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CHAPTER 13 (Part II) *(Part I of this article can be viewed at www.greenpsychology.net)*

THE PERSONAL GROWTH LABORATORY

By John Weir

The First Week

Our design emphasis for the first week is on building interpersonal relationships among staff and participants and on increasing the awareness of body structure and function. We accomplish this through the pseudonyms, dream and fantasy work, the percept language, and a sequence of verbal and non-verbal activities. For the body awareness part of the lab, I derive my design decisions and training interventions from a physiological model that organizes human behavior in terms of sensory-motor experiences.

In this model I think of the human organism as a simple tube, about three feet long on the outside and thirty feet long on the inside. It has appendages that aid in locomotion (arms and legs) and a concentration of communication centers at one end (the head). It is an energy exchange system designed to bring itself into contact with and ingest various natural compounds (food) at one end, chemically break them down and recombine them (metabolism) in the middle, extract energy in the process, and expel the residue (feces) at the other end. The energy profit from metabolism is expended mostly in building and maintaining the structure and function of the organism and powering its food-seeking behavior. It is always active, operating on a principle of least effort for maximum energy return.

The tube maintains contact with the world around it through more than a dozen sensory systems (vision, hearing, taste, smell, light pressure, heavy pressure, heat, cold, touch, pain, thirst, hunger, sex, suffocation, nausea, position, balance, weight, and vibration) by ingestion or rejection of a variety of chemical compounds other than "food," and as the recipient of externally applied forces. It functions optimally when it obtains biologically appropriate foods, has adequate use of its maintenance systems, is fully sensitive to sensory stimulation, and reactive within the full range of its response capabilities. It pulsates, expanding and contracting with varying rhythms. It contracts under stress, deprivation, or pain and expands under gratification, security, or pleasure. Under continued pain or stress it contracts chronically in such a way as to inhibit its motor reactions and to desensitize itself to the accompanying feelings. These actions are always to maintain the integrity of the system at some level of functioning.

The tube is always fully engaged in its existence. It is always experiencing sensory excitation, processing this input and emitting behavioral responses. It is most vital, most alive, when it is most response-able, when using all its capabilities or even extending them, in the service of its needs, its wishes, and its protection.

We use this model to design a program to sensitize and energize the tube and to activate repressed and undeveloped response capabilities. We employ a variety of activities intended to focus attention on body processes and to initiate interpersonal relationships among the participants at a non-verbal level.

We explore light and heavy touch, tension and relaxation, strong and gentle contact, balance and imbalance, controlled and random movement, posture, physical coordination, and body fantasies. We experiment with new ways of moving to music and help each participant

find his natural movements, rhythms, and pace. Dancing is an important part of the lab design. We dance before, during, and after the scheduled sessions.

The model calls for a wide variety of non-verbal experiences that facilitate the expansion of sensory awareness. For example, silent meals to concentrate on tastes, smells, and oral textures, body movement exercises to explore balance, position, movement, and coordination, blindfold walks to renew and increase familiarity with subtle and often ignored smells, sounds, tastes, and textures, with orientation by body position, and to experience the extent to which the perceptual process is usually dominated by vision.

A "tube" lab calls for attention to diet, self-poisoning through smoking, alcohol, drugs, and plastic foods, to physical exercise and physical release, to the physical aspects of emotional states, and to sleep behavior. There is also practice in learning to read body feeling states and changes, to know which are needed, which are excessive, and which are unnecessary. The varieties of ways one can breathe and the effects of each are examined and the consequences compared.

We stress the importance of the feet in balance, contact, sensitivity, and body movement control. All activities are done barefooted to begin restoration of the sensitivity of the bottom of the feet. A large pan of water filled with ice cubes is provided. Standing in it, participants experience extremes of cold, pain, and sensory acuity. They frequently make important discoveries about their reactions and accompanying feelings of fear, tension, relaxation, and exhilaration that come from moving from one sensory extreme to another. At various times during this "foot work" participants may experience the recall of early childhood memories, sudden mood changes, behavior insights, increased physical sensitivity, increased physical contact with the ground, a heightened sense of balance, and a greater tolerance for physical and emotional pain.

