

Triangle Webinar – 13th of November 2023

**The Triangles of energies
in Psychosynthesis**

From Duality to Unity

SLIDE 1

My talk will not be very “esoteric”. Even if we can guess the expression of the Seven Rays in the examples I am going to explain, my purpose is to focus on their manifestation on the psychological level. I will take the viewpoint of Psychosynthesis, that is the vision and the therapeutic practise of Roberto Assagioli, the founder of this psychological method of personal and spiritual development, education and therapy.

SLIDE 2

To live in the manifested world implies the condition of duality. So our lives are made of a large number of polarities. A polarity is a relationship between two elements. This relation is never absolute, but relative to a particular pair of opposites: the same element can be positive in its relation to a certain “pole” and negative in its relation to another. Let’s think about qualities like “warm” and “cold”, and we can easily conceive the relativity of these sensations to a type of organism.

Moreover we have to keep in mind that there is no strict separation between two opposites but a gradual relation that conducts from one pole to the other. When we observe the “day” and the “night”, the transition from dark to light is clearly gradual. The Taoism teaching has deeply developed that idea with the concept of *Yin-Yang*.

The dual structure of the universe covers several levels:

- Physical: like the polarity between the positive and negative poles in the atom, or between the sympathetic and the parasympathetic nervous systems; and we can also see a duality between the etheric and the dense bodies.
- Emotional: In the field of the emotions and feelings we find a lot of those dualities which are familiar to human beings: pleasure-pain; excitement-depression; sadness-joy; confidence-fear; attraction-repulsion; love-hate...
- On the mental level there is the polarity between the analytical activity of the concrete mind and the synthetic operation of the abstract intelligence. Today we even talk about the neuroscientific distinction between left and right parts of the brain: one is considered more rational, the other more creative and intuitive...
- An other important polarity that we distinguish in Psychosynthesis is between the **personal** and **transpersonal levels** of the psyche. That means the process is

divided into personal synthesis (that is the integration of the elements that compose the psychological area of an individual), and then transpersonal synthesis (that is the conscious relationship with the spiritual Self and the fusion with the I, the centre of consciousness)

At the basis of a triangle we find two poles. Remember that the polarities we will see concerns the personal level. At the top, we find a third element, a point of synthesis which is transpersonal. The law of polarity implies a driving force that is the cause of the movement from one pole of opposite to the other extreme. But with the conscious experience of life we can slowly find a middle point, a point of balance from which a *narrow path* leads us to the top. To walk this path, humility and courage are required.

In this talk I will describe seven ways of accomplishment, seven psychosynthesis, seven ways to link the personal level to the spiritual Self throughout a transpersonal journey.

SLIDE 3

First let's start with a famous distinction in psychology, which is once again another psychic polarity: It is between *Introverted* and *Extraverted*. These are two words we hear very often even from people who don't know Carl Jung, the psychologist who has described these two tendencies.

Extravert means that the attention and the interest of the individual is directed in the objective world.

Introverted people are more inclined to live in the subjective world.

Ambivert means the ability to direct the focus in either an introvert or extravert direction according to the purpose we follow.

SLIDE 4

Now I would like to introduce the concept of **Subpersonalities**, or *secondary identities* which exist in our psychic world.

In Roberto Assagioli's book called *Psychosynthesis – Principles and Technics*, he explains the subpersonalities in these words:

“The organization of sub-personalities is very revealing and sometimes surprising... One discovers how very different and often quite antagonistic traits are displayed in the different roles. These differences of traits which are organized around a role justify, in our opinion, the use of the word “sub-personality.” Ordinary people shift from one to the other without clear awareness, and only a thin thread of memory connects them; but for all practical purposes they are different beings – they act differently, they show very different traits.” (end of quotation)

Before the 20th Century, the American philosopher William James has already described what he called the “various social selves” ...link to the role we play in society. In other words subpersonalities are ***identity patterns derive from important relationships that take form of self-images and social role.***

Some of them are natural identity patterns that emerge throughout a person's life, for instance: *child, adolescent, young adult...*

Moreover subpersonalities emerge in response to family relations, like *father, mother, son, daughter...*

They are also linked to psychological elements like *inferiority or superiority complex, social masks (Persona), ideal models...*

Each sub-personality is made up of a set of attitudes, behaviours, habits and beliefs.

