

Holistic Counselling Practice



-1-

THE THEORY OF MIND CLEARING

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I am offering this piece of work for any interested person to read at their leisure, rather than have it forgotten and unused on my laptop for ever more. It might be of help to you to read it as it was to me to write it.

I wrote this article following training in Mind Clearing in 1990. It is a summary of the manuals which we learnt from on the course. It has certainly been of value in my work throughout the years, and, whilst I do not practice Mind Clearing now in its original form, I still find the model and some of the techniques useful in my current integrative approach to therapy and counselling.

INTRODUCTION TO THE THEORY

The following is an attempt to present the key theoretical assumptions which form a model of the mind, around which the practical working techniques used in a Mind Clearing session were developed. It consists mostly of quotes from the Mind Clearing manuals, which are themselves transcripts of talks given by Charles Berner (also known as Yogeshwar) to his advanced Yoga students in the USA during the 1960'S, 70'S and 80'S. He had discovered that his students could not achieve advanced meditative states while their minds were preoccupied with certain thoughts, so he examined the nature of these thoughts and the nature of the mind, and considered how to deal with them. Much of the ensuing theory was arrived at through years of study of the great Yogi's, in particular Patanjali, and many thousands of hours of searching for pragmatic ways of applying the principles in a therapeutic context.

“The mind sits in and overlaps the brain, but is not the brain itself. The mind is other than the brain”. “You are neither the mind nor the brain”. You are a divine individual who uses the mind to get along indirectly with others; the less mind we have the closer and more directly we are able to relate.

The mind is built up in levels or layers. The most deeply buried core consists of attitudes; the next layer up consists of ‘beingnesses’; the next layer up consists of states; the next layer is beliefs and the uppermost layer consists of more surface attitudes.

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-2-

The core of the mind is made up of five attitudes and their opposites. These are:

Existence / Unexistence
Mass / Unmass
Energy / Unenergy
Time / Untime
Space / Unspace

If these attitudes were verbalised, they would be represented by the following, or similar, words:

“I am” / “I am not”
“I am able” / “I am not able”
“I do” / I do not”
“I am here now” / “I am not here now”
“I am here” / “I am not here”

These core attitudes are at the deepest level of the mind. They are the FINAL issues to be dealt with in the process of clearing the mind.

Attitudes on the surface layer of the mind are referred to, in Mind Clearing, as ‘superficial’ attitudes. This is simply because they are uppermost. Their intensity and fixidity may feel very deep! In life, they are often connected to more than one basic core attitude. For example:

ATTITUDE/EXAMPLE 1:
“No one would ever love me”.
“No one” = Unexistence.
“Would ever” = Untime.
“Love” = Energy or Existence
“Me” = Existence

ATTITUDE/EXAMPLE 2:
“I can’t get anywhere in life”.
“I” = Existence.
“Can’t get” = Unenergy or Unmass.
“Anywhere” = Unspace
“In life” = Existence

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-3-

Basic beingnesses form up through one's initial identification with one or more of the five basic attitudes. Beingnesses usually become complex, but have dominant themes. For example:

BASIC ATTITUDE	BEINGNESS	ATTITUDES	POSSIBLE ATTENDANT ATTITUDES
Unenergy	A laggard; Laziness; Concept: no energy	"I'm a low-energy person" "I have no get-up-and-go" "Life is too much work"	"Something's wrong with my body" "I need more sleep than

The following is an example of how the above might apply to an individual:

Because of the way I have dealt with my particular life experiences, I might be more attached to the core 'Energy Attitude'. As a result of being in this attitude at any time, I would tend to attract new experiences which would keep me holding on to this attitude. In the ebb and flow of life, out of this would be born 'beingnesses', or states (which aren't quite as deeply rooted as 'beingnesses'), such as strength and determination, virility, aggressiveness and powerfulness. Around these states that I might be in, I might infer, unconsciously, from my resulting experiences that I should adopt certain beliefs, or secondary beliefs, such as 'I can beat anyone', 'If I'm determined I can succeed', 'I've got to act first'. Emerging from each of these beliefs and from the life experiences which I've attracted, would be various further attitudes in the uppermost layer of my mind.

Around each of the levels of core attitudes, beingnesses, states, beliefs and attitudes, would cluster all the experiences and impressions that support or confirm them. Likewise, our experiences and impressions of the world predispose us to identify more with certain core attitudes, 'beingnesses', states, and so on in a self-perpetuating cycle.

"So the mind is made up of this whole morass of the five basic beingnesses (or core attitudes), hundreds of sub-beingnesses, thousands and thousands of superficial attitudes, and millions and billions of experiences and impressions supporting or agreeing with them. Taken all together these make up the mind."

