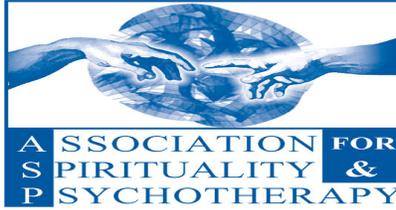


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"The integrated pathway of spirituality and healing in psychotherapy"



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PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF KEN WAPNICK, PH.D., A FRIEND, SUPPORTER OF ASP, AND THE GUIDING LIGHT FOR A COURSE IN MIRACLES.

SEE PAGE 4 FOR A TRIBUTE TO KEN.

NEW: Please note that our new website, now called ASPHealing.org, is nearly completed; we hope that you find it more welcoming and attractive and mention it to your friends and associates to promote the Association. Your feedback is encouraged. Thanks!

*Look out for our e-Newsletter, where 2014 members may freely advertise their educational seminars
NEW: Our web site will be posting MEMBERS audio interviews for listeners!*

OUR 2014 ASP MEMBERSHIP DRIVE IS STILL ON. REMEMBER, WE DEPEND ON MEMBERSHIP DUES TO KEEP THIS IMPORTANT WORK GOING. FOR A REGISTRATION FORM AND TO PAY VISIT OUR WEBSITE AND CLICK ON THE MEMBERSHIP LINK.

PLEASE NOTE THAT OUR ABBREVIATED PROFESSIONAL DIRECTORY APPEARS IN EVERY ISSUE AND CAN BE VIEWED AT THE NEWSLETTER ARTICLES LINK

The Subject of this Issue of the Newsletter is

"WHAT IS LONELINESS? HOW CAN SPIRITUALITY/GOD HELP HEAL LONELINESS?"

See Pages 6 through 12 for several articles on this lively topic.

**THE SUBJECT FOR ARTICLES FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS:
"IS THE FEAR OF DEATH THE UNDERLYING SOURCE OF ALL ANXIETY?"**

**SEE PAGE 3 TO LEARN ABOUT ASP'S PREVIOUS ONE-YEAR PROGRAM ON
Developing A Spiritually Informed Approach to Psychotherapy and Counseling**

Please note that we are currently considering Offering ONLINE Courses or Modules

Please let us know of your interest in such presentations

By emailing ASPSpiritAndPsych@gmail.com or calling 609-662-4911

To be notified about ASP Network Meetings, Events and to receive our e-Newsletter send us your email and snailmail address to ASPSpiritAndPsych@gmail.com or visit our website. Since 2012, ASP publishes PsychoSpiritual Dialogue on its web site only, at the Newsletter Index link and mails paper copies to members only. In Addition, ASP will send an e-Newsletter each month, with links to some individual articles from our authors.

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ASP President's Letter

Mary Marino, Ph.D.

It is with great excitement that I am pleased to start the new year with our new active website: asphealing.org. Part of our expanded focus is to explore the integration of spiritual concepts and practices to other healing disciplines besides psychotherapy. The website has two new areas that provide opportunities for members:

Every Professional Member has the opportunity to do a 5-10 minute audio interview with one of our board members, Alan Steinfeld. This interview will be placed on the ASP website in the member interview area, with the member's name and picture. It will be possible to click on the picture and hear that professional speak about the focus of his or her work, and how spirituality is integrated and applied in his or her practice. The focus of the interviews will be to learn from one's colleagues, provide educational information, and to build a professional community.

The second new opportunity is that ASP is now listing all member events, workshops and educational seminars in a section of upcoming events. Professional members are encouraged to send in a description of their events for posting. ASP is still open to co-sponsoring

events with members and we encourage those interested to click on the link on the website that fully describes this opportunity.

When ASP was originally formed, the ideas of relating spirituality to the practice of psychotherapy were a new approach. Today, these ideas can be found readily investigated and represented in the numerous educational centers and retreat organizations that explore and expand on them. It is now becoming more common to find courses that focus on spiritual concepts and practices offered within more traditional academic training programs. Both Harvard and Columbia have offered courses in meditation as part of their psychology and MBA degree programs.

ASP respects the academic rigor, research foundation, and ethical practice components that are the hallmarks of more traditional psychotherapeutic training approaches and disciplines. However, the last two decades have proven through documented results the positive and constructive benefits of expanding the application of spiritual practice and other healing modalities into those more traditional approaches. The American Psychological Association has recognized, for example, the field of Energy Psychology as a viable practice for the treatment of trauma and other psychological issues.

ASP sees part of its mission to be a organization centered around the discovery of new information around human emotional, mental and spiritual health, and, what contributes to a thriving, and happy life filled with meaning. This reflects the expanding model of psychological healing that is not just problem focused, but rather the building of awareness that leads to a more open and expanded sense of self, open to growth and learning. Our intention is to create an organization that supports a professional network where we have ready access to meeting others, sharing discoveries, and expanding our disciplines and understanding.

The Association for Spirituality and Psychotherapy (ASP)

A Non-Profit (501c3) Corporation at 250 West 57th St., Suite 501, NYC 10019

www.ASPSpiritandPsych.org email: aspspiritandpsych@gmail.com

ANNOUNCES The 2013/14 Course:

Developing a Spiritually Informed Approach to Psychotherapy and Counseling

THE MONDAY NIGHT Year Long CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION PROGRAM

Offers an in-depth exposure to psycho-spiritual theory and method. In addition, the process/project class provides a coherent structure intended to help each student develop a personal perspective regarding spiritually informed therapy.

Course Faculty	<i>ASP therapists experienced in a variety of spiritually-informed orientations</i>
Monday Nights Sept. to June 7:30 to 9:30 PM	<i>Throughout the year 6 different Modules meet Monday nights for 4 weeks each for 2 hours a night: A process/project class meets after the conclusion of each module. All Classes take place in NYC at 250 West 57th St., suite 501</i>
Tuition	<i>\$1,800 -71 contact hours - 10% OFF FOR ASP MEMBERS</i>
NASWNY CEU's	<i>If Approved receive NASWNY CEU credits and a certificate of completion.</i>

Developing a Spiritually Informed Approach to Psychotherapy and Counseling offers the participant a unique program for personal and professional growth in a community of experienced teachers and like-minded fellow students.