Sometimes the subpersonalities are in conflict into our unconscious. In a certain way we can understand the Arjuna's experience on the battle field depicted in the Hindu's text called The Bhagavat Gita as a conflict between our subpersonalities.

When an inner conflict immerge in our lives, we feel a twinge inside ourself, a kind of psychological crisis that requires a conscious and determined action from our part to create a new balance. This is a stage of the process of synthesis. We can be involved in that process by using the dis-identification technic. Why it is so important?

“Because we are dominated by everything with which our self is identified. We can dominate and control everything from which we dis-identify ourselves.” R. Assagioli

SLIDE 5

Now we are going to see ***how to create harmony when two poles are in conflict?***

- 1.) Become aware of a sub-personality and its opposite.
- 2.) Adopt the attitude of a detached, neutral observer, listening to both parties to understand the needs underlying each of them.
- 3.) Perceive compatibilities and make compromises in order to satisfy the sub-personalities fairly.

The opposite poles are adjusted from an intermediate centre:

- either by reducing the amplitude of the oscillations between the two extremes to get closer to the point of balance where starts the "middle path".

- or by consciously directing the alternations so that the result is harmonious.

- 4.) Create the synthesis by a higher principle which transforms, sublimates and reabsorbs the two poles into a higher reality.

SLIDE 6

The **Egg Diagram** is the representation of the psyche designed by Assagioli. It helps us to visualise the geography of the unconscious. As we see, there is three levels: lower, middle and higher unconscious.

The subpersonalities can only be understood in relation to the self – the central core in the centre of the Egg – that is *the subject* in a person, around which the subpersonalities can be integrated. Assagioli defines it as *the point of pure self-awareness and will*.

We are not the different roles we are playing in life, but we are the *witness*, the *observer* and the *directing agent*. The personal self is the agent that can be trained to regulate and guide all the manifold roles and character traits from the detached centre of awareness. But very often we are not in a position to do so in the world of realities because we are immersed in our emotions, thoughts, desires and roles as parents, lovers or a job function. The over-identification is a source of conflict and crisis.

There are three kind of them: psychic conflicts, moral conflicts and spiritual conflicts with their correspondent crisis. In a certain way, Arjuna was confronted to all of them.

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In my book, “La mosaïque de l’Être”, I have defined several laws about subpersonalities.

Here is the first one : *A sub-personality generally co-exists with an opposite pole.*

One way of summarising this law about pairs of opposites is to say that extremes attract themselves, or that one sub-personality can hide another, its complementary opposite. Very often it is hidden in the unconscious. Knowing this, we can use an already identified sub-personality to discover what its 'inversed double' is, and thus bring to light the existence of a pair of opposites within ourselves. In this process, the function of the conscious I (aligned with the transpersonal Self) will be to find the balance between the opposites and help the personality to stand in the middle.

Let’s take the example of the 'judge', if we explore the unconscious we will find its opposite pole, i.e. the 'culprit'. We can draw up a long series of these pairs of opposites:

The winner >< the loser

The superior >< the inferior

The abandoned >< the deserter

The invader >< the invaded

The inner child >< the adult

...

We are not used to recognise these pairs of opposites in our inner world. Most of the time, we are prone to projection and, as a result, our inner conflicts become external conflicts in our relationships with others.

SLIDE 8

Let's continue with the second law : ***From the interaction of opposites, a new element can emerge.***

Assagioli has given many examples to illustrate this law in the form of triangle. For instance, the pair of opposite **Optimistic** and **Pessimistic**. The point of balance on the same level has the characteristic of **Practical Realism**.

When the personal self is aligned on the spiritual Self, he can follow a transpersonal way and reach the **Clear Vision of the Reality**, which is the gift the Higher Self.