An important staff responsibility is to provide as many and varied ways as possible for a participant to experience himself. This increases the likelihood that he will experience himself reacting or behaving in a particular way while participating in a variety of activities. For example, he may experience his fear, his anger, his aggression, his strength, or his weakness in his dreams and his guided fantasies, while clay modeling or finger painting, while improvising, while listening to a staff member, while being led on a blind walk, while dancing, etc. Uncovering such consistent ways of perceiving or reacting in a variety of situations can provide increased self-awareness and a rich source of personal insight.

As the lab progresses, the pace and vigor of the physical activities increase. This is accompanied by an increase in vitality from heightened body energy levels. With this revitalization, the participants experience a sense of greater strength and personal power. This, in turn, encourages them to take greater personal risks with deeper and more meaningful self-confrontations at all levels of consciousness. Self-images expand, dreams and fantasies become richer, self-acceptance increases, and enhanced physical capabilities emerge. New body awareness facilitates new social awareness. Increased body security is accompanied by increased personal security. The verbal work follows a parallel course of increasing vitality, openness, and directness. The concept, "I am my body" becomes more and more meaningful and more appropriate.

Almost any sensory, fantasy, or motor experience may reawaken long-forgotten visual or body images. As they emerge into consciousness, they may be experienced with almost their original intensity. Such "reliving" usually results in the confrontation of past trauma and the discharge of the accompanying feelings, frequently resolving them.

This kind of experience can be activated by beginning anywhere in the experiential loop of <-> sensations <-> images <-> recollection <-> feeling states <-> body movement <-> sensations <-> etc. One of the strategies of "tube training" is to provide opportunities for this reactivation process to occur.

The basic learning formula for a tube lab is: I have an experience that reveals to me an inhibition or a facilitation of a sensory or motor capability. As a consequence, my awareness is increased. I know myself in a new way: I have new data. These data render incomplete my present self-perception, putting me into a state of confusion, anxiety, or excited expectation. Ultimately, a new organization emerges, I am reintegrated and I experience release, stillness, exhilaration, and a heightened sense of power, of wellbeing, and of personal worth. This process is a movement toward greater self-differentiation. If I pursue it deliberately and self-consciously, I am managing myself.

In percept language: I experience me inhibiting or facilitating my sensory or motor capabilities. As a consequence, I increase my awareness of me. I know me in a new way. I have new data. With these data I make me incomplete. I confuse me, "anxious" me, or excite me with expectations. Ultimately I organize me, I reintegrate me and release and quiet me. I make me feel better than before, more powerful and more valuable. This is how I grow myself. I move me toward greater differentiation. If I move me deliberately and consciously, I am managing myself.

Here it is the job of the staff to encourage sensory exploration, help promote greater acceptance and use of the body and body processes, help participants extend the limits of their physical movements, and model exploratory and experimental behavior. They will resist attempts to alleviate the confusion and anxiety of the amorphous state. They will help the participant recognize these feelings as a sign of movement and to value and embrace the state for what it is, a necessary precursor to personal growth.

We have scheduled sessions morning, afternoon, and evening. In each session we usually have an activity with part of the time spent in sharing and working this experience with the rest of the community. We also consider, and take advantage of, the remaining time as work time. This includes meal times, play time, and sleep time. We "work" twenty-four hours a day, living our relationships and our transferences, dreaming, fantasizing, and conducting our self-explorations. All our experiences provide data for personal growth.

The focus of tube theory is on neurophysiological processes. I find the theory adequate for the design of personal growth laboratories that are focused largely on physical experience. I find it satisfactory to concentrate, as tube theory does, on input and output and ignore the intervening or internal processes. With adequate understanding and acceptance by the participant of his **sensory and** motor processes, I am convinced that his symbols, fantasies, and dreams will undergo parallel differentiation without deliberate attention. However, there will be limited insight into, and verbal understanding of the processes of personal growth, self-management, and differentiation unless these inner processes are examined in detail. Therefore, we are careful to provide ample opportunity to conceptualize these processes as they emerge. My preference is to use a type of transference theory for this purpose.