Teaching Philosophy:

The Association's teaching philosophy is based on the belief that spirituality is necessary for psychological healing. ASP is dedicated to deepening our students' inner spiritual awareness to enable healing to take place for both themselves and the patients they work with. We believe that a spiritually informed therapy, while working with common presenting problems, can be maximally beneficial for the individuals who seek our help. ASP is committed to helping students work in a more effective, fulfilling way with individuals, couples, families and groups.

Who should take this Course?

We invite analysts, psychotherapists, counselors, and other psycho dynamically oriented healing arts practitioners and ministers as well as individuals who have a spiritual and psychodynamic orientation to register for these programs.

General Learning Objectives:

- Provide a spiritual perspective on working with psychological issues such as depression, anxiety, addiction, somatic problems and relationships, as well as casting "spiritual light" upon them.
- Develop "spiritually-informed therapists" by providing sound theoretical bases and learning experiences that will broaden perspective and increase skills in diagnosis, treatment, therapeutic presence and listening.
- Provide opportunity for psycho-spiritual growth as it relates to personal and professional development
- Offer a professional community.

Teaching methods will include

- Relevant meditations
- Relevant Supportive Psycho-spiritual Readings
- Didactic presentation of theory, method and technique
- Case discussions
- Experiential exercises including practice therapy sessions
- Process papers including the development of personal perspectives on spiritually informed therapy.
- Project and Class Presentation.

To View the Previous Year's Curriculum, Visit

<http://psychospiritualtherapy.org/2011-2012%20NewOneYearProgram.pdf>

Or Call Diana Kerievsky at 917-834-9228

Tribute to Dr. Kenneth Wapnick By Jon Mundy, Ph.D.

I'm assuming by now that many of you have heard of the passing of Dr. Ken Wapnick on Friday, December 27th. Ken was only 71.

I met Ken in April 1975 when Helen Schucman (whom I met in 1973) decided it was time to sit me down and tell me about *A Course in Miracles*. It happened in Ken's spartan little studio apartment on East 17th Street in New York City. It was decided at the end of that meeting that Ken and I would continue to get together for further discussion. This we usually did in my office-apartment at General Theological Seminary where I was doing graduate studies and teaching.

Six weeks after Helen told me about the Course, she met Judy Whitson. Judy and I were both working with the American Society for Psychical Research in NYC; and we were both teaching at New York University School of Continuing Education. Judy saw to the reproduction of several copies of the Course and we got a chance to read it. After the Course was published in June of 1976, I began sponsoring workshops with Ken as the leader in New York City, in Westchester County, and at my church in Orange County, New York.

From 1977 to 1988, I owned a mini retreat center called "High Rock Spring" in Katonah, New York. For several years, I sponsored workshops there with Ken, usually on Memorial and Labor Day weekends. In 1979 the Foundation for Religion and Mental Health in Briarcliff, New York, commissioned me to produce a series of Saturday seminars with leaders in the field of psychotherapy and spirituality. I organized one weekend with Ken as the keynote speaker.

Gloria was there, and it was the first time I noticed Ken and Gloria "making eyes," and I thought, "Oh boy, something wonderful is going on here." The next year they were married in a private ceremony. Ken was so in love with Gloria. Once, when we were going out to dinner in Temecula, I remember Ken running ahead of us to the car so he could open the car door for her. How many men do that?

His dedication, persistence, and downright doggedness were astonishing. He had an amazing ability to focus. I went to see him at Gloria's house in Ardsley, NY in 1981, and he showed me the work he was doing on the Glossary-Index for the Course. In an age before personal computers, he had it all laid out on 3 x 5 cards. Ken wrote 31 books and he produced hundreds of CDs and DVDs. Ken slept six hours a night, from 10 pm to 4 am. He would be up working while many of the rest of us were still dreaming.

The last workshop I sponsored with Ken was at High Rock in 1983. By that time, he no longer needed my help as he was receiving more invitations to speak than he could handle.

I always thought of Ken as my older brother and an ever wise advisor. When I was having "women problems," I would go to Ken and he would always help me see a clearer way through the maze. For many years he counseled me through whatever road I was trying to navigate and just like Helen, who also offered me her counsel, Ken never judged me. As I would progress in understanding the Course, he would say, "Okay, now take it deeper."

Ken had the remarkable ability to disagree with you without attacking you. He could "shape you up" and love you at the same time, doing it good naturedly. He read every book I wrote on the Course before it was published and offered his commentary. What he did for me, I know he did for a host of others.

In the early years, Ken had a noticeable speech impediment, but over the years he gained increasing control over it and it almost completely disappeared. In time, as he grew in the Course, Ken became progressively free, light, and ever more playful – always the sign of someone who is free of the tethers of this world. Recent pictures of Ken show him with a kind of impish smile on his face.

I can't believe he is gone. It seems as if there was more he could have taught us. Regardless of how much we learned about the Course from Ken in the classroom, in his books and on his many CDs and DVDs, it is Ken himself – that really taught us by his example. He taught only love for that is what he was. I said to him in a letter, just one month ago, "I can't imagine this world without you."

When I called Dr. Bob Weltman to tell him of Ken's passing, Bob said, "Oh, how I loved that man." And then he said, referring to a session he had with Ken, "When I got up to leave, he hugged me and I knew that he loved me." Even folks who met Ken only once felt as though he was their friend for life.

I was giving a talk in Winnipeg, Canada, and a lady showed me a framed picture of a treasured letter she had received from Ken. Other people have shown me their letters as well. When he moved to Roscoe in 1988, Ken was so busy with the move that he did not have time to answer all his correspondence. When he finally sat down and responded, he wrote replies to more than 50 different people. I've got a file of letters from Ken and I suspect that many others do as well.

Ken was at Omega in Rhinebeck, NY in 2008. I live near Rhinebeck, so one day when he was on a break, I went to see him and we went out to lunch. After lunch, we sat together for a long time, not talking. We did not close our eyes and deliberately meditate; neither did we stare at each other, we just sat, taking in the nature that surrounded us, neither of us speaking. Talking would have seemed extraneous – artificial and superfluous in an otherwise beautiful moment of communion. I rarely if ever felt more completely comfortable. After 20 minutes or more Ken and I looked at each other, smiled, hugged, and said goodbye.