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-4-

All the latter elements above are shuffled around and used in different ways in the four main compartments of the mind. These are:

Logical Reasoning or Central Analysing Compartment.
Memory Compartment.
Decision-making Compartment.
Ego or Personality Compartment

The upper part of these compartments is conscious, the lower part unconscious: that is, some experiences and impressions which we have we are aware of, some we are not.

“The conscious mind consists of that part of the mind with which the individual can easily be involved. The subconscious mind consists of any part of the mind with which the individual cannot easily be involved”.

“There is no part of the mind which is irrevocably unconscious.”

Further, for every conscious beingness, state, belief or attitude, there is its subconscious opposite.

“The pairs of opposites which make up the mind set the stage for conflicts in life that appear to be real but which are not. The only true, basic duality is you as a divine individual and the other as a divine individual, and there is no inherent conflict in this relationship. The apparent conflict is only within oneself. It consists of one’s trying to understand or have union with the other, on the one hand, and one’s forcing and resisting on the other hand. This resistance and forcing is due only to our ignorance of what others actually are.”

The following page shows a pictorial representation of the mind; however, it is useful first to remember, when looking at the picture, that the process of clearing the mind is a process of “evolution in reverse”. Beginning at the surface of life (i.e. the presenting problem), we use the differentiation techniques (discussed later) to spiral inwards seeking the “cause behind the appearance, and then the cause behind the cause, until the innermost Reality is reached”. (Quote from: ‘How to Know God – The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali’, by Prabhavananda and Isherwood).

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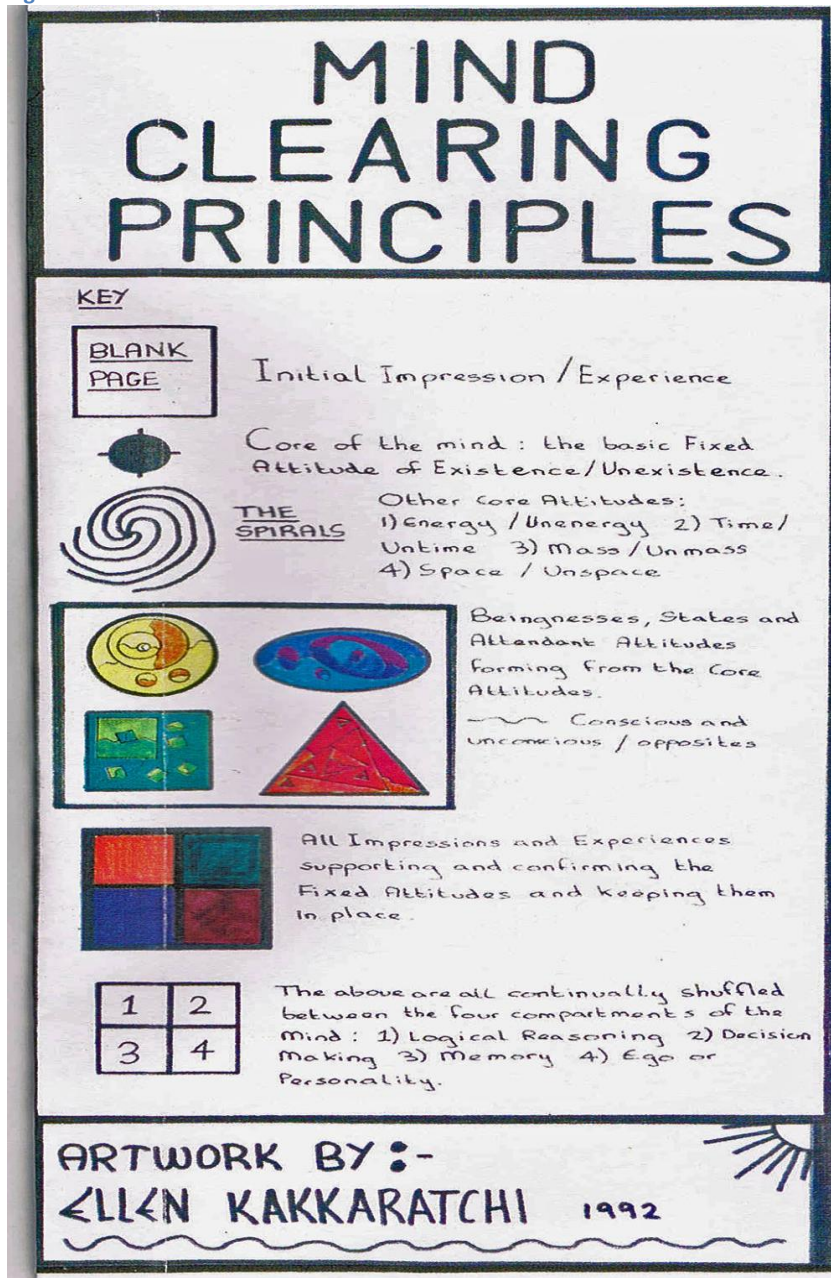


-5-

BUILDING A PICTORIAL REPRESENTATION OF THE MIND

I will place the key below and then add larger images of those contained within the key.

