

### Bite a Blue Apple

Spirituality is a hard subject to ingest for psychotherapists in general. It is fraught with so much controversy. There is the ever present problem of how to even define such terms as "spirit" and "spirituality"; how to keep dogmatic concepts from imposing themselves in secular, clinical settings; how to deal with terminology that steps outside of common conventions in seeking to "express the inexpressible."

Still, there is a wide and deep concern on the part of clients and therapists alike that the dimension of the Spirit be addressed as fundamentally and centrally important to both the human and psychotherapeutic enterprises - however elusive, ineffable; however fraught with dangers the exploration might be.

This third edition of the Hakomi Forum makes a modest first attempt to address this expressed felt need. There is no pretension here that any form of adequacy is made in addressing a subject which is so far ranging and inclusive. The purpose is to promote dialogue while expressing a bias that the world of value, meaning, and Spirit is indeed somehow at the center of concrete, historical living and in need of being explored openly in community. As one of my supervisors used to put it, "we need to share our work and perspectives with each other so that people can help us check out our heresies." Heresy in the Judeo-Christian tradition of this supervisor means a constriction of the faith (world view) by a too narrow and limiting principle of interpretation.

I also come back again and again to a quote by Peter Koestenbaum in his book The New Image of the Person: The Theory and Practice of Clinical Philosophy (Greenwood Press, Westport, CT, 1978, p. 5). As I said in the Forward to Hakomi Therapy by Ron Kurtz, Koestenbaum "makes a cogent case that the precise problem with psychotherapy today

is a confusion of technique with value structures and philosophy. Highly trained and eminently successful psychotherapists are being burned out and left empty because they are using techniques divorced from any comprehensive philosophy of life that would accord them meaning."

"When the technique has spent itself, when usefulness is exhausted, there still remains a fragmented, aimless and foundationless client-therapist relationship." -Koestenbaum

Part of what this means to me is that it is in our enlightened self-interest as therapists to creatively and responsibly explore this dimension of our life and work.

Hakomi Therapy does lend itself well to being explored for spiritual dimensions. In this edition alone there are contributions which bring up perspectives related to Taoism, Buddhism, Judeo-Christianity, and Huna. Hakomi therapists report clients sometimes asking them to guide their prayer life when no mention of religion of any kind has been made during the therapy. In any case, this volume is happily offered to all those who are struggling with the issue of spirituality and therapy, and desire to have a public forum from which to deal with it in community. Reactions, further comments, and additional papers are welcomed for future editions in what is expected to be an on-going dialogue.

It is somehow mysteriously appropriate that this edition also contains the announcement of the birth and death, celebration and grief of the life of Emily Rose. Emily was the first born child of Terry Toth, N.D. and Ron Kurtz, Founder Director of the Hakomi Institute. Though there was much concern and sense of tragedy for the loss of such a young life, in some inexplicable way, Emily was to many a teacher of things spiritual.