I never knew Ken to be sick a day in his life, though someone said that he once had a cold. The Course is incredibly clear in its emphasis on the fact that "You are not a body." During these latter days, as Ken was getting frailer and folks were worrying about him, he would say, "I am not dying." How can the immortal die? Only the body, which never is who we are, can ever dissipate and disappear.

We were supposed to have lunch this past August, and the day before, his secretary, Elizabeth, called to read a humorous note from Ken canceling our appointment. As it turned out, he was going to visit the doctor for some tests. Little did we know that four months later he would pass from this world.

*The time is set already. It appears to be quite arbitrary.
Yet there is no step along the road that anyone takes but by chance.*
ACIM – W-158.3:1-2

You never know about the completion of a life plan.

Ramakrishna, who was thought to be an enlightened man, died of cancer at the age of 50. Ramana Maharishi, also thought to be an enlightened man, died of cancer at the age of 70.

I will miss Ken tremendously as will the thousands of others who also loved him. You've heard of the saying "WWJD" -- "What Would Jesus Do?" Whenever I've been really stuck in this life's journey, I've stopped and said, "WWKD" – "What Would Ken Do?" I learned more about Jesus through Ken than I did from the Jesus of history or the Bible. Many folks have told me over the years that when they looked at Ken, they could see Jesus in his smiling eyes.

In 1991, I wrote an article for *Miracles* magazine about Ken titled, *Impeccably on the Path*. I don't know how close one can get to perfection in this earthly life. I know that Heaven is perfection and that Ken is there. If anyone ever achieved perfection in this life. . . Ken did.

If it seems I've put him on a pedestal, so be it. He was asked on several occasions if he would write his autobiography but he never did. He would always respond, "It's not about me." All he wanted in life was to provide us with a clear understanding of the Course. As I continue this life's journey, I'm sure I will continue to say, "WWKD?" "What would Ken do?"

I'll be doing a talk on the Course, 1:30 pm Sunday, January 12 at CRS, 123, 4th Ave. in NYC. It will be recorded for You Tube, at that time. I'll take time to offer a more formal eulogy for the most remarkable and spiritually advanced man I ever met.

Lovingly, Jon

The following section is dedicated to this issue's dialogue on "What is Loneliness? **HOW CAN SPIRITUALITY/GOD HELP HEAL LONELINESS?**" As usual, we invite all readers to offer their responses, which may appear in the next issue of the newsletter. Also we welcome suggestions for newsletter topics.

Sitting alone and still, he travels very far.
Upanishads

The Poetics of Loneliness By Michael Grosso, Ph.D.

I've been living alone now for some time but rarely feel lonely. According to the U. S. Census Bureau, more Americans are living alone today than at any time in the last 42 years, and that includes people from all age groups. One in four households is occupied by one person. And even greater numbers are going solo in France, England, and Germany. Leading the field is Stockholm, in Sweden, where 60 percent of the population lives alone.

Of course, Americans and other advanced capitalist peoples can afford to live alone; in the bulk of the impoverished world, living alone would be an impossible luxury. (In the ancient and medieval worlds, they ran off to the woods and the desert to live alone.) Without meaning to sound cynical, it may be one of the few advantages of the triumph of capitalism; it allows us to escape from one another, from the hell that Sartre said other people can be.

According to some studies, living alone, far from creating a painful sense of loneliness, affords many so-called "singletons" the opportunity to enrich their social life, to explore various community outlets, and to pursue an improvisational life of multiple friendships or love affairs.

Then, of course, there is the obvious point that we now live in the age of the Internet and to some degree can banish the feeling of loneliness with the stroke of a computer key. If we think of the Internet as the objectification of the collective human nervous system, from a comfortable hermitage one can connect with the total information sphere of the species. The possible ways of doing this range from solipsistic pornography and vacuous facebook gossip to getting involved in all sorts of serious intellectual, social and sometimes revolutionary movements. So if you're reasonably well set up in your wired nest, you need never suffer the pangs of

loneliness. Thanks to capitalism and technology, we can avoid having to live out a pathetic scene like that of Anthony Quinn at the end of *La Strada*, louring at the night sky, perplexed and tormented, reduced to soul-racking animal loneliness.

But is that really such a good thing? Do we really want to abolish the sense of loneliness? The painful sensation of being cut off, isolated, without emotional support or helping hand? Do we want to wipe out forever the experience of yearning for something we know not what, something more, something deeply important and missing in our lives? Do we really want to live in a world in which we can completely block out any distressing sensation of dwelling in soulful solitude? Should we be ready to embrace any means available to mask the pathos of loneliness?

Maybe not. I was once acquainted with somebody who thought he was the greatest guitar player in the United States – "possibly the world," he later added, without batting an eyelash. The interesting thing about this fellow was that night after night he didn't make music but played video games and drank glass after glass of the cheapest beer he could buy. The deluded musician never suffered the pangs of loneliness -- no doubt an overstatement. But he had mastered the technique of making it through the night by muffling his pains, reducing them to virtual extinction by booze and video distraction.

But is not the sensation of stark loneliness also a badge of our humanness? In the effort to escape or even transcend loneliness, isn't there the risk of losing our humanity, vulnerability, our sensitivity to the mystery of others? Perhaps the same questions could be asked about the mass striving to control or eliminate all the untoward feelings, the malaise, shyness, uncertainty, depression and other byproducts endemic to being human by means of pharmaceutical agencies.

To eliminate and technologically master all the discomfits of being human would be proof of the triumph of capitalism. Would this signify the

coming of utopia or the enslavement and death of the soul? In our overweening need to “connect” at all costs, is there a danger of turning into self-absorbed, techno-drug-reduced zombies? And not just in one’s domicile but in the thick of family, work, and social life? Are those little magical devices so many of us nowadays have at hand and seem unwilling to let go of turning into devices of techno-possession?

I recall visiting a household at dinnertime in which each member of the family was eating alone in a separate corner, munching and sitting with some machine in front of them, a TV, smart phone, or tablet. Everyone was in his or her own world and dinner was a silent repast of solipsism. There are cafés and coffee shops that remind me of morgues except that the dead are sitting up and riveted to their Apple screens. There was a time when being with another person was possible without interruptions from some machine ringing, lighting up, or vibrating in one’s pocket.