Figure 1



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-6-

Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



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-7-

Figure 5

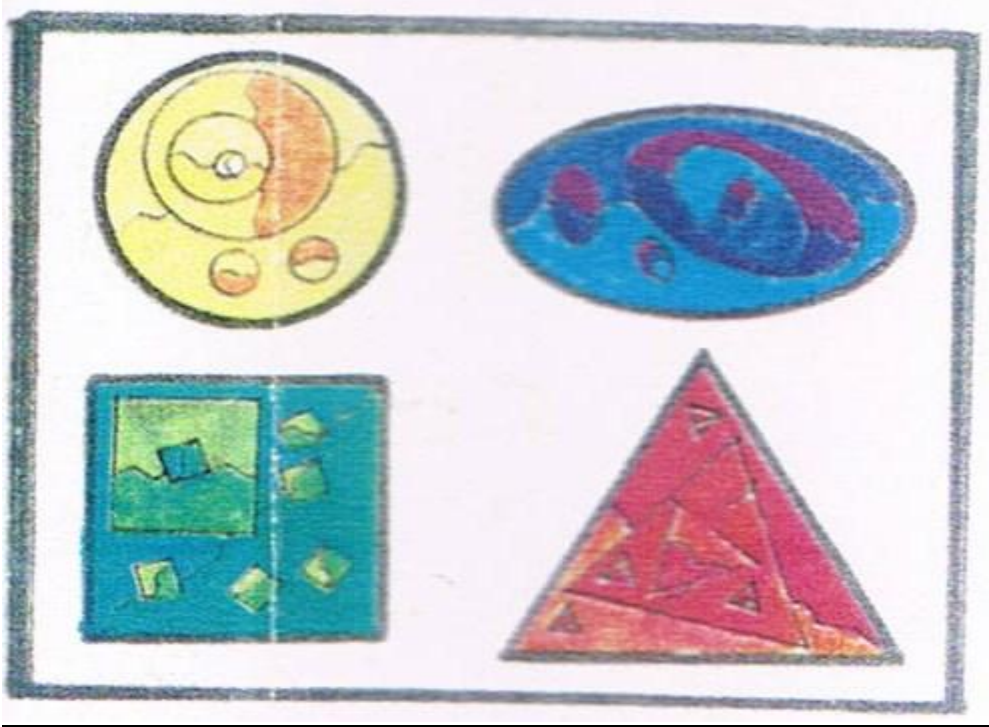


Figure 6



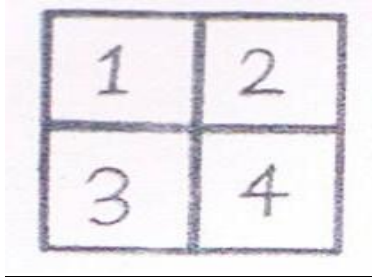
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-8-

Figure 7



Finally, all above parts are here put together to form a composite model of the mind.

Figure 8



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-9-

The conflict within oneself of trying to have union with or get closer to others and forcing or resisting them, then generates the formation of the mind, which begins with setting up core attitudes, states, beliefs and so on, and then their opposites in the unconscious. The only real problem with these states, beliefs or attitudes and their opposites is the unaware fixidity of their nature.

“If you get fixed into one side or fixed into the other side of the opposites, you have great conflicts. It seems virtuous to be non-forgettingness, because then you would remember. This is on the ability side of the opposites, so it seems that this is right.....But it is still just an attitude.....I want to be good. I want to have a quality of goodness. I don't want to be bad. So we have, for example, the fixed attitude of nix-badness, or goodness. The mind gets all set up, so that every time you try to (DO) anything, you will fall on one side of the opposite or the other, (AND YOU WILL THEN BE THINKING OF PEOPLE AS ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE ONE YOU ARE ON), which makes them appear to be opposing you. This is the hell of the mind”.

So if I decide I'm going to do something that I consider is being, for example, 'good' or right, actually I'm only dramatizing a one-sided view of things. If someone then gets in my way and appears to be stopping me, then I might blame them, make them responsible and punish them, when all they were really trying to do was live their life (however 'badly' or 'misguidedly') their way. My desire to punish them may appear to be a solution to the conflict in my mind, but this is not so. What's really happening is that I'm trying to punish (and thus destroy by trying to prevent it from happening again) the quality of badness or wrongness which I have put on them from the conflict in my own mind, but the bottom-line truth is that any inner conflict which appears to be generated from what others have done, or failed to do, is always a result of what's in my own mind, whether dealing with big life-threatening issues, or little ones like the best way to do the washing-up.

