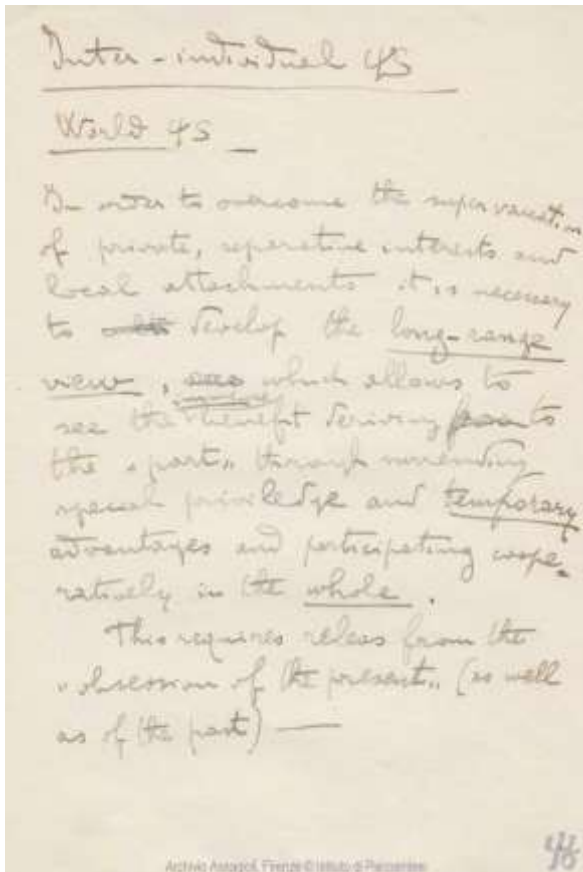


“Know, Love, Transform yourself”

INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME I OF THE ENGLISH EDITION by Petra Guggisberg Nocelli

*“INTER-INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOSYNTHESIS,
WORLD PSYCHOSYNTHESIS - In order to overcome the supervaluation of private,
separative interests and local attachments it is necessary to develop the long-range
view, which allows to see the immense benefit deriving to the “part” through
surrendering special privilege and temporary advantages and participating
cooperatively in the whole. This requires release from the “obsession of the present”
(as well as of the past).”*

R. Assagioli, handwritten note, Assagioli Archives



It is said that walking through an English garden is a unique and exciting experience. In it, the formal precision and symmetries of the Italian or French garden give way to a freer and more natural style. This type of garden is wild, spontaneous and at the same time, neat and elegant. A landscape in which the beauty of each section is respected and valorised and in which conflicting sensations and emotions find their equilibrium. There is room for wonder, for joy, and for silence and melancholy. Whilst the garden may give a somewhat haphazard impression, this is certainly not the case. The overall result is the culmination of careful planning. The harmony binding the various parts of the whole is crucial and is obtained through the balance of opposites: orderliness and wilderness, pleasantness and restlessness, authenticity and artificiality, majesty and humility, persistence and transience. All this is intended to inspire in the visitor a sense of wonder and, above all, the desire and curiosity to explore, to discover, at every step, the variety of

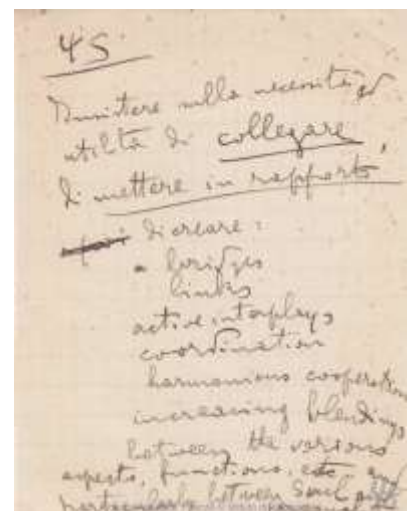
their surroundings.

As I was writing this introduction to *Know, love, transform yourself*, this is how I imagined the book to be like. A succession of different landscapes, sweeping and unpredictable, not hemmed in by sculpted hedges or rigid fences. An alternation of open vistas and hidden places. The reader will come across dense, age-old woodlands, and newly planted flowerbeds, viewing platforms with benches to rest on, secret caves, fountains, rolling meadows, statues and untended corners, solemn neo-classical temples, intricate webs of uneven paths, tall fragrant shrubs, small lakes, abandoned ruins, bridges, streams and sheltered areas of uncontaminated silence...

In the **Italian edition** of this text, I have included **more than 280 exercises, techniques and methods** developed by Roberto Assagioli, his students and other psychosynthesists, mainly Italian. When I started thinking about the **English translation**, I felt **the urge to expand the project** by involving other colleagues from all over the world. The intention was to give an overview of Psychosynthesis by illustrating the international, interdisciplinary and intercultural nature that has characterised it from its origins. I thus contacted some of Assagioli's historical students and other experienced psychosynthesists, asking them if they may like to contribute a monographic chapter focussing on their Psychosynthesis practice, particularly in relation to the core experiences of the Psychosynthesis approach: the model of subpersonalities, the practice of disidentification, the personal self and the will, the ideal model and the creative imagination, synthesis in its various aspects, the superconscious and the transpersonal Self. I was also interested in representing different fields of application of Psychosynthesis: psychotherapy, counselling, education, coaching, personal development, interpersonal relations and the social, systemic dimension, so topical in this age of globalisation.