So maybe with this growing trend toward living alone spreading around the world, we should reflect on, even celebrate our loneliness for what it means and for perhaps using it as a path to self-knowledge. Could loneliness be a redoubt to rally our forces and mount some resistance against the invasion of consciousness snatchers occurring everywhere in our midst today?

So all the loners, the parties of one, the wired counterparts of ancient eremites might reflect on the unknown riches of spirit that may be available to them in their solitary state. Living alone and a salutary sense of loneliness might have special uses if we think of them in this way. There may well be a treasure-trove waiting for us, too often muted and occluded by the distractions of a full and socially luxuriant life.

What if loneliness were the key to the most amazing discoveries we could make about ourselves? What if it were a doorway to a magical kingdom and the supreme adventure? Let’s suppose that like Ed Morell who was used as a model in Jack London’s novel *Star-Rover*, we were thrown into solitary confinement and strapped in a straightjacket. This would be the nadir of loneliness. What could we do? We could go within. In the novel – and in the true story of Morell – the prisoner retreats deeper and deeper into his inner world and learns how to project himself out of

his body into the outer world and into his past and future lives.

Loneliness then may be viewed as an invitation to go within, to explore the range and wonder of our heightened and expanded senses, intuitions, and visions. It is perhaps no accident that the prophets, the poets, the mystics and anchorites of the ages have known the uses of being solitary.

Leonardo da Vinci said, When you are alone you are completely yourself; when you’re with others you’re a fraction of yourself. The point is that in aloneness we’re free to search more deeply into ourselves or beyond ourselves toward the unknown. In the solitary state, undistracted by others, we are free to explore possibilities we never dreamed existed.

It seems to me that those millions of people out there living alone, for whatever reason and for however long, are quite privileged and I would say blessed -- even if they sometimes feel cursed: blessed because they can own every thought, every perception, every moment of their existence. At its best, being alone and even tasting loneliness is an opportunity to get to know oneself better. And it may be the best tonic for preparing to enter more gracefully back into the dance of human togetherness.

On Loneliness By Bruce Kerievsky

Loneliness has been described by Metapsychiatry as “a desire for closeness.” That wish is itself a miserable state of consciousness, for it floods one with a sense of lack that one is seemingly helpless to alleviate, since we are not in control of other individuals.

Often, the magnitude of the discomfort experienced when feeling lonely is increased by viewing or hearing of others involved in relationships. The envy or jealousy aroused by such awareness makes the pain of aloneness more acute.

Loneliness, then, indicates that one’s perspective has been narrowed to seeking companionship, an interest that further reveals distress in one’s own being. One looks for a companion who can provide acceptable confirmation of one’s existence by becoming involved in an interpersonal relationship. And, whether or not one finds such a companion, one remains stuck and dependent on the

willingness of others to initiate or continue a relationship to relieve one's discomfort.

Of course, loneliness can readily be dispelled by becoming interested in something. If we are interested in some topic or activity, then our attention is focused on that subject, and we cease to feel lonely (i.e. lacking companionship) because our awareness is otherwise occupied. This is a simple solution on a human level that is effective so long as one is able to sustain interest in a hobby or other activity. Indeed, what loneliness indicates is precisely a lack of interest in anything **except** having another individual confirm one's existence and worthiness.

However, on a spiritual level and from the viewpoint of optimal mental health, the alternative to loneliness is solitariness. This state of consciousness recognizes that we derive our life and well-being from the infinite mind governing the universe. That truth is our sole, but constantly reliable, dependency. Consequently, we are peaceful and serene, neither seeking human companionship nor avoiding it, but welcoming all thoughts emanating from the divine mind. When we are solitary, we see others, like ourselves, as creations of love and intelligence; we regard and value them without needing anything from them.

From this perspective, loneliness is an affliction based upon requiring others to validate our existence, which is an unnecessarily precarious view of life. It can perhaps only and permanently be healed by realizing and appreciating the fact that all we need is to be tuned into our creator and sustainer.

Loneliness: Is it the human condition?

Can it be healed?

By Sam Menahem Ph.D

How many people can claim that they have never been lonely? Rare indeed is the person who has not felt lonely or blue or cut off at some time. My mind just jumped to the first few days of my two year U.S. Army stint. There I was in South Carolina, ripped away from my friends, family and familiar surroundings. I was drafted to fight in a war I believed was wrong. I was being trained to kill people I didn't even know. I felt angry, scared and cut off from the other people around me. I even felt spiritually bereft. If there was a God, how could he let this

whole scenario occur? At first, there seemed to be little hope of any immediate relief. Life seemed to be a matter of survival from the idiotic sergeants yelling at me, threatening to "kick my kneecap off" if I did not obey orders. Gradually, though, things improved. I soon realized that the other soldiers were just like me. I began to make connections. I began to realize the importance of friends. I had always made friends easily. This was a big plus in my readjustment. I realized that loneliness can sometimes be cured by relationships. The sense that we were in the same leaky boat bonded us together. I didn't realize it then, but it was a spiritual thing, a sense of connectedness that healed most of us from our loneliness.

Psychology can give us some insight into the origins of loneliness. The great psychoanalyst, Dr. Karen Horney, wrote that poor parenting, especially from a self-absorbed, narcissistic mother, could create "basic anxiety," a sense of being "alone and isolated in a hostile world." The neurotic "cure" for this unhappy condition could be compulsive pleasing, compulsive achievement or compulsive distancing from other people. If people pleasers feel cut off or lonely, they try to find people to connect with and try to get them to like them. Achievers try to know everything and be better than everyone else. "Distancers" don't usually feel lonely (though they may feel so deep inside). They find solace and safety in being cut off and alone. None of these solutions really work. The "pleasers" and "achievers" are particularly prone to loneliness. They try to become their version of the ideal person but this does not help them to be happy. They lose their "real self," a spiritual being, in the chase for so called "glory." Connectedness to others must come from the "real self." According to Horney, compulsive, neurotic solutions need to be gradually dropped. This puts you in touch with your real self-spirit. She believed that psychoanalysis could strip away the neurosis, enabling the "neurotic" to love other people as well as themselves.