The Second Week

One of the consequences of the first week's activities is that complex relationships have had opportunity to form, with the percept language constantly surfacing and illuminating their projective or transference basis. In the second week we maintain our emphasis of the first and increase our attention to these transference relationships as they come to assume a more central position in most everyone's experience. We need a cognitive map for understanding and working with them. We provide one through lectures by the staff on a transference theory of human development and socialization plus some of Jung's ideas on archetypes and the collective unconscious. Briefly, the transference theory we use is as follows:

My existence begins in the womb. I am sustained without effort. I am fed, breathed, warmed, shock-protected, and purified. I have no responsibility and no obligations. Life is

peaceful, quiet, and secure. If this serene existence is seriously disturbed, the chances are that I will be damaged. The after-effects may linger on in me for years, perhaps even for life.

If I am fortunate, everything is comfortable and serene until the day of pressure, pain, and suffocation.

I am born into an existence that must always be at times cold, hot, noisy, rough, uncomfortable, painful, famishing, and abandoning. At other times, it can be pleasant, loving, gratifying, peaceful, and secure. From this day on I will never again have my every need filled completely arid at once. Often I will live frustration, failure, pain, and loneliness. Furthermore, I am now responsible for my own survival and the unknowing recipient of obligations and expectations imposed upon me by those with the power to give and to withhold.

Four strivings will govern and guide me for life: self-love, self-identity, sexual identity, and self-differentiation.

What is my value? Am I prized, desirable, lovable? Am I another hungry mouth to feed? A nuisance, a burden? Am I wanted? Am I welcome? Or am I an intruder?

My thinking is magical. Before my birth the world was me. Gratification was immediate and complete. Now I must compete, adjust, submit, wait. My feeling of omnipotence rapidly diminishes. How others, especially my parents, treat me establishes my value to me. If they prize me, I prize me. If they belittle me, I belittle me. If they reject me, I reject me.

Regardless of how I am treated, my impotence and the frustration I experience over and over launch me on a lifelong search for my birthright. It is my quest for self-discovery, self-acceptance, and self-love, not because I have earned them, but because they are my right. Because I'm me.

I have now lived a few years. I am beginning to sense, in a vague way, that I am an entity, separate from others around me. I know nothing about me, but I am curious to learn.

Who am I? Where do my parents end and I begin? Where are the boundaries of me? What is within these boundaries? What are my strengths and my weaknesses, my abilities and my incapacities? What do I look like inside and out? What am I like in your eyes? How do I affect you? Do you like me? Tell me! Give me feedback!

I find my answers in the way I experience others treating me. I am conditioned by their power, their experience, their authority, and their need for control. They mold me in the images they desire, without my knowledge or my permission.

My self-differentiation begins within the constraints of conformity. I capitulate when I must, resist when I can, and struggle to find a "me" in my confusion. It is likely I will spend most of my life in this search.

I thank the ancients for the gift of the Oedipal myth! It is my thread through the labyrinth of man-woman relationships.

My parents instruct me in the qualities of maleness and what is proper behavior for a growing young boy. I learn to take them as models of proper behavior and to do as they do. I seek to "possess" my mother, the most important female in my life, and in the process to become manly like my father.

Likewise, my sister will learn to become a woman like her mother, and to be appealing and flirtatious with her father. Each of us explores, experiments, and discovers our sexuality through counterpoint with our opposite-sex parent. Given the nuclear family, how could we possibly do otherwise?

Then I marry someone I love, that is, someone who is the unconscious, and occasionally the conscious projection of my mother. By this transference I have my mother all to myself. My wife has, in her turn, picked me, the transference image of her father. Our

reward is that, for the time being, we have satisfied our Oedipal longings. I have married my mother, she has married her father, and society has given its approval.

Now the marriage must live out its mission: to permit each of us to have our other-sex parent until we have fully experienced adulthood through our possession of them. Then we become ready and able to give them up and go on to rediscover our mates, this time without the transference loading. It is as if the institution of marriage as we know it were a social invention for the completion of this Oedipal journey.

