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Contributions to Transpersonal Psychology: Interview with Claudio Naranjo

Iker Puente: Claudio, you are one of the pioneers in the field of transpersonal psychology. What made you become interested in this field?

Claudio Naranjo: What interested me in transpersonal psychology was not that there existed a group with this name, being that my first work on the subject precedes it (Naranjo, 1967; Shulgin, A. T., Sargent, T and Naranjo, C, 1967a, 1967b). My first books were some of the first transpersonal books. The first one, *The One Quest* (Naranjo, 1972), *La Unica Busqueda* in its translation to Spanish, responded to a request (Naranjo, 1969).

I was a consultant for the Study of Educational Politics Institute at *Stanford Research Institute*, a very prestigious North American investigation center that entrusted me to see what there was in the so-called *Human Potential Movement*, which had its capital in *Esalen*: a movement that was like the most practical and experiential part of Humanist Psychology, that emerged later on, as an academic translation of that phenomenon. They entrusted me to see what there was in that movement that was useful for education in the future.

Iker Puente

It was only with the passing of the years, that I realized that the person who entrusted me with this task, Willis Harman, was a pioneer because education up till then did not take interest in such matters. Education, notably, insists on being the most obsolete and antiquated of our institutions. We are taught, in the style of the 18th century, to produce repeaters and to give information, instead of forming people. Curiously, there have been many stimuli that have come to me from the world of education to the point that I have become passionate about the topic.

Now they have invited me to Russia, to what is the completion of a long dream. Lately, I have ended many conferences proposing that a project for the global reform of education in the western world should be realized. Because, it is our education system that is responsible for the consciousness we have and the world we have. We have not had another education system, one that works towards affectivity, one that focuses on us truly becoming more virtuous, an education system that intends to create more conscious, more authentic people. And all this that is missing from the education system is blocked by information. So, I would end my conferences saying: "I hope that, being that the government ...CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

A Bit About the Nine Trance

Nines are part of the emotional trio who tend to delete themselves, are unconsciously angry and have trouble thinking clearly. In their Enneagram trance Nines anticipate being overlooked by others and delete themselves first to preempt the world's indifference. Their central defensive strategy is to self-efface, to adapt to and accommodate their environment, tamping down their expectations and camouflaging their deeper needs even from themselves.

Unlike Eights, who directly express their anger, Nines suppress theirs. This tactic requires that Nines conceal any part of them that might be disagreeable. Most Nines resent the result of this strategy – people overlook them – but they often downplay their anger, if they are conscious of it at all: "When I have to do or say something I feel angry about, I anticipate creating conflict. Some of the time I just chicken out." Another Nine adds: "Everyone gets mad and frustrated, but there's no reason to get angry and hateful. I wasn't brought up that way. Angry, vindictive people normally don't get ahead."

Nines can express anger by being passive-aggressive or invisibly stubborn, or

Tom Condon

slowing down their tempo to thwart others, for example by making everyone late for a meeting the Nine resents having to attend. This is not unlike an anti-war demonstrator who offers arresting authorities a slack, relaxed body instead of a struggling one. One police officer can drag a resistant protestor to jail, but it takes four or five to carry a limp body.

As with Eights and Ones, Nines tend toward confused thinking and render complex subjects into polarized opposites. The Nine version is to present themselves with pairs ill-formed, unwieldy choices, neither of which the Nine truly cares about. Asked what he plans to do next, a newly-unemployed Nine might reply: "Well, on the one hand I could go to Hong Kong and study acupuncture, or maybe I could become a golf pro. I've wanted to go to Hong Kong for 20 years but never have. My grandfather was a golf pro so it runs in the family." When you meet the Nine a month later and ask him what he decided, he might look at you blankly. The matter has been dropped or replaced by a new set of unlikely options.

Once in a college history class a professor who ...CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

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From the Editor

A good, albeit late start for a January and a new year, but this is how it sometimes works out when there is a confluence of factors like a string of red lights when we need to drive somewhere and get to wait in a hurry. But in compensation, the wait was worth it and see for yourself:

In this Issue:

In “Contributions to Transpersonal Psychology: Interview with **Claudio Naranjo**” **Iker Puente**, reviews the main contributions of Claudio Naranjo to transpersonal psychology, including the use of meditation in the context of psychotherapy, the integration of different spiritual paths and the study of the process of inner transformation that underlies all of them; as well as the use of different pharmacological agents in psychotherapeutic contexts (including MDA, MDMA, ayahuasca and ibogaine), his interest in shamanism, the transpersonal dimension of Gestalt, the development of the SAT (Seekers After Truth) program and his emphasis on developing a transpersonal oriented education.

Claudio’s relationship with Fritz Perls, Alexander Shulgin, Stanislav Grof and Joseph Campbell, and his link with transpersonal psychology are also reviewed. This interview sheds light on the less known side of Claudio Naranjo.