It is important to affirm here that in everyday life certain ethics and codes of behaviour are necessary for the effective functioning of society; discipline or the use of power may be necessary in the context of our welfare or safety. A sense of the latter is essential before learning to loosen the grip of entrenched points of view. Once done, without fixed attitudes and all the mental impressions and dramatised feelings that are attached to them, we can act more rationally, lovingly, and openly towards others.

However, everyone is free to choose to be exactly the way they are, however intolerable and 'wrong' this might appear to be to us. The fact is that the more firmly attached to my

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-10-

idea of 'goodness' or 'rightness' I am, the more psychological pain I will feel at other people's 'badness'. Freedom from this inner conflict requires that I loosen the grip of these fixated attitudes. To do this I have to find the unconscious opposite in the depths of my mind and ponder both, so that ultimately I can consciously CHOOSE which attitude to adopt.

Note that whilst choice is the goal of pondering fixated attitudes, in its wake comes closeness to others because I no longer need to use an attitude to get across the truth about me. My communication is direct. Unconscious, fixated attitudes act like mini incendiary devices which others inadvertently trigger. If I explode them safely in a Mind Clearing session I leave the real me intact, ready to make true contact with others.

The billions of experiences and mental impressions (which cluster around an attitude and support of confirm it) may be recorded in the brain's memory for a finite number of years. However, experiences and mental impressions recorded in the mind, and which we carry around indefinitely, ONLY include situations in which a non-understanding has occurred with another person. If a non-understanding occurs, then these experiences don't get completely digested. Even casual experiences may leave an indigested mental impression if there is some element of misunderstanding in it.

All infants have two basic needs: to love and be loved, and to understand and be understood (both of which mean making contact and connection). If this contact need fails to be met in any way this would constitute a trauma or series of smaller traumas. These traumas become impressions and experiences in the mind – either conscious or unconscious – and in all of them there is an element of misunderstanding with another individual. Also, at the same time as not getting our needs met, we were frequently, (although not always) unwilling to face the pain of any unpleasant emotion or sensation that went with our lack of fulfilment. Similarly, we sometimes got things which we didn't need, such as loud noises in the form of anger, for example, or physical abuse. In other words, all the mental impressions and experiences in the mind are there because we received too much or too little contact too soon. This created a non-understanding and at the same time, very often, emotions were caught up with this and not discharged either. Thus we started forcing and resisting others with the formation of fixed attitudes.

".....when you resist that which is other than you, or when you let part of that other in and you resist the other part, the part that you've resisted is suspended in the mind-stuff.....The reason you say 'oh no' is because you don't know what the other is....."

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-11-

Through ignorance we fail to fully accept another because the nature of the human condition is that we have never known what another is (either in this life or any previous ones). However, we desperately want to know. So, we spend most of our lives trying to find out by the very means that distanced us in the first place – the mind. Remember that the mind is, basically, a collection of fixed attitudes.

Non-understandings occur on a day-to-day level throughout the rest of our lives, because, being stuck in fixed attitudes, and relating to others from that point of view, we are relating with a barrier between us. The fixed nature of the attitude is the barrier. If we can drop it by choice that is, if we have nothing invested in keeping it erect then we can get closer to others. Most of us, however, relate from a distance and in our hearts we feel bad about this BECAUSE WE TRULY WANT TO BE CLOSE. Not knowing why we feel bad, incomplete, unsatisfied, and so on, in our relationships, it's difficult to own up to it; and then, if we do own up to it, a consequence is usually put on it and we get blamed or chastised. So we keep things to ourselves. We then begin to tell lies by omission and commission and start feeling even worse. This is difficult to face, so we suppress all this into our unconscious. All the energy which we could use to unravel this internal mess, we use instead to blame and criticise others for their failings – be it the government or the next-door-neighbour!

All kinds of problems ensue from this and our communications with each other get less and less real; more social perhaps, but less honestly connected to our inner nature. The less in touch we are with our inner nature, the more unsatisfactory life becomes.

All these mental impressions and experiences, which accumulate as a result of the above get automatically connected together over a lifetime (or several lifetimes) in one undifferentiated clump, in either stacks or series or circles. All these have to be disconnected before the buried attitudes, beliefs, states or beingnesses are discovered. There are many layers of impression/experience, attitude; impression/experience, attitude; impression/experience, attitude, etc, before the bottommost level (or core) of the mind is reached.

Disconnecting or differentiating these experiences, memories, impressions, and so on, is best achieved by examining the minutiae of specific issues or problems, both in our current life and in our earliest memories of them. In the Western world, close relationships in our early lives, for 99% of us, contained some trauma simply by virtue of our immersion into the human condition, to human parents. Examination of these relationships in detail throws light on to early decisions we made to survive those traumas (however small); more

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-12-

frequently than not, we still act on those early decisions years later, quite unconsciously and inappropriately. Making these kinds of connections, and understanding now what we were unable to understand then, and facing the pain, if appropriate, which made us shut down on the experience, enables us to change. For example:

“Suppose you kicked your car and this whole series was stirred up in your mind.....As part of this series, further suppose you had experience of being kicked by your sister. Additionally, there is an experience of when you were born and the doctor was holding you. He slipped on the floor and kicked you accidentally with his elbow. Then suppose there was a further incident, in which you were kicked in the head by a horse and killed, in a previous life. So we have a series here, and the common significance is ‘kick’, which would include either being kicked, or kicking someone or something else.