I continue to define my sexuality within my marriage relationship. When I have lived through my Oedipal strivings and can experience my sexuality without transference, I am ready to work directly on my self-differentiation at the sexual level.

As an infant I waited. As a child I obeyed. As an adolescent I conformed. As an Oedipal marriage partner I cooperated. Even when I was rebelling, I was reacting against a common enemy in an accepted way, another variety of obedient conformity.

I was learning skills, values, and proper attitudes. I was liking myself occasionally. I was identifying aspects of me in a limited way. But my parental transferences set narrow limits within which to experience myself.

As I dissolve each transference image, I am able to identify and love a little more of myself, to own a little more of myself, know a little better who and what I am, and take in and accept more fully my experiences in the present. I come to see more clearly the processes and forces of my inner and outer existence. I increase my ability to manage my existence and to facilitate and prize my further self-differentiation. Time is limited, but the process of discovery is continuous and becomes more and more exhilarating. It will continue for the rest of my life.

This theory of developmental stages is wedded to the concept of transference. Almost from birth we project parental images onto those around us, reacting to these transference images as if they were the original parent. Only after we have resolved them are we able to perceive the significant people in our lives with objectivity. It suffices for me that most of the events that occur among young and middle-aged adults in a personal growth laboratory can be understood and adequately dealt with in terms of transference theory. It is clear to me that the transference process is a basic growth process. It permits us to continue to react to and deal with the significant figures in our youth long after they are gone from our presence.

There is a long transition to adulthood. It is not something suddenly achieved at a particular age. Even when we are generally adult there are parts of us that haven't "kept pace." There is still work to be done, crucial experiences we must have in order to bring those parts into congruence with the trends of the whole: love, hate, jealousy, guilt, grief, and depression are feelings that accompany this work. They may dissuade us from making the necessary effort unless we have learned there is a tolerable limit to pain. In terms of this theory, then, we can define personal growth as the process of transference resolution.

After the transferences are largely resolved, usually but not always by middle age, the growth process is concentrated more fully on continued differentiation and the transformation of life experiences into wisdom. This is accompanied by an increased inward turning of psychic forces and a confrontation and coming to terms with aging and death. As far as I can determine, transference mechanisms do not seem to be used in these later stages of personal growth.

As one lives through these four existential stages of growth -(self-love, self-identity, sexuality, and differentiation), the degree of success experienced in any specific stage sets the limit on the success that can be obtained in the succeeding stages. If I experience insufficient love in stage 1, I will have great difficulty finding my self-identity in stage 2, I will be confused concerning my sexual identity in stage 3, and my differentiation will be restricted. With adequate love in 1, I will be more likely to establish my identity in 2. If I fail here, then I will have difficulty establishing my sexual identification and differentiating, etc. These developmental "arrests" are similar to the psycho-analytic concept of fixation.

Participants work through this sequence in reverse order. So we design our sessions and work phases to be congruent with this order. We start with differentiation activities. Then we confront Oedipal transferences. Next we go on to personal feedback and self-confrontation to clarify the self-identity. Finally, we seek to develop self-acceptance and self-love through acceptance of one's body structure and processes, and ownership of the self "as is."

This reversal seems to be a function of the degree of confidence the participant has in the staff that he will not be deserted on his journey, plus the amount of personal risk he is willing to take at the moment. It takes more trust and requires more risk to work at the Oedipal level than on differentiation, still more when working on self-identity, and most when trying to rebuild self-love.

Not everyone works at all four levels during any one laboratory experience. Some will be working at each level, and some will work at more than one. It depends upon where they are on their journey toward resolution, how self-managing they are, and the strength of the resources at their disposal. Repeated laboratory attendance enables some participants to work on earlier and earlier stages in each succeeding laboratory.

This transference theory is the principal guideline for the design and conduct of the second half of the workshop. More and more attention and energy are devoted to exploring each participant's transference experience, partly to help him resolve it, and partly to educate everyone in the identification and exploration of transference in the lifelong service of personal growth.