The interviewer, Iker Puente, studied psychology at the University of Deusto and anthropology at University Aut6noma of Barcelona (UAB) with a doctorate in psychology (his thesis: Complejidad y psicologa transpersonal: caos, autoorganizaci6n y experiencias cumbre en psicoterapia). His expertise is in Transpersonal Psychology, Integral and Gestalt psychotherapy; he was formed in Grof Transpersonal Training, at the Gestalt Institute and the Society for Applied Ethnopsychology and has completed doctoral stays in California.

Tom Condon says “A Bit about the Nine Trance,” how they tend to delete themselves, are unconsciously angry and have trouble thinking clearly. Anticipating being overlooked, their central defensive strategy is to self-efface, adapt to the environment, lower their expectations and repress their deeper needs along with anything else they consider as being less than welcomed by others or be actually disagreeable. The price for this strategy is being overlooked and Nines then will promptly repress their anger about that too. Of course repressed does not mean eliminated and this anger will manifest in other ways, often surprisingly

inappropriate, as with an outburst over nothing, or by being passive-aggressive, stubborn, delaying and hampering others.

Delaying and hampering are one way of acting out sloth, more likely adopted by introverted Nines. Extroverted Nines do it by being hyperactive, diddling around with irrelevant stuff at the expense of dealing with what’s more important. Entranced Nines can blind themselves to their own deeper needs and enter blank inner states when at rest as well as in action.

These are just some of the better known aspects of Nines and Tom brings his sharp insight to a number of other little known ways that Nines might use to camouflage or obscure from themselves what they really want.

The “Conversation with **Helen Palmer** Part 3” is about the research project Helen and Virginia Wiltse spent 12 years on. We do not touch so much on the history of the origins of the system as on the finer definitions of the purpose and distinctions between the three “shock points” (3,6,9) of the inner triangle of the enneagram and the points (1,4,2,8,5,7) that are surrounding and embracing the inner triangle without touching or interrupting its flow. Both groups are united within the circle where they assume different functions and properties in a benevolent symbiotic relationship. 3,6,9 have the function of allowing opportunities and a place or time for a vertical deepening, while 1,4,2,8,5,7 pursue a more horizontal path in time and sequence. Both can’t function by themselves and together they complete the purpose of nature. There is a yin and a yang to everything. With every good there is a corresponding opposition, but the good never goes away, nor does the bad. There is a continuous rapprochement, an eternal relationship of affirming and denying. The formless, needs the form. You cannot have one without the other.

In the conclusion of “Hidden in Plain Sight: *Part 3 Observations on the Origins of the Enneagram*” **Virginia Wiltse** and **Helen Palmer** confirm the particular relationships relevant to both the Enneagram and the diagrams that surfaced in exploring the *tetractys*. They make a case for the nine-pointed diagram being patterned on the enneagon created by the 60-year Jupiter-Saturn cycle and the diagram patterned on the lunar cycle with the gap at the bottom.

The idea that the planetary gods served as archetypes for human beings in the language of the Enneagram says that human beings are born with a

predisposition to a particular personality type. Virginia and Helen see this work as a beginning – not an ending – of the search for Enneagram origins. The potential for additional scholarly work is vast, and they invite scholars whose proficiencies differ to take up specific threads and pursue them. Additional scholarly work is warranted, and much wisdom can be found in the perspectives of Daoist, Buddhist, Hindu, Judaic and Islamic teaching that point at links between the Enneagram and the ancient motif of the journey of the soul through planetary qualities of being. The hope is for more scholarly development of ideas that were mentioned in passing in this initial essay.

The “Conversation about the Three Centers Part 2” is in full swing and in parts heated. Positions are attacked or defended, opinions and possibilities compared, explored, explained...just as we can imagine happens in most areas of life especially when a (relatively speaking) young system is going through its tectonic shifts while adjusting into stable continents. The continents of course are not geographic but delineated more by the purpose and application we assume the three centers are meant to express.

The debaters are **Sum Goddesses, Mark Sumner, Douglas Rosestone, Kirby Olson, Jack Labanauskas, Laleh Bakhtiar, Frederic Schmitt, Betty Rozakis, Bernadette Schmitt, Stephanie** and readers who thought that the enneagram as we know it, came in a neat package with all the basic structures understood and agreed by all, are in for a surprise. The saying: “a fool can ask more questions in 5 minutes than a wise person can answer in a lifetime...” but I digress, and my point would be that even when looking at the world’s most prestigious canons and traditional scriptures have countless commentaries and interpretations.

Amy Zoll has some tips and cautionary advice on what we best keep in mind as we are “Working Through the Need to Know.” When we are on top of our ego game, we feel a sense of ease and well being... all is right with the world. Yet, when our particular *knowing* is on the line, a tension and powerful energy arises in our body. This defensive, reactive energy may take the form of anger, resentment, pride, blame, anxiety, fear, deceit, etc. When we react in this way, we contract and become stuck in habitual thinking and behavior patterns. We suffer.

With self-introspection, this suffering and reactivity become the golden opportunity we need to move through, and transform the stuck energy. •

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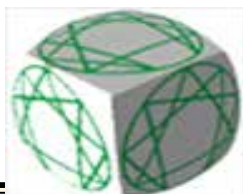
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