In the mind, everything that contains the concept of ‘kick’ would be connected with each other. They are laid over each other in the mind.....Normally, this would be all unknown to you, buried in your mind, because you didn’t want to experience any of it.....You can follow down a series like this by thinking, “I reacted and I kicked that car. What could that be connected with? What is going on here There’s a ‘kicked’ and there’s a ‘car’ and there’s ‘being late of work’; which one seems to have a connection? Yes, it’s ‘kick’. What down that remind me of? “I kicked a horse”. You follow it back, “I kicked the horse, and I kicked the car. That seems to be the pattern. Maybe somebody kicked me. My sister kicked me”. You can follow a series back like this by working with somebody else, or you could do it by yourself. It’s usually easier to do it when you are talking with somebody else, but you can do it yourself.

The themes in a series always go earlier and earlier in time. Finally you remember when your sister kicked you and you’ll think that takes care of it, but it doesn’t. You find later on that there was more to it. “It doesn’t feel like somebody kicking me, it feels like an elbow”. And you get this vague image of this doctor’s elbow.....”Maybe this is when I got born; I got kicked in the side of the head with the doctor’s elbow. That’s it. I’ve got the basic thing.” But when you wake up the next morning, you’ve got a headache. Your wife says “What’s the matter?” and you say “I feel like I’ve been kicked in the back of the head by a horse”. If you know about this sort of thing, you would think, “If I got kicked in the head by a horse like that, I would be dead”. That thought would bring you close enough to the original impression, the first incident of this ‘kick’ series. And that would be the end of the series and it would be the end of your headache. In this example, the only reason you would hang on to your headache would be if you had an additional use for it, like using it as an excuse to stay home from work.”

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-13-

Differentiating all the clumps in the mind can be done on a partial or short-term basis, or can be considered to be a life-long process, with the ultimate purpose of dismantling the mind.

“The being, or sense of self (ego), is at the centre of the mind. It is the initial attitude of existence (I am) and unexistence (I am not). Existence and unexistence are common to every attitude, and every level of the mind. In Enlightenment, or Samadhi, there is no sense of “I am” or “I am not”. Yet one is in union and fully conscious. When existence and unexistence are transcended, the mind is defeated.”

Most people would not be interested in achieving this state, but a very great deal of useful help can be obtained from Mind Clearing by people who want to solve ordinary, everyday human problems. The differentiation process is essential even for this. In practice, in a Mind Clearing session, this is achieved by staying very deliberately with the issue (or subject or problem) in discussion, so that all thoughts can be drawn out about it from every angle. This will include connecting the issue with our important early relationships to discover its origins. Some aspect of a problem, however seemingly trivial, inevitably stems from our early relationships. However well-meaning or kindly-intentioned our parents or caretakers were, or tried to be, they too were suffering from their own distresses, which made their behaviour less than perfect in our eyes. However, how we dealt with this behaviour needs to be examined to make changes in the here-and-now. At this point in the process there are techniques to enable us to accept that people did what they did simply because they're human, and to help us take full responsibility for our own reactions. The horrible truth is that while blame may help to relieve immediate tension, it's ALWAYS an avoidance of responsibility and it can take a lot of work to remove the urge to do it, either verbally or mentally!

Whilst the differentiation process is in progress, and the present is connected to the past, in order to disconnect it, really communicating the truth about ourselves to another begins to get easier. Yogeshwar has said that if we set out earnestly to find our inner Truth or Reality, even if we do it in isolation, meditating in a cave for many, many years, we would all go through the same stages of mental 'debriefing'.

First we have to rid the mind of deep, unconscious incomplete communications about ourselves to others; when we've done that, we find that there are many unresolved problems still lingering mentally which we wish we had solved. Once we've sorted those out, we discover that we are riddled with guilt over things which we've said or done or

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-14-

omitted to say and do; when these are flushed right to the surface and into the open, we discover that we still have fixed attitudes to break through. After dealing with this stage we are then better prepared to pursue Sahaja Yoga.

Going through each of these stages involves a continuous differentiating process; that is, seeing that the way we are now is a result of specific aspects of our psychological history. We can then bring those aspects out into the open, examine them and understand them fully, and maybe discharge some repressed feelings that go with them. Thus the past automatically loses its hold on us.