Although psychotherapy has come a long way since Horney wrote her epic book, "Neurosis and Human Growth," I believe that, in essence, she was right. Compulsive, neurotic defenses, keep us cut off from our true self, which is spiritual. It also cuts us off from honest, healthy, relationships with others. It is a cultural myth that only a romantic relationship can take us out of loneliness and into happiness. People vary in how much they need others to feel connected and whole. A mature person, however, can feel connected and happy in a spiritual way. Spirituality is nurtured by finding some way to connect to the divine. I almost always inject an element of spirituality in working with lonely patients. Meditation, contemplation and prayer often help. I treat a lot of older patients, who complain that all their friends are dying off. I direct them both to God or spirit and then back to others. Loneliness can be helped by connecting to the God self, the real inner self and then too reconnecting to others in a healthy way. Clinginess is rarely appreciated by people of any age. But healthy sharing of mutual interests does help cure loneliness. Horney might say that when people share their real, spiritual selves, a healing occurs. Spiritual relationships are not found only in church or synagogue. I find that one of the best ways to connect with oneself and others and cure loneliness is through humor. Patients often leave my office laughing. That in itself is not the cure. However, one thing I try to model and project is that we all take ourselves far too seriously. To me, enlightenment means lightening up. Loneliness dissolves when we are one with our real selves. We can then feel happy, connected and healthy-instead of lonely, isolated and misunderstood. Music can also help cure loneliness. Both music and lyrics can bring us up out of self-pity and away from feeling cut off, isolated, lonely. So don't emulate Bobby Vinton (who was Mr. Lonely in the song.) Instead find a spiritual practice, drop neurotic defenses and get in touch with your real spiritual self. Learn to laugh, love unselfishly and be happy with whoever you are and whoever you are with!

WHAT IS LONELINESS AND HOW CAN SPIRITUALITY HELP?

By Michael S. Isaacs, LCSW, NCPsyA, JD

As I pondered the trait and meaning of loneliness, I was reminded of the words of former United States Supreme Court Justice Douglas. He was having trouble defining the meaning of the term "pornography." The question before the Court in this particular case was whether the actions involved were legal or illegal. He wrote famously that he could not define it, but "he knew it when he saw it."

I realized that the Justice Douglas comment would not be enough to satisfy my quest or the curiosity of my readers as to nature of loneliness. But it does illustrate the difficulty of pinning the word down to an exact explanation.

So, I popped open my dictionary and here are some of the feelings described: sad or depressed because of the lack of friends or companionship; feeling desolate, remote, or isolated; destitute of sympathy, friendliness, or support; and standing by one's self or apart.

What can be said is that loneliness is not pleasant. Most of us have experienced its pain in varying degrees such as not being in a relationship or having broken up a relationship. The grief after the death of a partner can be another example where one can experience severe loneliness. And even in the best of relationships there are times when one feels not understood and not listened to and feels all alone and lonely.

What also can be said is that in our society loneliness is pervasive. As the Beatles song chimes: "All those lonely people, where do they all come from?"

Though all of us have moments of loneliness, I deduce that loneliness more frequently occurs in certain mental conditions. Included are those suffering social anxiety, low self esteem, introversion, shyness, trauma, various addictions, depression, and being brought up in dysfunctional families.

Generally speaking, I have not encountered much loneliness in my life. However, when I was single in my twenties, even though I did not feel consciously lonely I did have a fear of loneliness. I had many dreams where I had intense anguish where in my

dream state I was myself middle aged and did not have a wife and children. During my second psychoanalysis many years later I realized that my not feeling lonely was a repression and a denial of the truth that in fact I was quite lonely in my childhood due to parental emotional distancing.

So, can spirituality help heal loneliness?

Definitely yes, but this depends on one's conception of spirituality. I have a broad definition of spirituality. It includes any thought or deed evidenced by such virtues as compassion, selflessness, love, integrity, forgiveness, wisdom, and truth whether in or out of a religion or spiritual involvement.

Speaking from my vantage point, my involvement on spiritual paths has been an important factor (there have been other factors as well) leading me to much companionship and connection. There was study with spiritual teachers. I have experienced deep companionship with fellow seekers—individually and in groups. This spiritual involvement also motivated me to serve others in my professional life and in the community. I do not know why I started and continued on spiritual paths. One might call it karma, grace, or luck. It was a natural flow that just evolved. In any event, my spiritual studies and quest over a lifetime was and has been for me a key antidote to loneliness.

I would say that I am a mystic whose goal is to have an experience of God. My concept of God is a universal loving creative principle, the infinite invisible, the soul of the universe. My goal in meditation is to realize my identity and oneness with this spirit. Even glimpses of realization of oneness can activate for anyone a love of God, love of man, and love of self. Wow! As I see it these ideals are the highest opportunity to prevent or deal with loneliness. Love of God brings us an entity to love. Love of man brings us connection, compassion and empathy with others. It means we can with authenticity think or say to others "Namaste"- the soul of me greets the soul of you. Love of self means we feel lovable and deserving of another's love. Self-esteem is elevated.

But what about the loneliness of others who are not like me and fellow traditional spiritual seekers? What about atheists, agnostics, and those that have no knowledge of or interest in religion,

spirituality, metaphysics, or anything not material? How can they be helped with bouts of loneliness?

My answer is in accord with my broad definition of spirituality as I described above in this article. That is, spirituality includes any thought or deed evidenced by such virtues as compassion, selflessness, love, integrity, forgiveness, wisdom, and truth, whether in or out of a religion or spiritual seeking. Anyone suffering from loneliness that moves or is moved to one or more of these virtues can be helped to cope with the condition.

There are many examples of how non believers by their very acts embody spirituality that can counter loneliness. Lonely people can get out of their box and serve others, such as volunteering at soup kitchens or various charities. Underlying the motivation to start individual psychotherapy or other self growth groups is a spiritual yearning for connection and companionship.

Anyone who has moments of compassion or love for other humans or animals has a spiritual base. Simply smiling at someone you pass on the street can bring you a moment of spiritual peace from the love you are extending. And there often is a return smile indicating to you that the other is receiving your love. No loneliness here at the moment. Finding a lost wallet with loads of money and returning it to the owner reveals the spiritual virtues of integrity, empathy, and honesty.

