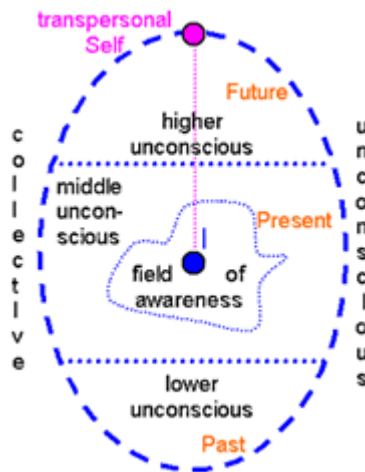


Psychosynthesis

In the late 1980s (wow! was it really that long ago?) I was becoming increasingly curious about both my personal development and my spiritual growth. To find a way forward, I read widely, went to a variety of workshops and classes, and spoke to a lot of people - but without finding what I was looking for. Then one day I read the first chapter of the book Psychosynthesis first published in 1965 by Roberto Assagioli and had an epiphany - here was a path that could help me discover my true spiritual nature and increase my ability to live this in the world.

Since then, the philosophy and models of Psychosynthesis have strongly influenced my life and my work as a Coach and Mentor, none more so than Psychosynthesis's central model - "The Egg of Being" (see diagram).

This is a map of who we are. At the heart of the diagram is the personal self, our individual "I" or self that experiences itself as having thoughts, emotions and sensations. Becoming more aware of this centre of our being is a primary goal of Psychosynthesis for this is the place from which we can manage and direct our personality - rather than be directed by it - and take responsibility for our process of becoming.



Becoming more fully integrated human beings (which Warren Bennis asserts is also the route to becoming a great leader) involves enabling the self's attention to more freely range across the whole of who we are (represented as the interior of the egg).



The middle unconscious represents our present and contains those aspects of ourselves that can easily be brought into our field of awareness. Our field of awareness is constantly changing in shape as what we attend to changes. The lower unconscious stands for our past and includes repressed complexes, long forgotten memories, instincts and physical functions over which we ordinarily have no conscious control. The higher unconscious represents our evolutionary future and is that part of our psychological space from which we receive inspiration and illumination and is where our intuition and potential lie. We are immersed in the collective unconscious in which all beings play a part.

When we incarnate, our self is clothed in a physical body and a personality, both of which develop as we grow enabling us to be and act in the world. But both can also limit us. Our personality with its particular configurations of thoughts, beliefs and emotions may come to bind us too tightly. As we learn to disidentify from the contents of our consciousness and expand our field of awareness, so we come to know our essential self and to express the fullness of ourselves in the world.

Assagioli expresses it very eloquently; "Psychosynthesis is a method of psychological development and Self realisation for those who refuse to remain the slaves of their own inner phantasms or of external influences, who refuse to submit passively to the play of psychological forces which is going on within them, and who are determined to become the masters of their own lives."

For an excellent introduction to Psychosynthesis read "Psychosynthesis: The Elements and Beyond" by Will Parfitt (available at www.willparfitt.com) or, for its application to leadership, read "Inner Leadership" by Simon Smith (Nicholas Brealey).

Article written and produced by Mike the Mentor – If you have any comments or questions on this approach then email Mike at enquiries@mye-coach.com