In the selection of movement activities, the focus is gradually changed from sensory and body awareness to the re-enactment of family dynamics and of racial myths and symbolism, such as evolution, rebirth, rites of passage, and archetype identification.

For example, one member said to another, "I have had an exciting experience with my name. I called myself Fury, meaning the focusing of the energy of the unconscious, the daemonic energy, the energy of the beast which can be harnessed and used for power and growth and transformation. I felt the tremendous energy in me and could hardly contain it (me). I was different in my living style and in relations with people. Of course, some of the difference was due to people's reaction to the name, their fear and fascination of the connotations of the name Fury. As time went on, my image of the energy was that of riding a powerful horse, that I could feel it between my knees, that I had to grip with my knees and hang on tight or get thrown. I had to use incredible force to rein in and let out the energy in useful ways and not let the beast under me take over. I got tired. I longed to get off and rest. I couldn't until the end of the journey (lab). I looked forward to getting safely to my destination and putting the animal in the corral and resting. Now, at the end of the lab, I have the most lovely feeling of well-oiled coordination, well-being and restfulness, coupled with acute sensations."

When I translate what I've said into the concept of the animal in us, the devil part of us that is uncivilized, savage, undisciplined, and the struggle of the godlike part of us to train and use the energy that has to be put down, hidden away by society in its attempt to civilize us, I remember that you are doing this with your stallion. That on a real and physical level you are doing what must be done later on a metaphysical level, in order to come into your full power as a woman and as a human being. This latter task seems to be one of maturity, to be done after much living has been undertaken.

We continue to explore the extremes of sensory and behavioral polarities. We use guided fantasies to extend our access to unconscious processes. We design behavioral prescriptions for various participants in whatever form their personal work requires.

The journey into these deeper recesses of memory and experience culminates with the rising to consciousness of repressed memories and feelings and leads to the expression of long-hidden urges, fears, and angers in the appropriate activity or movement session.

When a participant is successful in surfacing and discharging a repressed experience there is a clear beginning, middle, and end to his encounter with this part of himself. Immediately after he is finished, he feels a strong sense of release, peacefulness, and satisfaction. It is as if long-inhibited muscle action patterns had finally been discharged and there was no longer any need to hold them out of consciousness. It is clear that the release and satisfaction are feelings resulting from the adult-as-child getting revenge for early childhood punishments and deprivations, experienced or imagined. Once the revenge is expressed, the participant is able to experience and accept his love and dependency. The ambivalence toward the parent is on the way to being resolved.

My own experience, after having "encountered" the revengeful parts of me many times over the years, is a reduction of hostile, destructive impulses and actions and an increase in what I would call positive initiation or constructive aggression in my interpersonal relationships.

The Principle of Necessary Opposites

The principle of necessary opposites also influences many of our training decisions. It states that every functional image or social role requires a polar opposite for its delineation. The physician needs his patient, the slave his master, the officer his private, the con man his patsy, Christ his Judas, and God his Devil. And vice versa.

The principle also states that sensory, perceptual, and motor patterns have their opposites -their polarities. For example: hot-cold, up-down, open-closed, big-small, contract-expand, happysad, burdened-unburdened, suspicious-trusting, listen-ignore, accept-reject, initiate-follow, aggressive-passive, loving-apatetic, hating-apatetic, balanced-imbanced, and controlled-spontaneous. If a person invests his energy and experiences himself in only one side of a polarity, he limits his adaptability, constricts his range of experiencing, and limits his breadth of differentiation. One needs to be able to live anywhere along a polarity's continuum, depending on his state of being and the circumstances of the moment.

We use this concept in the lab to encourage participants to explore the hidden sides of themselves. To discover childhood by being a parent, parenthood by being a child. To discover masculinity by exploring femininity, and femininity by exploring masculinity. To know pleasure through pain, and pain through pleasure. To differentiate thoughts from feelings and sensations from emotions.