Many creative artists certainly do not consider themselves spiritual; but without their knowing it they are opening up channels to universal soul faculties. Their passion for their talents can be tantamount to a companionship of sorts, which not only can keep them from loneliness, but be a boon to those in society who share a similar companionship from experiencing their artistry.

So, indeed, spirituality, either directly or indirectly, can help one minimize or cope with loneliness.

Loneliness and The Illusion of "Being Alone" By Joseph Cavanagh

All the lonely people... Where do they all come from? -The Beatles, 'Eleanor Rigby', 1966.

Just what is loneliness and where does it come from?

In society today, we often cognize loneliness as “feeling physically alone.” In fact, if you Google “Lonely_Definition,” “Alone” is listed as one of several possible synonyms. However, loneliness is clearly much more than “being physically alone,” as someone experiences loneliness when a spiritual void exists, clouding his or her perception of the world and short-circuiting one’s innate gravitation towards unity and connectedness. In fact, a preponderance of evidence exists, from both the ancient spiritual traditions and the modern scientific community, alluding to the fact that “Being Alone” is nothing more than an ego illusion of the ‘animal’ mind.

In 1997, the first experiments in quantum entanglement were performed; one particle of light was split and its two halves were measured as they traveled apart from one another. The results of the experiments were that any change to one half, instantly altered the other half. Despite being physically separated, the two halves were permanently inextricably entangled ...*linked* or *connected*... to one another.

The conclusions of this experiment were that our classically conditioned notions of objects and space are entirely incorrect. Through these quantum entanglement experiments, it was discovered that our brains simultaneously over-estimate and underestimate the apparent space between objects. In fact, most scientists who study quantum mechanics (the study of the physics of subatomic particles) say that our penchant to separate and label objects doesn’t describe reality well at all and does more to *limit* our understanding of “physical reality” than enhance it. As scientists have begun to study subatomic particles, they find that the classical ways of looking at objects has begun to break down at a rapid pace, and they are finding most of the things that we think of as physically separate from other objects actually are affecting each other over long distances just like the particles of light! This oft-forgotten groundbreaking experiment endures as incontrovertible support for many ancient spiritual traditions, such as Buddhism, which have been dominated by concepts of unity between self and environment, and oneness between all things in the universe.

Japanese Buddhism uses a phrase “Esho Funi,” literally meaning “two but not two.” This phrase is meant to symbolize that at the most fundamental level of life itself, there is indivisible unity, no

separation between ourselves and the environment. According to this principle, everything around us, i.e. our environment, is the reflection of our inner lives. Everything in the environment is perceived through the self and is altered according to the individual’s inner state of consciousness.

Much in line with the concept of “Esho Funi,” Carl Rogers once said, “Loneliness is a barrier that prevents one from uniting with the inner self.” Essentially Rogers is right; loneliness clouds our perception. It is both a symptom and a cause of someone who has become out of balance, too attached to the whims and desires of one’s ego and disconnected from one’s higher self. Either through or because of loneliness, our ego has taken the driver’s seat and the path to our higher self is blocked. Without access to the understanding of our higher-self, the true path away from loneliness and suffering can never be reached, for it resides in solidifying our connection with something larger than ourselves,

If our perception is clouded by loneliness, our external reality is altered for the worse. Einstein once wrote, “The belief in the external world independent of the perceiving subject is the basis of all natural science.” However, in his 2009 work, *Biocentrism*, biologist and prominent quantum physics disciple, Dr. Robert Lanza, writes that, “the most recent data from the field of quantum physics tells us that reality is created by ...the observer.”

As we’ve learned, this idea, while although only recently scientifically confirmed, is hardly new. How different is Lanza’s “reality is created by the observer” from Japanese Buddhism’s “the environment is perceived through the self and alters according to the individual’s inner state”? Even back in the eighteenth century, Immanuel Kant said, “we must rid ourselves of the notion of actual qualities in things in themselves... all bodies, together with the space in which they are, must be considered nothing but mere representations in us, and exist nowhere but in our thoughts.”

It is nothing short of a marvel that three major fields, ancient traditions, spiritual psychology, and quantum physics, thousands of years apart, independently arrive at the same conclusion to promote a worldview of oneness, driven by our conscious experience, which claims everything in our physical world, even things that appear physically distinct, may actually be connected and

capable of influencing one another. Cutting edge scientific work has finally evolved to the point where it is capable of experimentally confirming the existence of connectedness in the Universe between two physically distinct objects.

The fact is that if everything is indeed connected, we are never really truly as lonely and alone as any of us may feel in any given moment. We are then forced to accept the reality that our feelings of loneliness are a mere self-destructive ego-illusion, distracting us from fully cognizing the big picture. No matter where the jargon we use over the years originates, be it “entanglement” from quantum physics, or Maslow’s “Social Needs: Love and Belonging,” from his 1943 paper, “A Theory on Human Motivation,” or a spiritual “Oneness with the Universe,” the common theme of unity, synergy and connectedness continues to persist in the narrative of human history. Yesterday’s reclusiveness is today’s Loneliness; tomorrow “it” will be called Spiritual Deficiency. After all, even hundreds of years later, we all know Juliet’s rhetorical question of, “What’s in a name?”

Whatever name we give them, it is important to recognize the extent that spirituality and unity play in long-term reduction of feelings of loneliness. The problem lies deeper than we all think and cannot be cured by simple “behavioral activation,” as the very definition of being lonely includes the absence of the presence of others. The definition is telling us the feeling permeates consciousness when the crutch of behavioral activation is taken away. Therefore, it our responsibility to become aware of these feelings, recognize them as a mirage and manage these self-destructive thoughts by consciously embracing our innate connectedness and realizing that our physical location, whether with or without others, is immaterial to our spiritual connection to the universe.

11 years after the Beatles’ ‘Eleanor Rigby,’ in 1977, Don Felder, Glenn Frey, and Don Henley of the Eagles reminded us we will always have the opportunity to re-connect to the Universe, with ‘Hotel California’, “Relax...you can *check out* any time you like... but you can *never leave*.”

As individuals in the field of mental health, the challenge becomes, how do we get people who feel lonely to *check back in* to the Oneness Hotel?

