He also focuses on how to look at what is happening inside the therapist and using that as a lens to look at how to intervene with their patient. For instance, when the therapist working with Sue revealed to Yalom that Sue said, "I wish you hadn't asked me that," Yalom responds by asking the therapist, "What gets evoked in you, what do you make of it?" This type of questioning allows the therapist to access his/her inner reactions and express, as appropriate, these reactions to the client.

Throughout the DVD, I enjoy how Yalom references some of his interventions with existential concepts and the works of past existential philosophers. An example of this is that Yalom interprets Sue as having a boundary experience and existential crisis, which throws her into another state of being. Yalom alludes to Heidegger's influence on these concepts, then goes on to more clearly describe them.

I like how pragmatic, direct, and clear Yalom's interventions can be. For instance, he tells the therapist to let Sue know directly that if she doesn't deal with the pain now, it will come out in other and worse ways. He expresses this in a gentle and matter-of-fact way.

With Yalom's strong interpersonal emphasis, he asks Sue's therapist a key question: "How does Sue feel toward you?" He goes on to state that in nearly every session it is important to check how the patient is feeling about the dialogue and the patient-therapist relationship.

In the second case, with "Paul," Yalom again moves into asking Paul's therapist about her relationship to Paul. He asks, "What is the process of therapy like? What is it like to be with him?" And, when the therapist says, "I want to have an answer to allay his anxieties," Ya-



lom interprets that as the therapist's countertransference. He feels action should come from interpretation, so he suggests that the therapist express to Paul what Paul evokes in her. In addition, Yalom asks the therapist if Paul has shared any dreams, for Yalom, like Freud, sees dreams as an opening to make one's unconscious conscious.

In feedback to Paul's therapist, he emphasizes the existential perspective. He interprets Paul as only defining his existence through his performing and doing, so the idea of just being in existence isn't there for Paul. To me, this is an example of Yalom's pragmatic existentialism—too often existentialism is associated with ethereal and/or convoluted ideas. Another example of his pragmatic existentialism is his telling Paul's therapist that Paul is crippled with regrets for things that he hasn't done and for his unfulfilled potential—and that it would be good to shift Paul's focus on past regrets to his future, so that two years from now, more regrets are not accumulated.

Again, Yalom addresses the relationship between the therapist and her patient by focusing on the experience between them, rather than what Paul will produce or how he will perform, or how Paul's need to produce or perform enters into the therapeutic relationship.

In the final case consultation, with "Jeffrey," the therapist sees him in both individual and group psychotherapy. Yalom focuses primarily on the group psychotherapy aspect. He is interested in how Jeffrey operates in the group, and how Jeffrey's existential issues are manifested in it. Yalom feels

the group is a social microcosm of society, and the patient will show their pathology at some point in the group. When this occurs, and the patient's pathology is manifest, then the group can stop-action it, and the patient can choose to use the feedback to change. In Jeffrey's case, the group can be used to help him deal with his anger more constructively and more powerfully. Yalom feels that a great value of the group is to have so many different worlds reacting in each of their unique ways to one stimulus, in this case, anger. I resonate with this, as it demonstrates the phenomenological roots of existential psychotherapy.

In Yalom's concluding remarks, he emphasizes the three major themes he covered in the case consultations. The first theme is the importance of working in the here and now, which includes: the importance of exploring the relationship between the therapist and their patient and the importance of the therapist using one's self in the therapy. The second theme is the importance of identifying and exploring existential issues, such as grief, loss, responsibility, death-anxiety, and our search for meaning in life. The third theme is the importance and value of group psychotherapy as a means through which a patient can reveal and heal their pathology.

While I appreciated the incredible scope of Yalom's knowledge, I would like him at times to be less certain of his conclusions and to allow more space for the unknown. I also would like him to elicit more comments from the participating therapists regarding their observations of the other cases presented. I felt this limited facilitation of comments was a bit ironic given how much and how powerfully Yalom uses group process and dynamics.

Finally, while I value his emphasis on the interpersonal aspects of the here and now, I feel it is at times

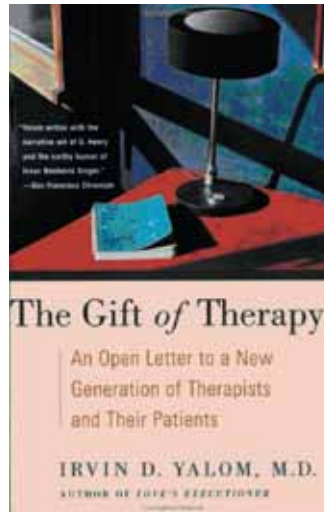
at the expense of the intrapsychic aspects of the here and now. I admit to years of training with Jim Bugental, who emphasizes the intrapsychic aspects.

In **The Gift of Therapy**, the interview of Dr. Yalom by Randall Wyatt, Ph.D., is excellent, and there is obvious rapport between the two men. Yalom discusses passionate and meaningful themes of his life's work as a psychotherapist and writer. He addresses such core concepts as existential psychotherapy, therapists' fear of self-disclosure, working in the here-and-now, group psychotherapy, and challenges for the next generation of therapists.

Yalom begins the interview process by stating his reason for writing **The Gift of Therapy**. In his youth, **Letters to a Young Poet** by Rilke had a profound influence on him. I greatly appreciate Yalom's self-disclosing manner throughout the whole interview, including his acknowledgment that he has accomplished a great deal in his life.

Yalom wisely, beautifully, and clearly describes existential psychotherapy and what it means to him. He similarly describes his interpersonal focus in psychotherapy.