SLIDE 9

We see another example on the next slide: It is about the **Intellectual doubt** on one hand, and the **Dogmatism** on the other hand. If we reduce the expression of this two poles, we find the **Common Sense**. This is possible from the centre of consciousness by the active resolution of the personal self to ponder rationally when facing intellectual problems about reality and truth.

And when the light of the spiritual Self guides the lower self, intuitive insights can flourish and lead to a **Spiritual Understanding** that is qualified by synthesis. Here is needed the mastery of the mind and of its tendency to reply limited and partial thought forms.

SLIDE 10

- Now let's continue with other kind of triangles related to the seven rays which draw seven ways of transpersonal accomplishment, or spiritual realisation and service to humanity: There is first...

The Way of Will that is expressed in our world by *the Way of Heroism*.

The Way of Love – *The Way of Enlightenment*.

The Way of Action - also called by Assagioli the *Way of Regenerative Ethics*.

The Way of Beauty (Fourth Ray) – *The Way of Aesthetics*

The Way of Science – *The Way of Knowledge*

The Devotional Way – *The Way of Mysticism*

The Ceremonial Way – *The Way of Ritual or Dance*.

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- Now we can illustrate the seven ways and their correspondent subpersonalities which incarnate the lower and higher qualities of the seven rays.
- The first ray is about the energy of will that is express by the **Manager**, able to direct employers, guide them in their work in order to achieve the goals defined by the board of directors.
- The **Pioneer** is more extraverted. His qualities of bravery and boldness lead him to discover new ideas, news ways, new territories,... As example just think about Lindbergh who was the first pilot to travel across the Atlantic.

- In this case, he was also heroic because he faced death during the exploit and he lived a transpersonal experience during the end of the flight.
- Another remarkable example is incarnated by Nelson Mandela who sacrificed his personal life with a view to achieving equality for human and social rights in a context of *apartheid*, repressive for black people.

SLIDE 12

Let's see the second ray with the love quality incarnated by the sensitive type: At the basis of the triangle we find the **Guide** on the introverted side, and the **Caregiver** on the extraverted side. The first can act in the profession of psychotherapist or a counsellor for instance, the other can be a social worker or a nursery.

It is a way going from empathy to love. Thank to detachment, the emotional sensitivity can be transmuted in intuition, this illuminative understanding gives a deeper help to the person. The true **spiritual teacher** are able to offer this kind of guidance.

SLIDE 13

On the next slide we see the mental type represented by the **Thinker or Philosopher** (quite introverted in his intellectual activity) and the other pole, the **Strategist** (more extraverted in his view) seeking to apply his ideas in the manifested world in order to get results.

On the top, we find the **Genius**, an exception in his field of research. He brings new light on complex intellectual problems and so he offers clarity which makes the finding of solutions more simple.

SLIDE 14

- The next one is the Creative Type represented by the **Aesthete** quite sensible to all forms of beauty and the **Transformist**, more extraverted, which is able to play with his look in an amazing show. David Bowie was an example of both sides of the artistic way. On the top we find the great **Artist**, like Amadeus Mozart or Beethoven, who reach the highest peaks of music to offer in timeless masterpieces a celestial vibration to humanity.

SLIDE 15

- The fifth ray gives the Rational Type: He can be the **Investigator** spending a lot of time for a scientific research, or the **Technician** or the Inventor able to create a new machine or to invent a technology that can revolutionize our daily lives. On the upper level, there is the **Explorer** who discovers a truth and so he expands the field of knowledge in a specific area. Albert Einstein is a famous example.

SLIDE 16

- The Devotional Type is represented by the **Idealist** on the introverted side and the **Advocate** devoted to the rights of a client and claiming for justice. Martin

Luther King was that kind of passionate advocate for civil rights. And more than that, he reached and indicated a spiritual vision to the world. This “promised land” is still a headlight for the following generations.

SLIDE 17

- Finally, we finish with the Practical Type: He can be an **Orchestrator** (or a Legislator who build a law) and on the other side, he can be an **Organizer (or a Manager)** conducting a project to the final realisation. On the top, we see the **Creator**, quite original, who can build for instance, a building very innovative in the architecture. A nice example is Gaudi who create a cathedral with forms and structures that we have never seen before.