The answer lies in cognitively reframing loneliness as a Spiritual Deficiency.

Through incorporation of a routine personal spiritual practice, like music, meditation, dance, writing, prayer, religious service, reading, painting, etc., or any kind of ritualistic spiritually invigorating activity, in any form, we can buffer ourselves and our clients against the illusory ego feelings of helplessness, aloneness and loneliness, and *check back in* with a sense of self that is larger than the personal, away from loneliness and towards unity, compassion, connectedness and self-actualization.

The next section features articles summarizing or inspired by ASP’s network meetings featuring a variety of speakers.

A Summary of the October 18, 2013 ASP Meeting: Can Spirituality and Psychotherapy Heal Anger? This meeting was hosted by ASP Board Members, Diana Kerievsky, LCSW and Bruce Kerievsky, A.B. Summary by James Powers, L.Ac.

Due to rage and jealousy, Hebert Rodgers of Vermont broke into the home of his ex-wife, Carmen Tarleton, and beat her with a baseball bat, fractured her eye socket, broke her arm and burned 92 % of her body with industrial strength lye which left her face severely disfigured. He thought she was seeing another man, but there wasn’t a man there when he broke into her house.

This is an extreme case of anger, but it shows the terrifying power of anger when it is unleashed and unchecked. For most of us, anger never reaches such extreme, caustic levels of destruction, but anger is a very pervasive emotion in our daily lives, which still has the power to harm ourselves and others.

Diana Kerievsky started the discussion for this important topic by generously sharing her experiences with anger in her life. Based on her studies with Dr. Thomas Hora, the founder of the School of Metapsychiatry, Diana discussed the idea of anger arising when a person is inflicted with Provocation,

Intimidation, or Seduction; she used the acronym P.I.S. to express this theory about the basis of anger. Bruce Kerievsky provided another fascinating dimension of anger based on Dr. Hora's teaching by stating that anger is never justified because it is based on existential ignorance of one's true nature or essence.

During the discussion, various participants gave examples for why they felt their anger was justified due to some form of P.I.S. such as being intimidated by their boss, not being heard by their partner or being infuriated by a patient who cancels an appointment last minute. In these and other cases, it was agreed that psychotherapy can be very helpful in overcoming anger by gaining insight into one's own emotions and the viewpoint of the other causing the anger. It was also agreed that spiritual practices such as mindfulness meditation could also be tremendously beneficial in understanding and overcoming anger within oneself.

On the surface, it would appear that psychotherapy and Metapsychiatry are in conflict since most psychotherapists would agree that anger is justified in a variety of situations such as in the case of abuse or obvious societal injustices like slavery. In psychotherapy, patients are often assisted in getting "in touch" with their true emotions such as anger and the expression of anger can be very healing in the course of a person's healthy ego development. If this is the case, how could Metapsychiatry take the position that anger is never justified?

One possible way of reconciling these two antagonistic positions is to see them as being applicable to two different paradigms of reality. On the everyday, ego functioning level of reality, anger can be beneficial and justified in certain situations in which a person is unjustly inundated with Provocation, Intimidation, and Seduction. Psychotherapy generally seems to deal in this egoistic paradigm of reality and in this realm of reality, the formation, clarification,

and maintenance of a healthy ego is of paramount importance.

On the other hand, if we are approaching reality from a spiritual paradigm, then anger could be considered never justified because it can be indicative of a subject/object split view of reality that only exists as an illusion in our consciousness, but not in the nature of reality itself. Based on this two paradigm understanding of anger, a person may need to develop a healthy sense of self with the attending, appropriate emotions such as anger, but as an individual transcends an ego perception of reality, this individual will need to let go of anger as it is normally understood in an egoistic view of reality.

A story of King Akbar and Birbal: About the power of angry thoughts
By Renate Lanotte, MS, LCSW

My story: About the power of positive thoughts

This ancient story told by my meditation teacher, H.H. Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj, illustrates the power of angry thoughts. All our thoughts have a very powerful impact on ourselves and our environment, loving or angry.

I recently participated in a very interesting networking workshop of the ASP where Diana Kerievsky, LCSW presented the following question to us, 18 participants:

Can Spirituality & Psychotherapy Heal Anger?

At the end of the workshop Diana invited me to share "my" story about the power of angry thoughts with her in our ASP Newsletter because it was too late during the workshop to add this story to our conversation and sharing.

A Story of King Akbar and Birbal

This story illustrates the power of thoughts. I am quoting this story from the book "Inner and Outer Peace through Meditation" by Rajinder Singh, on page 98.

King Akbar had a chief minister named Birbal who was known for his wisdom. Birbal wanted to prove to the king how potent thoughts are. So he told the king that when a particular man approached them, the king should think evil thoughts about him. The king followed Birbal's instructions and had a mental

tirade against the approaching man. When the man came nearer, the king asked him, "What did you think when you first saw my face today?" The man replied, "Suddenly I had an intense desire to hit you." There was no reason for the man to think this, but the effect of the king's violent thoughts towards the man were unconsciously perceived by him and he reacted in kind."

We usually think that our thoughts are private, but others can sense them. Our thoughts send out a vibration that other people can pick up. We need to be very careful about what we think.

There is another true story about the healing power of divine (good) thoughts based on my own life experience. Many years ago, when I was still a student at Fordham University in Manhattan, and prepared myself for my Master's degree in clinical social work, I was assigned to a Fordham project with a homeless and alcoholic population. This was my 3 months internship, together with two other social work students and a professor of Fordham University, at the Holy Name Center on Bleecker Street in downtown Manhattan. It is a day center for homeless and alcoholic visitors. It was our assignment to connect with this population and motivate them to accept social work services.

One day, the a very angry old man, maybe 70 plus years of age, entered the Holy Name Center. He was screaming and raging out loud and gesturing, and I was surprised that he was allowed to enter the center. But here he was. I will call him Albert. On that day, I saw him for the very first time. He was a new guest. As soon as he entered the social hall everybody backed out. The other two social work interns also left the room. I stayed thinking that it was my responsibility to stay and learn to connect with this very angry person. Therefore, I sat down at the same coffee table with him, after both of us had served ourselves with a cup of coffee. We sat at a round table, and I sat just across from Albert. He continued to rage and scream and talk very loud with lots of anger. I just sat there quietly drinking my coffee and focusing inside, repeating the names of God silently, a practice that I learned from my meditation teacher. I did not start a conversation or anything. I was just present there, continuing with my simran (the repetition of God's names).