I particularly liked his nuggets of wisdom: The word **patient** means one who suffers, so because we all suffer in one form or another, we are all fellow patients; The perfectly analyzed therapist is a myth; Let the patient matter to you, and let the patient know that; Happiness and meaning flow from engagements and encounters in relationships; It is the relationship that heals; Throw-ins are an important component of the therapeutic process. This triggered a warm memory for me. I once had a client



who was anxious about dating a woman. I said: "It would just be a date. You're not proposing marriage." This throw-in comment relaxed him enough to ask her out. Sure enough, he ended up marrying her.

I especially appreciated Yalom's nonjudgmental attitude, his gentleness, and his deep caring for the human being. It touched me

when he shared that self-disclosure is important to him, as he doesn't want to infantilize the patient. Thus, he will often disclose how he is feeling in the therapy process. He believes that being egalitarian in this mutual sharing process is a good thing. His comprehensiveness, wisdom, wit, and intuitiveness also come across in this interview.

I value Yalom's openness in the interview, such as his disclosure about his experimentation with different therapeutic ideas and processes. One example of this is he shared that he sent out weekly reports to his groups which included bringing into consideration his own mistakes in the group that week.

He says "I am still eager to see patients, to see what is going on, what will evolve, and what will be the next chapter in their story." I appreciated hearing this, as it resonates with a strong belief I have, that **enthusiasm** is a key quality to being an effective therapist.

His approach to his life and work describes to me the actualized human being.

BOB EDELSTEIN, LMFT, MFT, is an existential-humanistic psychotherapist based in Portland, Oregon. He also provides consultation, supervision, and training for other professionals, as well as workshops on **Authentic Engagement: A Radical Way of Being in the World**. Bob can be reached at BobEdeLMFT@aol.com, (503) 288-3967, www.BobEdelstein.com.

**SECRETS, LIES, BETRAYALS:
The Body/Mind Connection**

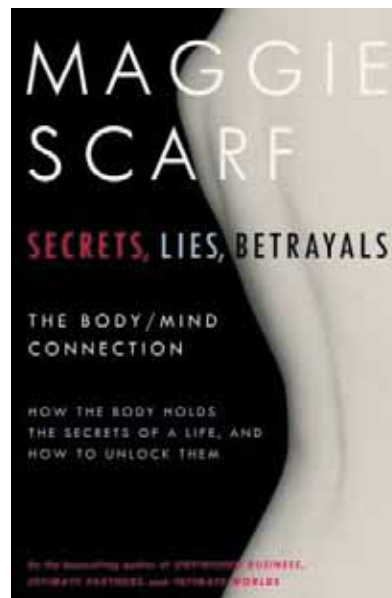
BY MAGGIE SCARF

Ballantine, 2005, 384 pp., \$14.95,
e-book \$9.95, ISBN 0345481178.**Reviewed by Stanley Krippner**

The basic theme of this provocative book is that the body knows more about our experiences than words are capable of expressing. Secrets, lies, betrayals, and the like have long-lasting effects not only upon our mental health but also upon our physical health. As a result, according to Maggie Scarf, a therapist and best-selling author, our bodies speak to us by means of such phenomena as sleep disorders, hyperarousal, irritability, emotional outbursts, and depression. Secrets lie dormant because of shame, fear, loyalty, and even love. These furtive stories may be kept from the mind, but they are not kept from the body.

Our emotional lives are deeply rooted in our bodily experiences of emotionally charged events that are currently happening or that have happened in the past. Scarf calls them “somatic memories,” and they have been the focus of such therapists as Lowen, Rolf, Feldenkrais, Rubenfeld, Gendlin, Mindell, and Hannah—all of them familiar to humanistic psychologists. It is the contention of these therapists that all the discussion, understanding, and insight given by family, friends, and psychoanalysts often fail to dispel the painful images, reactions, and somatic aftereffects of events that were once experienced as out of control or overwhelming. Because many of life’s most distressing experiences cannot be “talked away,” the remedy is what Scarf calls “top-down processing,” from the prefrontal cortex to the rest of the body. She maintains that the

body “stores” memories of intensely stressful experiences, particularly in the limbic system; bodily states of extreme stress trigger a panoply of psychophysiological responses. In a situation of threat, activating biochemicals such as the hormone cortisol (which is manufactured in the tiny adrenal glands above the kidneys), are immediately pressed into a state of high activity, as are “neural messengers” that serve to augment vigilance and to sharpen an individual’s attention



to the danger at hand. Severely emotional experiences are “stored” in the amygdala, often for years.

One of the many virtues of Scarf’s book is her description of the psychophysiology involved in this “storage” process. The hippocampus and amygdala are part of the limbic system, which maintains one’s internal state, including fight or flight, and the ability to react before one is fully aware of the danger (as demonstrated by an elevated heart rate and an increase in blood pressure). **Traumatized people have smaller hippocampuses (that sort and organize sensory experiences) than non-traumatized people.**

Two approaches recommended by Scarf to “unlock” the body’s secrets are eye movement depro-

cessing and reprocessing (EMDR) and Albert Pesso’s psychomotor approach, both of which have accumulated significant supportive research data over the decades. Practitioners of these therapies attempt to “detoxify” bodily memories from the traumatic stresses that (in the words of the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual) have led to “the disorganization of a core sense of self and safety in the world,” leaving “an indelible mark on one’s worldview.”

This book, with its useful appendixes, is extremely timely in that one in three Iraqi veterans suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or some other emotional difficulty, not to mention the soldier suicides in Iraq. Scarf also notes that the firefighters of 9/11 are requesting marital or family counseling at a rate more than three times higher than what was requested before the attacks on Manhattan and Washington, D.C.

Scarf writes in an engaging manner, utilizing case studies that illustrate her concepts, and ends with useful suggestions regarding what questions her readers can ask prospective therapists. **Secrets, Lies, Betrayals** is instructive not only to people trying to untangle their body/mind knots but also for those people who are endeavoring to support their struggle.

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