Mind Clearing borrows techniques from other therapies, in particular from Gestalt, to deal with the first two of the above stages. The techniques used to deal with the latter two stages of dismantling the mind are unique. Once these techniques have been completed we are in a position to live our lives in a more open and fulfilling way, and we do not have to adopt fixed attitudes to relate to people, nor are we disturbed unduly by other people's attitudes or beliefs.

"A person who is mind clear might still get irritated at another person when he can't get a communication across, but he wouldn't be fixed in that irritation. He wouldn't go on and on for the next two weeks holding a grudge about this stupid idiot who can't understand him. If he doesn't have the ability to just drop the attitude once the stimulus is removed, then he is not mind clear."

After Mind Clearing comes the next level of clearing called Emotional Clearing. This has a different set of techniques from Mind Clearing, but actually a clearing of the mind is still taking place. The fact is that until we face the pain deep inside of us, we cannot fully dissolve the mind. Some emotions are spontaneously discharged in a Mind Clearing session but that is not the principle purpose. The latter are more likely to be 'dramatized' emotions (still painfully real however) because they are attached to fixed attitudes; remove the fixed attitude first and there will be less sensitivity thereafter.

For example, suppose I have the attitude "nothing ever works for me" buried somewhere in my mind. When some stimulus (either an internal thought or an external event) triggers this attitude so that it rises to the surface of my mind, I might then feel sad, angry, fearful or any combination of these emotions. They are, however, mentally stimulated; if I remove the attitude, then I don't keep plugging, over and over again, into any suppressed pain that I have.

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-15-

Nonetheless, old pain has to be faced and discharged to fully dissolve the mind. Adopting a fixed attitude to achieve this is, in effect, using a false solution, because the mind, and its collection of fixed attitudes, actually came about in the first place to STOP us feeling the full force of raw emotion.

True deep emotion is a powerful force and is not connected to attitudes. It is a direct and vital response to life. If we are emotionally clear we are free to respond fully and empathically to other people's emotion; to feel their feelings with them. This is difficult to do, however; most of the time for most of us, what appears to be a response is simply a restimulation of our own unresolved unexpressed emotions.

Emotional Clearing deals with these unresolved, unexpressed emotions, the groundwork for this having been achieved in Mind Clearing, when any fixed attitudes are removed which get in the way of full emotional expression.

"The influence of emotional trauma experiences is resolved by (a) identifying the non-understanding that took place within the trauma and experience or (b) becoming conscious of the ENTIRE trauma."

This process may or may not include feeling the unfelt emotional feelings which occurred at the time, with our bodies.

Similarly, "beneath the emotional trauma experiences are physical or sensate trauma experiences which were not fully experiences but held suspended in the mind through a change of state of being." (Sensate trauma may involve, for example, either active physical brutality or simply experiencing an emptiness from a withdrawal of love by not being touched when an infant).

"The influence of physical trauma experiences is resolved by talking the original viewpoint." (And experience what it was you didn't experiences at all initially).

The level below this in the mind are implants, and finally below this are the five core attitudes (or 'beingnesses') which are treated in a Mind Clearing session in the same way as superficial attitudes and beliefs – that is, by pondering the opposites.

"The core attitudes are resolved by voluntarily assuming these states and their opposites".