Slowly, slowly, the tone in Albert's voice changed. He calmed down and started to talk with me. His

voice became more and more friendly. He finally told me in detail about a very special day in his life, looking at me with kindness, reaching his hand out to me across the table. He finally said: "Wow, I am talking with you about the only really happy day in my life. How did that happen? Thank you. Will you be my social worker here? I would like you (!) to be my social worker. "

Thus I agreed, after discussing this with my supervisor, and Albert became my client during my stay at that center. We became friends after this first meeting and he did accept services. When my internship approached the end and I told Albert that I would leave soon, he came again with his very large black garbage bag and said that he had a present for me. He reached into his bag and gave me a beautiful Macy's shopping bag. "This is for you" he said with pride in his voice.

This story illustrates the power of positive thoughts, the transforming power of meditation in our daily life. I am grateful to my social work training and to the spiritual guidance that I receive in my life by H.H. Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj. Now, I would like to share two quotes from my meditation teacher.

"Spirituality is the personal testing of the hypothesis that there is a higher power that brought all creation into being; that the higher power is within us, and that the higher power can be known".

"If we want to take up the challenge of finding answers to what lies beyond this world, then we need to give up the instruments of metal and use the tool of our consciousness".

My answer to the question discussed at the workshop is a clear "yes". Spirituality and psychotherapy can heal anger, and go even beyond anger, reaching into our inborn goodness and higher consciousness. The first step is to heal ourselves by learning to know ourselves. May the inscription on the temple at Delphi where the Delphic Oracle gave inner guidance thousands of years ago in Greece remind us of this task "Know Thyself." Our essence is Love, Consciousness and Bliss.

**Summary of Lisa Fawcett's Presentation of the Seven Rays of Light on December 13th 2013
By Linda Tarack, LCSW**

In a softly lit room with rosy brick walls and newly sanded old floors at the back of the sixth floor on West 47th Street in Manhattan that is occupied by One Spirit Learning Alliance, Lisa Fawcett, a Jungian analyst and member of ASP, made a spirited presentation of the Seven Rays of Light, a sacred paradigm of ideas and practices for healing and relationship with the Divine that has been circulating in the United States and perhaps worldwide since the early nineteen thirties.

Lisa's soft silky outfit in purples and greens seemed to represent the beauty and healing energy about which she spoke. She condensed a day-long workshop into an hour and a half with aplomb and chose to focus on three colors, Blue, Pink and Gold, rather than all seven. She added on Violet because it is good for everything. After describing the qualities of each color Lisa directed us to close our eyes and center ourselves with deep breaths. This always feels good.

Lisa "called in" the angels and light of the color and we did our best to suspend disbelief and imagine the color all around us filling us with its particular gifts.

The history of the Seven Rays and St. Germaine is new to me but I recognize the values that are the foundation of most spiritual practices. Figures like Christ and the Buddha, Moses and Confucius, probably Lincoln and Gandhi, are considered to be Ascended Masters, and there are numerous others who are guides for our own spiritual growth. There are angels who can help us who work from unconditional love. Because humans are meant to have free will, we can only be helped if we ask for it.

Lisa referred to the divine presence in all of us called the I Am. which as a group ASP has meditated on at other meetings. My notes about the Blue Ray include the Archangel Michael who often carries a sword of protection. Blue stands for the Will of God to which we all have to surrender. It is the higher intelligence, a reason for unanswered prayers, for the expression, "Thy Will Be Done". Lisa told us that Blue is shared by mother Mary and by Quanyin who can hold our grief and disappointment with their compassion and mercy.

From Pink to Crimson is the range of the color of love. Unconditional love, romantic love, compassion, charity, gratitude, brotherhood, praise

can all be colored in the rosy spectrum. Pink, like love, blossoms, multiplies with out awareness and heartfulness.

The Golden Rays carry wisdom, truth and enlightenment. God helps us be our true selves without separation from Spirit. It is the Illumination Ray that is expanded by inspiring experiences like literature, music and art. The experience that makes us say ahh or soften with knowing and a sense of connection feels like the Golden Ray.

The Violet Ray is connected to the head chakra and offers transformation, compassion, freedom and forgiveness. It is a combination of pink and blue and can dig into pre-conscious layers of our lives. Visualization of Violet increases its effect by 97%. These colors can all be imagined as cool or warm flames, vibrating energy all around us. Lisa outlined work she did with a seriously troubled client visualizing Violet. She and the client both visualized the color supporting the release of suffering and the growth of well being and felt that it was effective.

Lisa discussed ways we could use the Seven Rays in our therapy practices. It felt like an invitation to pay attention to the ambiance in our offices as well as ways to use visualization for healing. Lisa said she fills empty spaces with visualizations of color. She thought it would be advisable to practice visualizing colors on ourselves before we used them on clients. We were encouraged to use the Violet Ray for a period of a month to three months to see if we notice a difference in how we feel and in our work.

We were given a list of books on the Seven Rays and St. Germaine and a couple of pages of mantras for accessing the Light and the Angels of each color. Lisa emphasized the importance of following our own intuition with respect to the guidance received. In essence we are all connected to the Divine, and can be helped by recognizing the connection even though at times it can be hard to see. With meditation, prayer and awareness we open our hearts to love that is always with us.

ASP ABBREVIATED 2013 PROFESSIONAL DIRECTORY

Appearing below is the yearly, abbreviated listing of all Professional (\$70 or more membership) members of the Association for Spirituality and

Psychotherapy. Business telephone numbers were used where they were available. To update your listing, notify aspspiritandpsych@gmail.com. **We will be mailing the full Professional Directory with the 2014 membership dues letter. We need**

your continued support to publish our newsletter, arrange networking meetings, and plan ASP conferences.

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Spiritual Teacher H.H. Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj, mentioned in Renate Lanotte's article above, offers the following interesting definition of Spirituality:

“Spirituality is the personal testing of the hypothesis that there is a higher power that brought all creation into being; that the higher power is within us, and that the higher power can be known.”