The response to my invitation has been enthusiastic and I am very grateful to my colleagues for their support. **More than 25 contributions enrich this English edition.** They include new techniques and exercises which elaborate on Assagioli's original techniques; timely reflections on one or more of the key experiences of Psychosynthesis; clinical case studies; personal accounts of practitioners' professional journeys and reports on specific projects.

However, I would like to point out that the aim of giving an inclusive overview of the development of Psychosynthesis at an international level has only been partially achieved. Despite its thousand pages, *Know, love, transform yourself* provides only a glimpse of all that Psychosynthesis can offer. There are many more countries, cultures, fields of application and themes, I would have wished to include. There are many colleagues, groups and Institutes, whose work would have deserved to be represented. It was not easy to set a limit to the number of additional chapters, but I had to honour my own limits in terms of time, energy and finances. Not an easy thing for me. Despite my regret in having to make these necessary sacrifices, this experience has also made aware of the incredible vitality, dynamism and potential of Psychosynthesis that still awaits realisation. And how each of us can, as Assagioli wrote (handwritten note, Assagioli Archives: www.archivioassagioli.org), actively contribute to this process by "*insisting on the necessity and value of connecting, relating, creating: bridges, links, active interplays, coordination, harmonious cooperation, increasing blendings, between the various aspects, functions, etc. and particularly between Soul and personality.*" I hope therefore that *Know, love, transform yourself* will inspire other colleagues to continue in this direction, joining the many who have already done and continue to do so.



As mentioned earlier, English gardens may look as if they were thrown together randomly, in a spontaneous, even disorderly way, seemingly lacking a preconceived design. In fact, the opposite is true. The landscape is carefully composed, and its juxtaposition of different types of vegetation and colours is anything but random. The garden's layout is organised thematically, and plants and flowers are planted accordingly, but are then left free to express

themselves following their nature and inclination. This philosophy inspired me in composing this work.

Readers will therefore come across familiar places as well as new and unexpected territories; some locations will immediately capture their attention and arouse in them the desire to explore further, others will leave them lukewarm, perhaps even nonplussed; and may only be glanced at briefly. It all depends on individual tastes, personal and professional inclinations, and areas of interest.

Know, love, transform yourself has become a vast garden, made up of many different areas. The amount of material to be organised was huge. The original Italian text alone had more than 500 pages. Given the addition of the 26 monographic chapters, it was necessary to divide the publication into **two volumes**: the first 7 chapters of the original text plus 11 additional contributions are included in this first volume; the last 2 chapters of the original text with 15 additional contributions are comprised in the second. Let us take an exploratory stroll through these expansive grounds.

Volume I opens with a general introduction to the figure of Roberto Assagioli and to Psychosynthesis (Chs I-III). Chapter IV expands on a necessary premise; namely that Psychosynthesis techniques and exercises must always, be contextualised within a meaningful relationship, which is unique and original. The following three chapters discuss the phases, or aspects, of the psychosynthetic journey, offering practical tools for each of aspect: the general assessment of the conscious personality (Ch. V); the exploration of the unconscious (Ch. VI); the techniques for self-mastery in personal psychosynthesis - catharsis, critical analysis and humour, disidentification, and the development of the will (Ch. VII).

Volume II will begin with Chapter VIII, which is devoted to the transformative techniques used in personal psychosynthesis - the training of the imagination, the ideal model and the use of symbols, the applications of the skilful will, the development of weak or immature elements, synthesis in its various aspects - as well as interpersonal psychosynthesis techniques (from the couple to humanity). Chapter IX, the last chapter of the original text, is dedicated to transpersonal psychosynthesis and contains different exercises and techniques used in this field - inner dialogue, visualisations, the technique for activating intuition, the technique for evoking higher feelings, the different types of meditation, etc.

The 26 monographic chapters written by my colleagues were distributed across the two volumes mainly on the basis of thematic convergence with the topics covered.

The first two additional chapters of Volume I reflect on the theme of addiction and abuse.

Bonney and Richard Schaub, in *The Psychosynthesis treatment of addiction* (Ch. 1), describe a new way of responding to the vulnerability one attempts to suppress with substance use. They explore the elements of the recovery process in light of the psychosynthetic map of subpersonalities - with, at its centre, the organising self - and the objective existence of transpersonal knowledge in each person.

In Chapter 2 *An addiction/abuse workshop* - excerpted from **John Firman and Ann Gila's** book *The primal wound* - we follow workshop participants as they uncover the core experience of primal wounding, the plunge into nonbeing, at the root of their compulsive and addictive behaviours. We then go on to explore the quest for being underlying all compulsions and addictions.