We also use it in our insistence that self-discipline is a necessary aspect of spontaneity and freedom of expression. Contrary to what has sometimes been said, the kind of personal growth training being described here is not an orgy, or a training program for the expression of hostile impulses, or an excuse for licentiousness. We discourage hostile physical contact. We forbid participants to injure themselves or others. The aim of sensory exploration, physical contact, and expressive movement is to reacquaint the participant with his body and its processes. The conscious management of these processes demands a high degree of control and a type of self-discipline that approaches a form of asceticism. One will no longer permit the abuse, neglect, or denial of his newly understood, respected, and prized self. Participants frequently assess this acquisition of self-control as one of the most valuable achievements of their lab experience. It gives added reality and a sense of permanence to their experience of autonomy, ownership, personal responsibility, and self-management.

In principle, one becomes freer to be spontaneous and expressive over his entire range of possible behavior as he becomes more aware and capable of greater self-discipline. Only when one is completely aware and self-disciplined can one be completely spontaneous. Freedom derives from conscious, self-managed awareness, not from blind self-indulgence.

It is essential that participants share their experiences with others. Verbal sharing helps them discover and understand added implications and meanings of their experiences. The sharing also performs a kind of witnessing.

Witnessing seems to be extremely important in connection with many ritualistic and ceremonial activities. Participants frequently reactivate a memory or a body fantasy, act out a personal improvisation or a bio-energetic release, or experience another participant in a new way. We ask that if possible this be done in the group, or at least in the presence of group members, so the experience can be witnessed. Witnessing, and sharing, for that matter, seem to validate the event and give it and the participant public sanction and acceptance. The sanction prevents the generation of guilt feelings. Acceptance enables a person to own their experience, making it a part of self and contributing to personal growth.

It is as if participants return to childhood, recall images or expresses behaviorally motor patterns (accompanied by the appropriate feelings) that were originally repressed, and then need the accepting observation of the witnesses, especially transference objects, to be assured that their behavior is approved, respected, and perhaps even genuinely admired. The more of their existence they can take into themselves, the more secure they become. They might reach a state of complete self-acceptance and internal security, free to let all parts of themselves be seen, to disclose whatever aspects of self they wished without fear or trepidation.

The last day or two of the lab is spent in consolidating the learnings made by some, and in continuing the uncovering and working through for those who still have unfinished business. During this time the group culture is one of acceptance of individual differences, mutual affection and respect, and strong feelings of community. Compared with the beginning of the lab, the level of energy and excitement is high. Sensations are intense, images are rich, behavior is spontaneous and open, and work is efficient and productive. At the same time there is an atmosphere of peace and quiet with the serenity that follows having made an arduous journey. The emphasis on self-responsibility has produced for some the exhilaration of greater acceptance of self, greater sense of ownership or autonomy, knowledge of how to grow one's self, the price and rewards of increased awareness, increased access to unconscious processes, greater zest for living, etc. For others, there is a new appreciation of how they deaden themselves to experience, how they immobilize themselves with fear or anger, how they enslave themselves to the needs of others, how they have degraded, abused, and rejected their bodies, how they deny their sexuality, and avoid the life decisions they can or must make, etc. These keener appreciations are not accompanied by depression and despair, but faced with anticipation and resolve.

We end the lab with a ceremony designed to be congruent with the one used for the opening. It focuses on feelings of separation and departure. In the opening, our ceremony brought us together, in the closing, it separates us and sends us on our way. We go with a sharper distinction between "me" and the "them-in-me." Many leave with a new appreciation of the strength and peace one can feel when one fully accepts his existential aloneness.

At the end of the lab, people often say they are ready to leave. They feel able to stand alone. They do not feel dependent on the lab community and they look forward to leaving to start dealing with the "world out there" in new ways. For them, the so-called re-entry problem is not a big issue. For others, the central concern is how they will be able to alter their living environment to make it more congruent with their new self-awareness.

Actually, the end of the lab is not the end of the experience, nor the end of the work. As a matter of fact, most of the work remains to be done. The laboratory focus is on how to identify and work with one's growth processes. Most participants return home and continue to "do" themselves. The laboratory learnings have only started or aided them on a journey that will continue for a long time to come.