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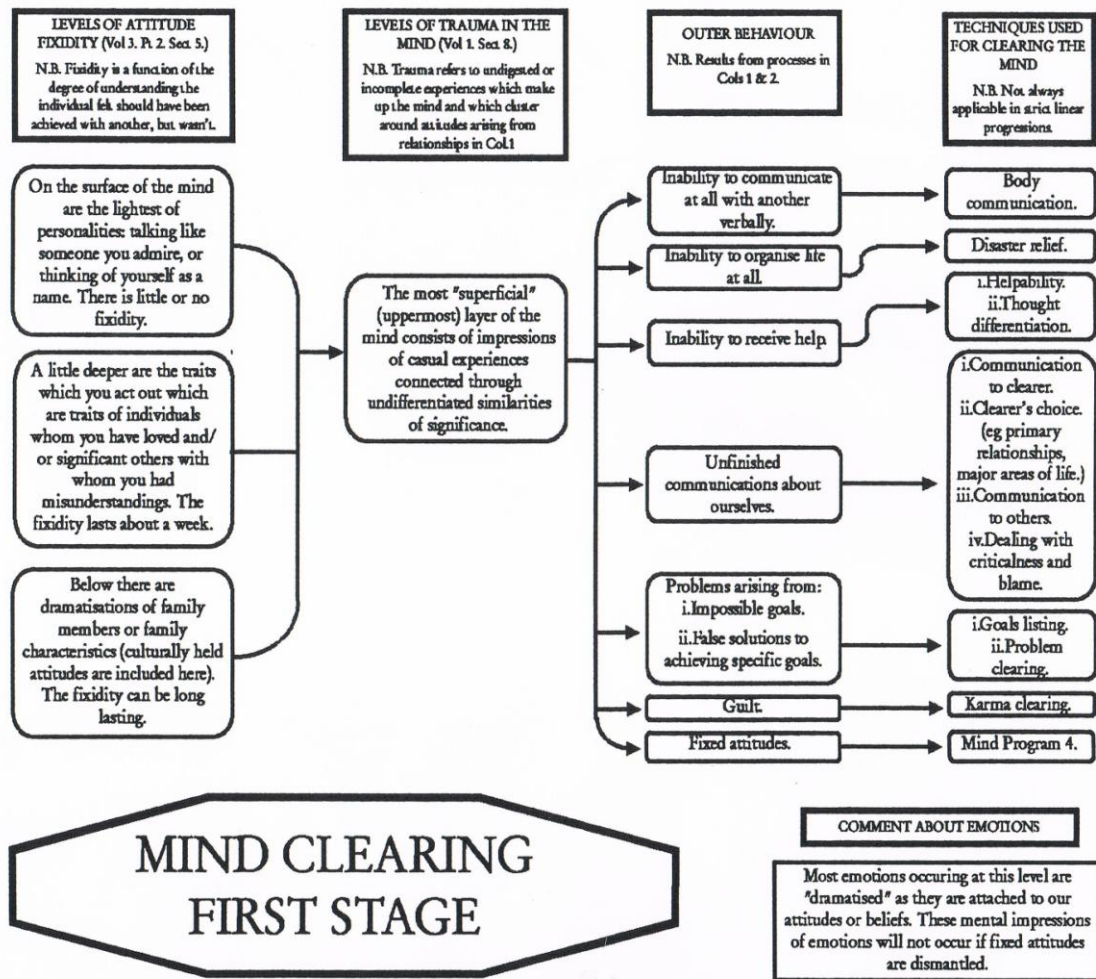
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-16-

Diagram 1 to Link Theory to Practice



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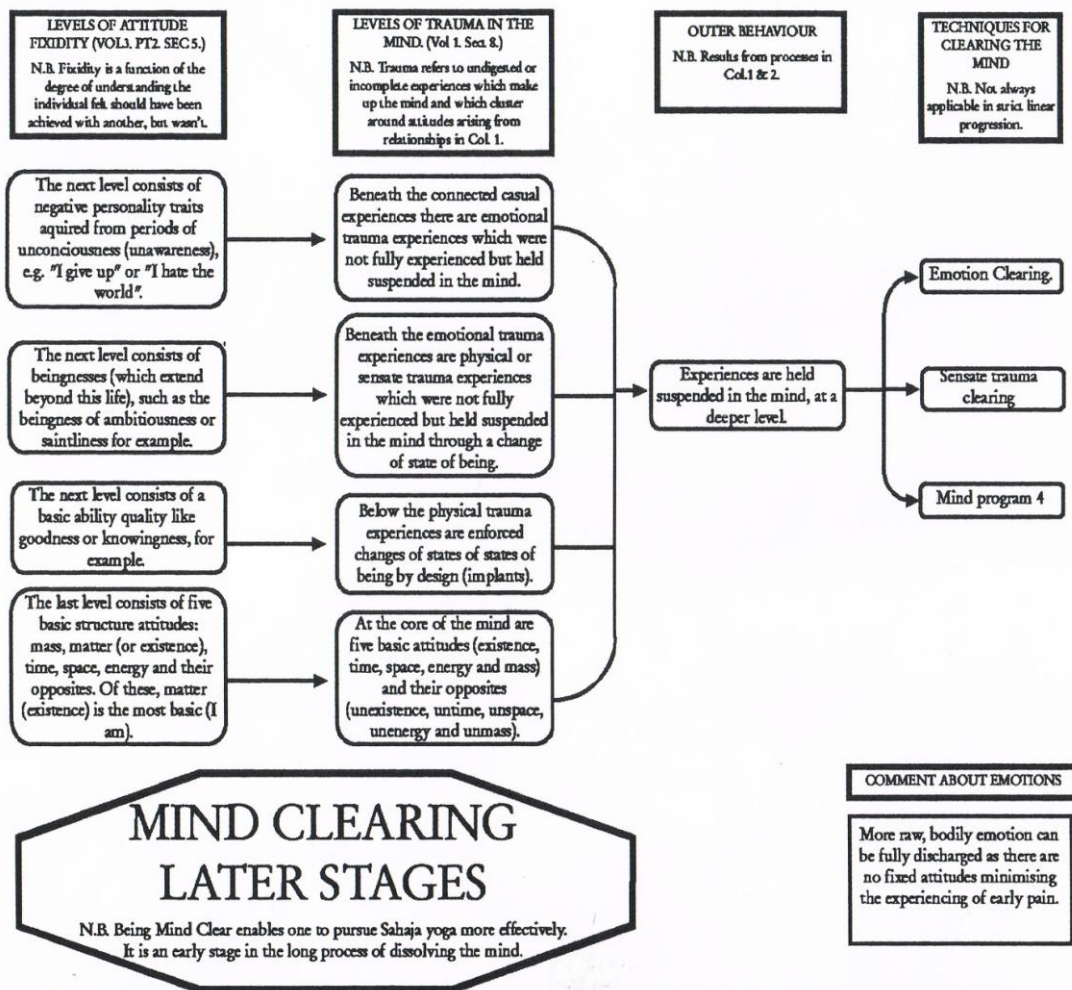
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-17-