In Chapter 3 - entitled *Unblocking creative energies with the subpersonality model: A case study* - **Catherine Ann Lombard** states the importance of creativity in society and in particular in health psychology. She introduces the subpersonality model - one of the fundamental

Psychosynthesis techniques, as an effective intervention for aiding creative expression - and presents a case study that demonstrates subpersonality integration and its role in helping a client become more creative in his personal and professional life.

Chapter 4 - ***From “hanging in a void” to the world of beauty*** - also focuses on the theme of creativity. **Rozana Bazec** describes how she integrates Psychosynthesis and Art Therapy in her group work with women who are survivors of violence and different types of abuse. Helping women work through their traumas, creativity becomes a doorway through which they can start accessing the world of beauty that had been denied to them.

With Chapter 5, we come to another core concept in Psychosynthesis: disidentification. **Didi Firman** - in ***Beyond the exercise: Disidentification as the ever-present invitation*** - describes how disidentification helps us step back from the various contents of consciousness and guides us towards the experience of being the one who is aware, the one who chooses. Aiming towards this core experience, the principle of disidentification (identification, disidentification and Self-identification) is a key theoretical underpinning of Psychosynthesis and is based on the assumption that the *I* and the *Self*, as pure awareness and will, transcend our history, genetic heritage, circumstances or fate.

The theme of disidentification and identification with the I-Self axis is also explored in the next two chapters. In Chapter 6 - ***The sensory soul: Unfolding a sense of dynamic wholeness*** - **Tan Nguyen** describes how, in the clinical practice of Psychosynthesis, the soul dimension can be experienced through a moving sensory/feeling/time/space awareness. The assumption is that the symptom is already a solution. The point is not to fix it. The purpose of therapy is rather to facilitate - through a therapeutic relationship based on not-doing, on receptivity and sensory empathy - the feeling of being able to choose, of being in the energy flow of the world rather than isolated in one's own bubble.

The aim of Chapter 7 - ***Strengthening resilience through the lens of Psychosynthesis*** - is to highlight similarities and differences between the resilience concept and the Cologne Psychosynthesis Model. First, drawing on a case study of *Inner-child work* – **Birgit Haus** discusses the *five guiding principles for therapists*, offering therapeutic tools to support the basic attitudes of resilience. Then, using the *five categories of learning*, the author shows how clients can acquire self-awareness and self-reflection practices and experience new self-efficacy, through a process of emotional self-expression and “dialogical mindfulness”. Finally, dealing with dilemmas and polarities is presented as a resilience-strengthening practice.

The fundamental experience of disidentification and self-identification is accompanied by the discovery of the will. Two complementary perspectives on this same theme are offered in the following two chapters. In Chapter 8 **Joan Evans** discusses ***The triphasic model of psychospiritual unfoldment***. In 1957, Assagioli presented the Egg Diagram, a revolutionary paradigm and model of the human psyche. This diagram, however, gives a structural, static, almost “anatomical” representation of our inner constitution, while it leaves out the most important and essential aspect, the dynamic one. Within the Institute of Psychosynthesis, Joan Evans, and other senior colleagues, developed the Triphasic Model to provide a contextual framework for the clinical application of Psychosynthesis and a methodology for working particularly with the Will of the Self.

Then in Chapter 9 - entitled ***Will, love and imagination*** - **Will Parfitt** explains how the will is a natural process, the spark of life. It is vital to understand how we connect with this energy in our lives, since every choice or decision we make is an act of will. The author presents some exercises aimed at helping us develop our will and our imagination and showing how, combining the two, we can create a meaningful and satisfying life directed by a deepening connection to the healing power of love.

The last two Chapters reflect and illustrate the application of the psychosynthetic model in the fields of management coaching, education and personal development. In ***A psychosynthetic perspective on***

management coaching (Ch. 10), **Michael Wolde** discusses three different but interrelated topics. After offering some personal reflections on the differences and similarities between traditional therapeutic work and management coaching, he introduces his hands-on approach to applying Psychosynthesis in the context of management coaching, offering new elaborations of traditional techniques. Finally, he reflects on building blocks for a new systematic psychosynthetic approach to leadership development.

In Chapter 11, the last chapter of this first volume, **Ewa Bialek** describes the extraordinary influence that Psychosynthesis has had on her existential journey. She explains how this encounter has inspired her to apply Psychosynthesis to the field of education and personal development, highlighting the preventive role of these interventions. **Horizontal and vertical growth with Psychosynthesis** includes both a selection of exercises devised by her teachers - John W. Cullen (Managerial and Organisational Psychosynthesis) and Vivian King (Inner Theatre) - and her own original techniques.

We have thus come to the end of our initial foray into the splendid garden of Psychosynthesis. Looking forward to expanding our explorations further, I wish you an enjoyable read and take the opportunity to anticipate that Volume II of this collection promises to be as enriching and stimulating as the first.

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and Author of *The Way of Psychosynthesis* - Miglieglia, 2021