OVERVIEW

There are many beliefs and assumptions underlying the theories I employ for laboratory design and the strategies of my training interventions. Among the more important that I recognize are the following:

1. As long as I live I am a functioning unitary organism. I am not composed of parts, such as body, mind, psyche, soul, feelings, thoughts, ego, id, etc.
2. I am my body; nothing more, nothing less.
3. I have an innate urge to grow, to realize my potential, to differentiate.
4. I learn, I grow by experiencing.
5. No one can give me knowledge, insight, or wisdom. I must gain them through my own efforts; from my own experiences.
6. I cannot and will not change, grow, or understand until I am ready.
7. I am the only one responsible for my existence.
8. I am the sole authority over my inner life and feelings.
9. I am frequently the unwitting captive of my childhood experiences. Only I can free me.
10. To experience and to grow is good.
11. Everyone has a right to personal autonomy.
12. Everyone has the right of self-determination.
13. Autonomy, self-determination, and differentiation follow transference resolution.
14. Whatever I feel at any point in time is an appropriate feeling to have at that time.
15. All of my behavior is functional for me. I always do the best I can with what I have.
16. My perceptions are never "wrong" though they always differ from those of everyone else.

I am keenly aware of these assumptions and the theories I use and how strongly they influence my laboratory designs and training strategies. I have already said they derive from my experience, my background, and my value system. I wish they had a more solid foundation of scientific verification than they do at present. They cannot, because the scientific data do not exist. I know of no adequate scientific research on the effects of personal growth training. We have no convincing scientific validation of the theories and procedures we use; no clear guidelines, scientifically based, for future developments, and only limited demonstrations that present methodologies are dependable, safe, and effective.

Like many other workers in this field, I have done questionnaire research and follow-up surveys, and have collected long-term autobiographical material from participants. These data provide many exciting, dramatic, and inspiring testimonials that convince me that personal growth training can be influential in clarifying a person's attitudes, values, and life style as profoundly as other life experiences. But none of these reports or other research studies satisfy me. No one has yet devised the research design, the comprehensive measuring instruments, and the sophisticated analytical techniques commensurate with the extreme complexity, variety, and subtlety of the processes of personal growth. My conviction that the processes of human differentiation into ever-expanding uniqueness are becoming observable and definable gives me hope that this will not always be the case.

Let me make explicit what has so far been only implied. I believe that one must have a theory of some sort, either explicit or implicit, as to the nature of personal growth if one is going to do effective personal growth training. The adequacy and validity of that theory will strongly influence the quality and effectiveness of the laboratory design and the training procedures. Without a theoretical orientation that is clearly understood and consistently applied, personal growth training is apt to be experienced by the participant as incoherent, contradictory, and confusing. The learning will be limited and the impact will be slight.

The two theories I have described above represent a personal bias synthesized somewhat from my study of Freud, Reich, Jung, and Rogers, but mostly, from my personal growth struggles and a multitude of significant events shared with workshop participants in more than 350 laboratory experiences. These theories are my metaphors, fantasies, and "as-if" formulations and concepts. They work for me; they reduce my anxiety. I need them to design a laboratory. I need them to tell me when and where to go with a participant. I need them to tell me what is meaningful and what is irrelevant in process and content. They structure my world.

I emphasize the "my," the personal origin of these theories, not out of arrogance or possessiveness, but from a conviction that I have no choice but to order my world the way I do. The theory that results is, and must inevitably be, solely my own. We each construct our own order out of what we experience, what we do, and what we think. My theory can never be another's and theirs can never be mine. Personal growth, self-differentiation, and theory building are always subjective and internal processes. They can be described and discussed, but never transferred. Our existential aloneness is the precondition for everything we feel, do, and think.

I have come to the end of my sharing with you my bit of order in the confusion of contemporary human relations training. I end with a quotation from T. S. Eliot that captures, for me, the essence of personal growth:

"We shall never cease to explore, and the end of all our exploration will be to return to the place from which we started and know it for the first time."

Each time around is fuller, richer, and more enlightening. I excite me with this realization.

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