Diagram 2 to Link Theory to Practice



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-18-

The theoretical summary presented above is part of a much larger framework called Sahaja Yoga. The ultimate goal of any form of Yoga is union with God or Samadhi. Being Mind Clear is an early stage in this framework, though much inner work has to be done in getting even there. However: "From a certain point of view, being mind clear is really not so much, but it's a far cry from the average human on this planet. Still, it doesn't mean that the person can levitate or get up and be the leader of 10,000 companies, necessarily. It just means he wouldn't be stuck in attitudes....."

The steps involved in getting Mind Clear mean going through the processes touched upon above. What we can expect as a result of these processes is summarised below:

1. Unfinished business no longer has a hold on us, as the subconscious becomes conscious.
2. We achieve greater clarity and flexibility of thought and are able to differentiate between any two concepts.
3. We become free of fixidity, which gets us closer to others. Closeness comes from being less reactive to others' thoughts and feelings, which we can achieve by having no fixed attitudes of our own waiting to be triggered. We can drop any contrary attitude by choice, and communicate directly about ourselves. By the same token we respond more completely to real deep emotion in others; it can touch us and flow through us in a way that would be impossible with fixed attitudes acting as a barrier between us.
4. We become more aware of the difference between "dramatised" and real emotion in both ourselves and others.
5. We increase our ability to accept that others are what they are and that they have the freedom to choose; we realise fully that we too have the power and freedom to choose.
6. We are able to take responsibility for everything that has happened to us which means that we don't attribute cause for the way we are now outside of ourselves. We give up victimness.
7. We become aware of our own inner standards and thus develop a proper code of ethics in our relationships with each other.
8. There is no tendency for NEW unworkable mental impressions to be made in the mind stuff.
9. We recognize the divinity in both ourselves AND others.

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-19-

In a Mind Clearing session there is a basis formula upon which the above theory and techniques rest. It is important that the Clearer understands fully what the Clearee tells her, since any further misunderstanding would only add to the stack-up of misunderstandings from the past. The Clearer also acknowledges that she has heard and received what the Clearee is saying so that the communication cycle is complete. Trust and flow in the relationship can then be built up enabling the Clearee eventually, to delve deeper into her mind. Since mind cannot resolve mind however, the Clearer has to take as little of her mind as possible to a session. Similarly, she's there to support the individual and not the Clearee's mind. This may involve questioning the Clearee as to whether there's any avoidance of responsibility or any feeling of victimness. This is done with love and from the position that the Clearee and Clearer are on the same side. This is then worked with. Transference is dealt with by continually checking with the Clearee, using a formal and set procedure, as to whether there are any unspoken thoughts or feelings. The more withholds the Clearer helps to surface, the greater the flow of relationship, and thus the effectiveness of the Mind Clearing session is greatly enhanced.

Finally, an important principle is this: "Bringing about an increase in the ability of the Clearee to relate with others requires that you, the Clearer, adds your ability to relate to his ability to relate in the session".... so even if the Clearer has, for example, three units of ability to relate and the Clearee has five, the sum total available for the Clearee's use is greater than if the Clearee were alone!

I would like to add that there is neither necessity nor requirement for any Clearee to change their belief system in order to gain from Mind Clearing; the choice must always rest with the individual. For example, reincarnation theory is an essential part of a system of yoga, but it is not essential to believe it to receive benefit from Mind Clearing. There is no teaching in a session, although there are no secrets, and if a Clearee asks for clarification or explanation about the theory or technique, this is given. Self-education however inevitably occurs if the Clearee is open to it.

In summary, Mind Clearing is a synthesis of valuable principles from ancient yoga texts from the East, early Christian texts, and more modern psychotherapy and counselling. In the former, a person is guided to inner peace, self-enlightenment, and ultimately union with God or one's spiritual nature. In the latter a person is guided, in a confidential one-to-one

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-20-

setting, to resolve life issues which interfere with inner peace and harmony, and thus ultimately, to attain those states. So in this sense, in religious or spiritual philosophy, and in psychotherapy and counselling, there is a merging of goals. To some, however, Mind Clearing is neither a form of therapy nor counselling; it is simply a part of a long road to finding one's spiritual origins. To me, it's a wonderful merging of both.....

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